

## Addressing the Educator Workforce Shortages

### Timeline:

- Growing problems with educator recruitment/retention were visible prior to the pandemic in Oregon and nationally.
- The pandemic accelerated these trends and made them more visible.
- Fall 2021 return to school: crisis.
- Legislative work group formed:
  - Senator Dembrow
  - Senator Frederick
  - Rep Weber
  - Rep Neron
  - Rep McLain
  - More than 50 stakeholders (agencies, teachers, classified, subs, administrators, parents, college/university educators, social justice advocates).
  - Worked via three subgroups:
    - Recruitment (“The Pipeline”)
    - Retention and Working Conditions
    - Compensation
  - Three Priority Problem Areas:
    - Special Education Workforce
    - Diversifying the Teacher Workforce
    - Rural Educators
  - Decided to focus on short-term, medium-term, long-term strategies
- Work group’s priority short-term recommendations led to HB 4030 (2022)
  - Establishes statewide recruitment/retention grant program (\$78 million)
  - Funds TSPC/UO project to identify shortages and ODE/TSPC to create statewide reporting and job application portal
  - Requires TSPC to review licensing reciprocity
  - Requires State Board of Ed to suspend nonessential reporting and professional development requirements for 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.
  - Funds reimbursements for classified and substitute teachers for professional development activities
  - Funds licensing assistance positions at TSPC.
- Following passage of HB 4030, ODE asked the Educator Advancement Council to design the components of the application and appropriation process in a way that would advance the goals and create pilots for future work.
- Part of the application process was identifying challenges to recruitment and retention:

Recruitment/retention challenges described in the applications submitted by districts included (from most common to least common):

1. Difficulty finding and retaining qualified candidates to fill open positions across most licensed and classified staff categories, including for specialized positions such as special education teachers, counselors, nurses, mental health counselors, and bus drivers.
  2. Need for improved preparation and staff support, including additional training, professional learning, and mentoring opportunities, particularly for classified staff, new staff, as well as in areas of high-need (special education, social emotional learning, and meeting the growing diversity of student needs)..
  3. Burnout of current staff caused by lack of time and space for staff collaboration, planning, and connection, as well as chronic understaffing in specialized and substitute positions, leading to staff feeling isolated, disconnected, and overwhelmed.
  4. Increasing cost of living, low wages, and affordable housing shortages across the state, and in particular affecting classified staff and staff in rural communities with long commutes and few housing options
- During the interim the work group continued to meet to prepare legislation for 2023.
  - Legislators settled on the twelve components of the omnibus workforce bill that would be SB 283 (see one-pager)
  - In addition to the omnibus, we have the following two bills:
    - SB 275: Moving TSPC into ODE to improve efficiency, improve service, lower cost, and eliminate redundancy, fragmentation, and misalignment between TSPC, EAC, and ODE.
    - SB 279: Authorizes Oregon to join the Interstate Compact on Teacher Mobility, <https://compacts.csg.org/compact-updates/teaching/> a partnership between the Council of State Governments, the Department of Defense (DoD) and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC).
  - All three bills are scheduled for public hearings in Senate Education in the next two weeks:
    - SB 383: February 14
    - SB 279 February 14
    - SB 275: February 23

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