



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

For the record, my name is Cynthia Branger Muñoz, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Education Association, which represents more than 41,000 public educators and education professionals across Oregon's pre-K-12 schools and community colleges.

OEA strongly supports the community schools model. We believe in its potential to transform school communities by fostering equity, integrating wraparound supports, and deepening school-family-community partnerships.

That said, we must respectfully oppose HB 3941 as currently written, due to the absence of key protections necessary to ensure the program operates with public accountability, labor fairness, and long-term sustainability.

OEA has participated in the community schools steering committee, and we've consistently raised these concerns throughout that process. Our feedback should not come as a surprise—we've been clear and vocal from the outset. We appreciate the opportunity to continue engaging on this important work and are especially grateful to Representative H. Nguyen's office for their openness to collaboration.

We are requesting the following changes to the bill:

- 1. Public Oversight and Coordinator Placement**

Grant funds should be administered by a school district or education service district, and the community school coordinator should be employed by the district. This ensures public accountability, alignment with budgeting processes, and oversight by elected school boards. This is not a reflection of distrust toward community-based organizations, but a commitment to building a transparent system with clear roles and sustainable safeguards.

While ODE is named in the bill and plays an important role in oversight, local school districts are the boots on the ground—they already work directly with students, families, and community-based partners every day. They are uniquely positioned to build trust, engage diverse stakeholders, and ensure that services reflect local needs.

- 2. Labor Representation**

Ensure that at least 50% of individuals providing services funded under each grant are represented by a labor organization. This helps protect working conditions and reflects research showing that strong labor representation supports improved outcomes for students and school communities alike.



To be clear, this does not mean OEA members exclusively. We recognize and support the vital role of multiple labor organizations—including OSEA, AFT-Oregon, SEIU, AFSCME, and others—who represent educators, councilors and other school staff across the state. Our goal is to ensure that the individuals delivering services through this grant are part of a workforce that is respected, supported, and protected.

3. Responsible Contracting

Include language requiring that services traditionally performed by public school employees be first offered to qualified district staff, and that any contracted services be performed by individuals represented by a labor organization. This ensures thoughtful stewardship of public funds and supports a stable, well-supported education workforce, while still allowing for culturally specific and community-based partnerships.

These principles are not in conflict with community voice. Rather, they are essential to ensuring that community schools are built on shared power, transparency, and equitable partnership. Without these core protections in statute, we cannot support HB 3941.

We urge the committee to adopt these changes to ensure Oregon’s community school model is both inclusive and accountable.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, and again, thank you to Representative H. Nguyen’s office for working closely with us on this important issue.