

Submitter:

Melanie Driessen

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3652

Dear Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Melanie Driessen, and I am 4th grade teacher at Findley Elementary in Beaverton School District. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 3652, which would make class size and caseloads a mandatory subject of collective bargaining in all Oregon schools.

Last year I had 31 students in my fourth grade class. This is not an uncommon experience. When you have 31 students in your class and 1 teacher you simply cannot meet the diverse needs of students. The result is this teacher running themselves haggard trying to work with as many students as possible. This is not helpful for kids and it certainly is not conducive to a long fulfilling career as an educator.

This year my class is much smaller; however, I have 4 students receiving special education services, which is 17% of my class. We have one special education teacher for the entire building. Her caseload is approaching 30 students. She is unable to adequately support students with individualized learning plans (IEP) due to extremely high caseloads. That means students on IEPs are not getting the support they need. This results in me increasing my support of these students greatly. The cost of this? The rest of the students in my class. As I work tirelessly to provide accommodations for the students in my class who need those accommodations to be successful, the rest of my class suffers. Their needs deserve to be met too. The way that special education caseloads are set up right now does not allow me to do that.

Students deserve a quality education where their unique needs are met. Whether they are receiving specialized education or not in a general education classroom they deserve to have the supports that help them be successful. Right now this simply a dream. I want to see it come to fruition.

The fact is smaller class sizes help students learn. HB 3652 ensures class sizes and case loads are negotiated in Oregon school districts. Educators should have the ability to advocate for reasonable class sizes and caseloads at the bargaining table. It is essential.

**VOTE YES on HB 3652—because every student deserves the attention and support they need to succeed!**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Melanie Driessen  
4th Grade Teacher  
Findley Elementary