

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

My name is Brittany Dorris, and I am a proud member of the Portland Association of Teachers and a fifth-grade teacher in Portland, Oregon. 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.

As an educator, I have witnessed firsthand the detrimental impact of large class sizes on student learning and teacher well-being. During the 2023-2024 school year, I had a class of 36 fifth graders—an overwhelming number that made it nearly impossible to provide the individualized attention my students deserved. Managing such a large group meant that students who needed extra support often went without, and the quality of instruction suffered despite my best efforts. My students with disabilities, in particular, were severely impacted due to the lack of special education funding, our incredible but overloaded Special Educator, and my limited capacity to meet their needs within such a crowded classroom. These students require and deserve more individualized attention, yet in an overburdened system, they were left without the crucial support they needed to thrive and were sent off to middle school where they continue to go without crucial support in massive classes.

In my 11 years of teaching fifth grade, I have watched class sizes continue to increase, and the needs of students have only grown. Students today require more individualized attention than ever, both academically and emotionally, yet they receive less and less from us each year. The increasing demands on educators without corresponding support or class size limits mean that students are not getting the education they deserve, and teachers are being pushed to their breaking points.

Class size was my number one issue during our historic strike in 2023,, yet our district's leadership was unwilling to negotiate class size caps. The refusal to even discuss reasonable limits on class sizes demonstrated a disregard for both student success and teacher retention. When educators are forced to teach in overcrowded classrooms, students suffer, teachers burn out, and our education system weakens as a whole. I have seen incredibly valuable, beloved young teachers—educators who bring fresh ideas, passion, and dedication—being pushed toward burnout because the working conditions are simply unsustainable. The weight of managing excessive class sizes while trying to provide high-quality instruction and support is driving talented educators, like me, out of the profession.

Oregon's average class sizes are among the highest in the country. [Source](#) Research consistently shows that smaller class sizes improve student outcomes, especially for our most vulnerable populations, including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and those from low-income backgrounds. [Source](#) Ensuring that class size and caseloads are part of the bargaining process would give educators a voice in shaping the conditions that directly impact student learning.

HB 3652 does not impose mandates or specific reductions; it simply ensures that class size and caseloads are on the table during negotiations. This bill is about fairness, transparency, and the well-being of our students and educators.

I urge you to support HB 3652 and give Oregon educators the ability to advocate for learning conditions that set our students up for success.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brittany Dorris

Portland Public Schools

Portland Association of Teachers