



Date: March 10, 2025
To: House Education Committee
From: Amber Eaton
Subject: OAESD Testimony on House Bill 2009

Good Afternoon, Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the House Education Committee:

For the record, my name is Amber Eaton, the Executive Director of the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts (OAESD). We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 2009 and the proposed amendments under consideration.

We want to acknowledge and thank Governor Kotek, her team, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and the many educators, education partners, and advocates who have contributed to this process. It is critical that our accountability system continues to evolve to ensure meaningful support for school districts and the students they serve.

Education Service Districts (ESDs) play a vital role in the infrastructure of support for Oregon's school districts. Accountability conversations often emphasize interventions, but we must also ensure that districts receive the sustained support they need through strong regional partnerships and investments in education infrastructure.

Sustained Investment in ODE and Regional Education Support Systems

OAESD strongly advocates for sustained and increased investments in ODE and ESDs and Regional Educator Networks (RENs) to ensure districts have access to the resources and expertise necessary for meaningful improvement. While intervention efforts are important, long-term investments in capacity-building, coaching, and technical assistance at the regional level are just as critical to ensuring districts can meet performance growth targets. Without this, we risk setting unrealistic expectations for districts without providing the necessary tools for success.

Alignment of ESDs and RENs to Support Districts

To maximize the effectiveness of regional support structures, ESDs and Regional Educator Networks must work in alignment with the Department to provide coordinated services that meet the goals and targets established by districts and eliminate duplicative efforts or gaps in support. We must ensure that all regional partners are operating within a unified



framework that reinforces district goals rather than creating additional administrative burdens.

Increased and Sustained State Investment in Regional Infrastructure

The amendment to HB 2009 must acknowledge the importance of a well-resourced regional system. ESDs are uniquely positioned to provide tailored support to districts, particularly smaller and rural districts that may lack internal capacity to navigate complex accountability and improvement processes. Investing in ESDs as regional hubs of expertise will yield long-term benefits for district performance and student outcomes.

Differentiation and Consultative Processes for School Districts and Related Entities

The proposed amendment includes broad definitions of school districts, encompassing common school districts, union high school districts, ESDs, public charter schools, approved recovery schools, and Youth Corrections and Juvenile Detention Education Programs (YCEP/JDEP). While we recognize the value of comprehensive accountability structures, differentiation in expectations and supports is necessary. The consultative process must account for the unique roles of ESDs, public charter schools, and alternative education providers to ensure that accountability measures are appropriately tailored to their distinct functions. We seek further clarification on how differentiation will be structured and how consultation with these various entities will be implemented.

Recommendations

- Ensure sustained state investment in ODE and regional education system partners to provide districts with long-term support.
- Align coordinated support systems for districts, rather than operating in silos.
- Simplify and streamline accountability structures to reduce administrative burdens and focus on high-quality, differentiated supports.
- Clearly define the differentiation framework for ESDs, public charter schools, approved recovery schools, YCEP, and JDEP programs to ensure accountability structures are appropriate for each entity.
- Develop a robust consultative process that includes ESDs and Regional Educator Networks in discussions around district performance targets and interventions.

Closing

We appreciate the committee's ongoing work to strengthen Oregon's accountability system while ensuring that school districts receive the necessary support to meet their goals. OAESD remains committed to working with the Governor, Legislature, ODE, and education



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partners to build a sustainable, aligned, and effective support system for accountability statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. We look forward to further discussions and collaboration on HB 2009 and its amendments.

Sincerely,

Amber Eaton

Executive Director

Oregon Association of Education Service Districts