

Submitter: Hannah Joseph

On Behalf Of:

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

March 14, 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.

As a nonprofit education farm, Seed to Table Oregon has benefited from this grant program in funding our hands-on farm-based education. We align our program with Next Generation Science Standards and coordinate with classroom teachers to bring classroom learning to life in the living laboratory of the farm. We never want cost to prohibit student experiences on the farm, so we need support from grants such as the ODE Farm to School Grant Program. This program builds skills for wellness and health in kids and communities and we see the changes in attitudes towards fresh vegetables with every field trip that we host at Seed to Table. Kids walk away with arms full of greens, chomping on cilantro stems and kale, and raving about their experience pulling a carrot from the ground.

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.

Hannah Joseph  
Seed to Table Oregon  
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