
Date: May 7, 2025
To: Senate Committee on Education
From: Morgan Allen, COSA
Subject: House Bill 3365-A - Climate Change Education

Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education.

My name is Morgan Allen and I am here today on behalf of the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators and our 3,000 members across Oregon. We are asking the Senate Education Committee to oppose House Bill 3365-A.

It is important to put on the record that our concerns about the legislation are not based on the topic area, climate change, but rather mandating that academic content standards for “core subjects” include “sufficient instruction” related to climate change. Oregon’s public schools are already required to implement instruction related to climate change, the environment, and sustainability in Oregon’s academic content standards for Science, the Social Sciences, and Health.

House Bill 3365-A Lacks Key Definitions and Has No Sideboards

Our members have two key concerns about the proposed legislation. First, the bill does not define “core subjects” or “sufficient instruction” for the purposes of the statute and leaves it up to the State Board of Education to define this, most likely by rule. And second, given that key definitions and sideboards are not in place, the bill allows the State Board of Education to add climate change to any subject that requires the development of academic content standards. Another way of looking at this - the State Board is given clear authority to include climate change in subjects like mathematics, language arts, physical education, the arts, world languages, and others.

When the Legislature has added new curricular or standards requirements in past legislation, the bills include much clearer direction to the Oregon Department of Education and State Board of Education. For example, when the Legislature adopted [House Bill 2023](#) in the 2019 Session to ensure that perspectives from Native Americans, African Americans, people with disabilities, and other historically marginalized groups were included in academic content standards, it specifically included a list of covered subjects: History, Geography, Economics, and Civics (see page 2, lines 29-36 of HB 3365-A for the current statutory language).

Currently, we are not aware of any area of study that could be required to be addressed across all subject areas for which content standards are required. While climate change is



appropriately addressed in Science, Social Sciences, and Health standards, we believe that it is not appropriate to mandate potential inclusion across other areas that require academic content standards such as mathematics, language arts, physical education, the arts, world languages, or others.

The original bill required climate change to be included across all subject areas, but the amended version of the bill still directs the State Board of Education to determine which “core” subject areas to create academic content standards for the topic of climate change.

Processes For Reviewing Or Proposing New Academic Content Standards Already Exist

We know that proponents have said the intent of the bill is not to mandate climate change be taught in all subjects that require academic content standards, but the plain language of the bill allows for this. Our concern is that there are already existing processes for consideration and revision of academic content standards through ODE that include subject matter experts, teachers, and a thorough public engagement and feedback process on any proposed standards in Oregon. The proponents of this legislation have the same access to these processes as anyone else.

We believe that some proponents of the bill still desire that climate change be addressed in subjects beyond those which academic content standards are already required, and in all grades. If that is not the case, there would be no reason not to narrow the bill to Science, Social Sciences, and Health. Our members are concerned that passage of this bill will result in new standards for more subjects and become an unfunded mandate for our school districts to implement, likely requiring updates to instructional materials, textbooks, and professional development for staff, depending on the rules the State Board of Education adopts to implement the law.

Additionally, districts are in the process of implementing three new full credit courses for graduation requirements. HB 3365-A could mean adding additional academic content standards and instructional requirements at the same time we are talking about increased accountability and improved student outcomes, with a particular focus on literacy and math. We are concerned that this bill may diminish our ability to be laser focused on the most important academic skills our students need to master.

HB 3365 Creates Uncertainty At A Critical Time for Oregon Public Schools

The question we hope the Legislature considers is: Will the outcome of HB 3365 be similar to HB 2023 from 2019 and include climate change in a few key subjects? Or, is this a review and revision of the academic content standards of multiple subjects to ensure that climate change is addressed across multiple new subject areas besides those already required in Science, Health, and Social Sciences?



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We cannot support an open-ended and unfunded requirement that could impact the standards revision process, instructional practices in our schools, or require the purchase of new curriculum and professional development for staff. We urge the committee to not adopt the bill and ask that the proponents utilize the current processes to advocate for changes to academic content standards.

Thank you for your time today.