

My name is Jonathan Gault, and I use he/him pronouns. I am the current president of the Springfield Education Association and I represent not only my members in Springfield but also educators all across our state. I am here to join my education colleagues to advocate for efforts toward fully funding the preK-12 Quality Education Model (including complete funding for students with special needs). I am also here to advocate to ensure pay parity for part-time community college employees.

With a large majority of current preK-12 educators considered early in their careers, many must take on additional work in order to pay the bills. This can lead to burnout which contributes to the already astounding rate of early career educators leaving their chosen profession and passion because it simply isn't worth it. There are educators with workloads and caseloads that are extreme and unmanageable, forcing some of our best into mental health emergencies and requiring them to look for greener pastures in other professions. Greater investments in education can provide sufficient salaries to retain some of our most vibrant, creative, and effective educators in the classroom with our students. These investments can also provide additional staff to reduce the overwhelming burden of an unreasonable workload.

I certainly appreciate the opportunity to advocate today for education. We all know that the quality of education in Oregon determines the quality of future living in our state, and to echo a message I heard in an earlier hearing - education can also be a powerful answer to the issues of poverty and houselessness. Please do all you can to invest in our future and fund education at a rate inching closer and closer to the QEM, as well as fixing the inequitable pay practices for part-time community college faculty.

Thank you,

JG

**Jonathan M. Gault** (he, him, his)  
President, Springfield Education Association