

Submitter: Dorothy Griffith
On Behalf Of: 12M for Farm to School
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5515

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

3/13/2025

Co-Chairs Senator Sollman and Representative Ruiz and members of the Committee

I am testifying today in support of funding for the Farm to School Grant Program included in the Oregon Department of Education's budget at \$12 million dollars. This represents a 9% increase from the current service level. This Grant program provides funding for schools and early childhood education programs to purchase Oregon foods, hands-on farm and garden education programs and technical assistance for the farm to school community. This past biennium, there were over \$15 million dollars of requests for this funding. With increases in costs of food, supplies and staffing over the past few years, this modest increase is needed simply to maintain the current level of programming.

I support farm to school for a variety of reasons. I am a Foods and Gardening teacher for middle school and the Farm to School Grant program has helped my class program in the past. My students grow a variety of foods from fresh fruit to small crops of tomatoes, beans, asparagus etc. Their support makes a difference in educating young students about fresh farmed foods that we can use in our recipes in the class as well as provide them opportunity to grow at home. The second reason is the high need for healthy foods for all students around the state. With food scarcity in our communities, providing healthy food options is extremely important. Finally, our farmers need our support and they have a relationship with our schools. That needs to continue for the benefit of our Oregon farmers.

I ask that you support including this grant program in the Oregon Department of Education's budget at \$12 million. Thank you for your time.

Dorothy Griffith
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