

Submitter: Meaghan Mikulic  
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 Meaghan Mikulic, and I am school social worker at Arts and Communication Magnet Academy. 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.

Recently, the Beaverton Education association just bargained for nearly a year, and unfortunately, one of the things we had to give up was class size and caseload caps. If this bill passes, it will automatically make these points part of bargaining and we will not need to choose between a living wage in the communities we support and what is best for our students. I do not have a caseload cap as I support both general education and special education in my role and am the only social worker in my building. I'm writing in support of my students and my colleagues. Our school is only a few years old and we are already overcrowded in classrooms. Despite declining enrollments in the district, as an options school we always have a waitlist so our student population is not decreasing, but remaining steadfast. I see my SPED colleagues handling increasingly difficult and growing caseloads. Students are not getting the learning benefits or individualized supports with these large numbers. I want to urge the committee to consider it is not just about numbers, but about the whole students who are on the caseloads/in the classroom. We have seen increasing need for behavioral, mental health and academic supports since the pandemic. Oregon ranks 8th highest in class sizes nationwide. Large class sizes reduce student engagement, lower academic performance, and increase stress for both students and educators. We are not spending the money on education other states should be and are therefore among last in the country for education. We have several students who do not come to school and it is hard to engage students when there are 35+ students in a classroom or on a caseload. Our teachers, special educators and counselors are feeling the weight of this and many are burnt out.

HB 3652 does not require specific class size or caseload reductions—just a fair conversation in contract negotiations and there is no cost. Public and educator support is strong. Surveys consistently show that reducing class sizes is a top priority for parents, students, and educators.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Meaghan Mikulic

meaghan.v.daniels@gmail.com

School Social Worker, BSD