



AN EMPLOYEE OWNED PURPOSE TRUST

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

March 24, 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 CRITICAL 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 because it supports schools as hubs for communities especially during times of crisis such as wildfires and pandemic and with over \$6M in Federal funding for Local Food for Schools being eliminated by the USDA, we need state support now more than ever. Our children are our future and we must show our support by continuing to fund this important program.

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.

Deirdre Geddes, Director of Sales and Marketing

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