

To: The Senate Education Committee
Re: Testimony in Support of HB 3365

Dear Chair Frederic, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Committee on Education,

My name is Nanci McChesney. I taught Physical Education, Health, including Structural and Applied Kinesiology and Body Systems (Anatomy of Movement), at Sheldon High School, in Eugene, OR. I taught there for over 25 years. I am writing to express my unwavering support for HB 3365. As a teacher of Physical Education and Health, my life's work included a passion for offering my students the ways and means to lead a healthy and happy life. Learning how to care for our bodies and how human life is inextricably linked to our environment is part of learning how to think critically and make decisions for our own health and the health of our communities. Climate Resilience Education will allow teachers to show connections in EVERY subject.

I also offer a respectful rebuttal to the many brief opposition testimonies that argue that this bill will somehow detract from instruction in reading, writing, and math. On the contrary, HB 3365 offers a powerful opportunity to *enhance* student engagement and performance in those core subjects by anchoring them in relevant, local, and real-world experiences—particularly through interdisciplinary approaches that make learning meaningful.

When students see how classroom subjects apply to real life, especially within their own communities, they are not only more interested in the material, but they retain and understand it better. This is well-supported by educational research. Oregon is currently ranked near the bottom in national education standings (49th or 50th). HB 3365 could be part of the solution to that long-standing problem by making our curriculum more engaging, modern, and connected to the world students live in.

Learning math, reading, or writing in a vacuum often fails to capture a student's imagination. Interdisciplinary approaches, as proposed in HB 3365, breathe life into these subjects. For example:

- **2nd Grade (Science + Reading) in Lake County:** A class could read a story about a family affected by drought, then explore how declining snowpack levels in the Fremont-Winema National Forest are impacting local streams and agriculture. Students would read, discuss, and write about what they learn—enhancing literacy while building scientific awareness.
- **5th Grade Writing Class:** Students could interview their parents or local farmers about how weather patterns have changed in the area over time, then write persuasive or narrative essays based on those interviews. This is writing with a purpose—grounded in local relevance.

- **12th Grade Math Class:** Older students could use real climate data from Lake County—such as temperature trends, water usage, or wildfire frequency—to analyze statistical patterns. They could then apply algebraic and geometric concepts to model predictions, calculate resource needs, or assess mitigation strategies. This is math with consequences that matter.
- **12th Grade Health and Physical Education Classes:** In 12th grade Health and Physical Education, students explore how wildfire smoke and poor air quality impact lung function and overall health. They learn to use air quality apps, study the respiratory system, research wildfire causes, and create projects—such as PSAs or reports—using writing, reasoning, and data to support health-related conclusions.

HB 3365 is not about subtracting from the basics. It is about delivering reading, writing, and math skills in ways that students can understand and care about. Learning facts is not indoctrination! Interdisciplinary learning is the foundation of critical thinking, civic responsibility, and informed decision-making. To suggest otherwise is to misunderstand the purpose of education itself.

Let us stop underestimating our students. Students are better served when we develop fundamental to advanced skills in reading, writing, and math through thinking, questioning, and problem-solving around the issues that affect their homes, communities, and futures.

HB 3365 honors that mission and deserves your full support.

Sincerely,

Nanci McChesney