

Submitter: Nicole Berard

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

3/17/2025

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. I support farm to school because I have seen the excitement students get when they get to try a new food item. I think the program benefits small farmers and school age children both. A wonderful win-win!

It builds a strong local food system and supports our local economy. It also supports schools as hubs for communities, especially during times of crisis such as wildfires and pandemic.

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.

Nicole Berard
Beaverton, OR