

Chairs Lieber and Sanchez and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Lisa Parlette. I am a Nutrition Services Assistant at Westview High School in Beaverton and the Nutrition Services Representative on the Executive Board of Beaverton, Chapter 48 of the Oregon School Employees Association. I am writing to urge your support for HB 5006.

As a concerned community member and school kitchen staff, I am deeply troubled by the possibility that school meals might not be fully funded. This decision would have far-reaching negative impacts on our students' health, academic performance and overall well-being.

School meals play a crucial role in providing balanced, nutritious meals to students. For many children, school meals are their primary source of daily nutrition. Cutting funding would compromise the quality and variety of food available, leading to increased rates of malnutrition and related health issues such as obesity and diabetes.

Numerous studies have shown a direct correlation between nutrition and academic performance. Students who receive healthy meals are more focused, have better memory retention and perform better on tests. Reducing funding for school kitchens would hinder students' ability to learn effectively, ultimately impacting their future opportunities.

School meals are essential in ensuring that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to nutritious meals. Not fully funding this would disproportionately affect low-income families, exacerbating existing inequalities and creating barriers to academic success for vulnerable students.

School mealtimes often serve as a hub for community engagement, providing opportunities for students to learn about healthy eating, diverse menus and sustainability. These programs foster a sense of community and teach valuable life skills. Reducing funding would diminish these opportunities, negatively impacting students' social development.

In conclusion, maintaining funding for school kitchens is vital for the health, academic success and overall development of our students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, we respectfully



Oregon School Employees Association

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urge you to prioritize funding for education this session and not wait until more critical education positions are cut for the well-being of our children.

Sincerely,

Lisa Parlette

Nutrition Services Assistant, Beaverton School District

Nutrition Services Representative, Oregon School Employees Association, Chapter 48

