

## Testimony in Support of Oregon SB 322

I am Kimberly Mandel, a certified teacher with 25 years in the classroom, mostly as a substitute teacher, who is advocating for the vital role guest teacher educators play in Oregon's education system. Substitute teachers often go unnoticed, yet we are an integral part of a child's educational journey, contributing to the creation of lifelong learners and productive citizens.

Substitute teachers come from diverse backgrounds, and many of us lack formal degrees or teacher preparation programs. Despite this, we are expected to step in seamlessly and support classroom teachers and students, a job that sometimes feels impossible given the lack of relevant training offered to us.

Oregon SB 322 directs the Department of Education to contract with a third party to develop and offer online professional development opportunities for substitute teachers. This bill is crucial for several reasons:

- 1. Enhancing Educational Outcomes:** Well-trained substitutes are essential for maintaining continuity in the classroom and ensuring that students continue to thrive academically during a teacher's absence.
- 2. Supporting Classroom Teachers:** Substitutes must be equipped with the skills and knowledge to support classroom teachers effectively, ensuring that the educational environment remains stable and conducive to learning.
- 3. Addressing Workforce Shortages:** Providing substitutes with professional development and resources will help attract and retain qualified individuals, alleviating the current shortage and reducing the chronic dysfunction in many districts.

The reduction of educational standards, the outsourcing of substitute services, and the shortage of qualified substitutes highlight the urgent need for this legislation. Oregon's students and the dedicated substitutes who serve them deserve a system that treats all stakeholders fairly and professionally, with proper oversight, training opportunities, and due process.

I urge you to prioritize SB 322 and support the development and implementation of professional development opportunities for substitute teachers. Together, we can ensure that every student in Oregon has access to a high-quality education, regardless of who is at the front of the classroom.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of SB 322.

Kimberly Mandel

OSTA Membership Chair