

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

My name is Blake Auler-Murphy, and I am Special Education Teacher Specialized Program for Behavior at North Clackamas 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.

In my program, we generally have very small caseloads, but the needs of our students are very high. I often see students as they are spiraling towards my program in my school. My colleagues try their best to keep students in the least restrictive environment. Everyday resource level case managers are implementing behavior interventions and building relationships, but with case sizes in the high twenties to mid thirties, they are unable to meet the demands placed on them by the school district and in turn the service to students suffer.

Another aspect of my role is to help students develop skills to start joining general education classes. With class sizes being so large, teachers have difficulty holding space for students to join when they have the skills, struggle to monitor interactions between students that require adult intervention, and the classroom environment is taxing on students with mental health and behavioral challenges.

As you can see by my statement, both caseload and classroom sizes are necessary points of discussion in delivering meaningful instruction to students. Without meaningful instruction, we are not going to be able to meet our goals of a better educated Oregon.

I implore you to support HB 3652 so that we can all benefit from the results of well bargained contracts that provide reasonable workloads for teachers, a sense of belonging and connection for students, and the rewards of an educated populace for all of Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Blake Auler-Murphy
North Clackamas School District