

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

My name is Lindsay Ray, and I am Beaverton EA President at 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.

During our last bargain in Beaverton, we had a proposal around class size and caseload in our initial proposal. We went back and forth several times with different attempts at addressing this problem that impacts almost every other issue faced by students and educators, and it was 10 months into the bargain before District management even acknowledged it in their proposals.

Large class sizes and caseloads affect every aspect of learning. In Beaverton, there are middle school classes that are over 40 students with one teacher. That means, given an 85 minute class period, an average of around 2 minutes per student per class for any individual attention (if there is no group instruction!). Classes that are packed with students are physically uncomfortable, they don't allow time or space for educators to effectively support dysregulated students, and they lead to drastically increased workloads for teachers trying to provide meaningful lessons and feedback for students. There are Speech Language Pathologists who have caseloads of over 70 students. Meeting legal requirements for students, planning interventions, and completing paperwork for that many students is impossible in a regular workday. Scenarios like these are not uncommon and they do not lead to effective or meaningful education for Oregon students.

We know that overcrowded classrooms and untenable caseloads impact our historically marginalized students the most. Students who need extra attention, who are accessing special education services, who are learning English for the first time, who are members of vulnerable populations and are looking to schools to be their safe space are simply not best served when educators are overwhelmed, spreading themselves across so many students, and burning out. We need to find real solutions to this recurring problem, and that starts with being able to talk about it early in the bargaining process.

I strongly urge you to support HB 3652 so we can start to meaningfully discuss the issue of high class sizes and caseload and their profound impact on Oregon students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Ray
Beaverton School District