

Submitter: zachary alcerro
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 Zachary Alcerro, and I teach at Ida B. Wells High School. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 3652, which would require collective bargaining on class size and caseloads in all Oregon schools.

In the ESL classroom, our class sizes are small, ranging from 10-15 students. Due to the complexity of needs and services we provide to our Multi-Lingual Learners(MLLs), a small class size is ideal. Many of our students are brand new to our country, speak no English, and require services beyond the scope of the school, like medical checkups, parenting services, and food assistance. Perhaps they need help enrolling at community college or another program that is a better fit than high school, due to their age or lack of required transcripts from countries they fled. Vulnerable students are impacted the most from overcrowding. Students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), and low-income students benefit the most from smaller class sizes and lower student-to-teacher ratios. Small class sizes enable us as educators to get to know our students and see what specific supports they might need. As the precondition to learning, students need to feel safe and secure. In packed classes, needs could fly under the radar for all students, not just MLLs. Connecting with students on a personal basis is essential for teaching. When increased caseloads cause impacts like increased uncompensated grading time, crowded classes that strain the capacity of old buildings, and burnout from teachers managing 38+ student classrooms, we must advocate for our success as educators and students together.

I urge you to support HB 3652, class sizes have consequences on student outcomes, and we know a simple fact to ensure the success of our learners: less is more when it comes to class sizes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Zachary Alcerro
Ida B. Wells HS (Portland Public Schools)