



Office of the Senate President

March 12, 2025

Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Weber and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Rob Wagner, State Senator for Senate District 19 which encompasses Lake Oswego, West Linn, Tualatin, SW Portland, Rivergrove, and Durham. I am also honored to serve as the Senate President.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 141 and I want to thank and applaud Governor Tina Kotek on the work she has done on this important topic.

Supporting students in their education has been my life's passion. I began my career as an advocate for educators, classified staff, faculty, and academic professionals. On a personal level, my commitment to education runs deep. Both of my sisters are public school teachers, and my four children have attended public schools in Oregon. I've volunteered in schools, served on site councils, participated in school foundations, and been a member of a local school board.

I would like to offer some context as to why I strongly support this legislation and how it fits within Oregon's long history of education accountability and reform.

Since 1989, Oregon has seen numerous education reform efforts aimed at improving student outcomes. From the "21st Century Schools Program" to the "Education Act for the 21st Century," from No Child Left Behind to the Student Success Act, these efforts have had varying degrees of success. While some initiatives have brought positive change, they have also left many educators and school districts feeling overwhelmed by constant change.

Despite these efforts, Oregon still faces significant challenges. According to data from the National Education Association, Oregon has made meaningful progress in school funding. In 2003, our state ranked in the bottom third for state support of schools. By 2013, we moved up to 23rd in state support, and in 2023, Oregon ranks among the top 15 states in state-funded support for education.

However, our reading and math scores remain disappointingly low. This reality underscores the need for targeted accountability measures that focus on improving student outcomes.

SB 141 is a critical step in strengthening Oregon's education system. The bill prioritizes:

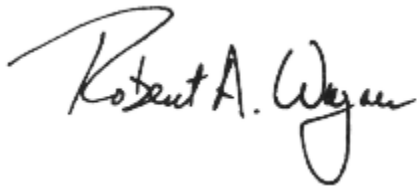
- **Multiple measures of student success** to provide a more comprehensive view of student learning.
- **Local flexibility** to allow school districts to build on successful models while maintaining state oversight where districts need additional support.
- **Targeted assistance** for students who need it the most.

Importantly, this bill emphasizes stability in education accountability. After years of shifting reforms, we must commit to consistent, evidence-based practices that provide students, parents, and educators with clear expectations and sustained support.

I believe that SB 141 is the next right move for Oregon's education system. As a former school board member, I can tell you that as soon as this bill goes into place, you're going to see behavior start to change. School districts aren't going to wait until the state steps in, they will start aligning with best practices. By linking accountability with best practices and targeted investments, we can ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Colleagues, I urge you aye vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert A. Wagner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "R".

Oregon Senate President Rob Wagner  
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