

Date: March 24th, 2025

To: House Committee on Education

From: Nick Keough, Political and Legislative Organizer, AFT-Oregon

Re: Support for HB 2359

Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

AFT-Oregon is a federation of 27 local unions representing 18,000 education workers across early learning, K-12 classified, community colleges, and public universities. Today, our labor federation is writing to express our **enthusiastic support of HB 2359, the Oregon SLEEP (Starting Later for Educational Excellence and Progress) Act.**

Our K-12 members see firsthand the impact that sleep deprivation has on students in their classrooms every day. **This bill is a necessary step to ensure that Oregon's high school schedules are aligned with the biological needs of adolescent learners, setting them up for success inside and outside the classroom.**

As educators, we know that students who are well-rested are more engaged, more prepared to learn, and more likely to thrive academically and emotionally. Research shows that adolescent sleep cycles shift naturally, making early morning start times a barrier to their success. Pushing back high school start times to 8:30 AM or later is a simple, research-backed solution that will improve student outcomes across the board.

The benefits of later start times include:

- **Stronger Academic Performance:** More sleep leads to better concentration, higher test scores, and improved classroom engagement.
- **Healthier Students:** Chronic sleep deprivation contributes to anxiety, depression, and other health challenges – later start times help mitigate these risks.
- **Safer Communities:** Teen car accidents decrease when students get enough sleep before driving.
- **Long-Term Benefits:** A well-rested student body leads to long-term economic and social gains for Oregon.

HB 2359 is driven by student voices, supported by extensive scientific research, and endorsed

by educators across the state. As the professionals working directly with students, our K-12 members strongly support this policy as a way to remove unnecessary barriers to student success.

We urge the committee to pass HB 2359. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Signed,

AFT-Oregon – <https://www.aft-oregon.org/about-aft-oregon>