

Hello,

I am an educator, parent, community member and a person who cares about the future of all children but especially those in Oregon. I have been an Oregonian my entire life and recently I told my own child that they should not raise my future grandchildren in Oregon unless the state can figure out how to fund education the way that kids deserve.

I believe that there is a direct correlation between the housing and mental health crisis in Oregon and the lack of funding that began to impact our school after Measure 5 passed. I was in elementary school and being raised by a mom who taught in public education and I remember her saying years ago, "teaching has more demands but less funding every year." This is still the case over thirty years ago. We MUST do better for kids.

I am currently a teacher in SE Portland where I teach 31 first graders. Do you have any idea how long my line is to get to PE? Do you know how many parent emails this equals in a week? Do you know how to fit that many students on a rug and ask them to listen and learn? Do you know what it sounds like in a room with 31 six year olds? This budget crisis is not fair for kids who are trying to learn to be in school, feel connected to school and teachers, and best of all learn the essential factors to being a successful person-READ! When I hear that next school year there will be less staff members in my building and more students I feel frustrated and so sad for these families and students who deserve a good education for their children.

There is only a benefit to over funding schools and that is a prosperous community and state for years to come. We have failed the current generation. PLEASE fully fund or over fund all schools so that children can have safe, supportive staff who have the time energy and ability to care for them and teach them.

Please reach out to me any time,

Sarah Erickson

Mom of three Sam (CHS graduate, UofO junior, Amy senior in high school, Emily 6th grader at Sellwood Middle School)

PPS First Grade teacher