

March 10, 2025

Chair Courtney Neron
Vice-Chair April Dobson
Vice-Chair Emily McIntire
Members of the House Education Committee

RE: HB 2009 – Renewing Oregon's K-12 Accountability System

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Dobson, Vice-Chair McIntire, and members of the House Education Committee,

As the Executive Director at Foundations for a Better Oregon (FBO), I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for HB 2009. FBO is a partnership of five major Oregon philanthropic organizations committed to ensuring Oregon's systems support every child to learn, grow & thrive.

Decades of research on high-performing school systems are clear: A successful K-12 public school system requires sufficient and stable investment *and* strong and actionable plans for accountability and improvement.

Over the last decade, the Legislature has made historic progress in increasing public education funding. Now, the Legislature must ensure Oregon's public dollars are invested as effectively as possible to deliver the strong outcomes that every student deserves, and all Oregonians expect.

HB 2009 creates a robust system of continuous improvement and accountability for K-12 schools. It gives the state clear authority and effective tools to diligently monitor school districts' progress, celebrate and reinforce success, and ultimately step in with support and direction when needed. This research-aligned approach honors local context, wisdom, and decision-making while also providing a clear statewide system of expectations, supports, and interventions to make sure every child in Oregon is learning and thriving.

Building on the legislature's historic Student Success Act, HB 2009 will further focus school districts on improving outcomes and closing gaps around key metrics of student success, while streamlining K-12 regulations, data collections, and grant programs. It avoids the traps of shame and punishment and instead ensures the Oregon Department of Education has clear authority and skilled capacity to provide high-quality supports and interventions to school districts. This includes:

- Requiring evidence-based reading curriculum and high-quality interim assessment systems to measure student growth and guide classroom instruction
- Ensuring school district budgets are transparent and clearly connect investments to desired outcomes
- Providing targeted technical assistance and coaching
- Requiring intensive intervention for our most struggling school districts

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These are long overdue steps to build system coherence, accelerate improvement, and most critically, acknowledge with real urgency the need to ensure all Oregon students are learning.

Oregonians know that a strong public education is key to building a strong economy, healthy communities, and a secure future. Our students, schools, and state need you to act now, boldly, to put Oregon on a path to improvement and success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Whitney Grubbs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Whitney Grubbs
Executive Director
Foundations for a Better Oregon

