

May 8, 2025

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

We write this letter expressing our concerns regarding House Bill 3365A.

First, we want to underscore that we support the topic area of climate change education, but we are concerned that HB 3365A requires the State Board of Education to ensure that academic content standards for “core subjects” include “sufficient instruction” on the causes and effects of climate change. “Core subjects” and “sufficient instruction” are not defined in the bill.

Climate change education is already included in Oregon’s Science, Social Science, and Health Standards. The Oregon Department of Education currently includes elements related to climate change within the review and revision of the state science standards. [Oregon’s 2022 Science Standards](#) have increased opportunities for climate change education starting in kindergarten through grade 12.

This integration aims to provide students with a foundational understanding of weather, climate, and human impacts on natural resources from an early age through elementary and secondary grade levels. The science standards also specifically identify global climate change and human impact on the earth’s system as a disciplinary core idea in middle school and high school.

Climate change education is also part of [Oregon’s 2024 Social Science standards](#). Some examples of integration include:

- *Describe how physical, human, and political features influence events, movements, and adaptations to the environment* (Fifth Grade Geography and Human Environmental Interaction, pg. 42).
- *Analyze recent voluntary and forced migration patterns to identify and understand the push and pull factors and their effect on people and places* (High School Geography, pg. 74).
- *Evaluate efforts at the local, national, or international level to address the use of limited or environmentally harmful resources* (High School Geography, pg. 76).

We also have climate change education in [Oregon’s 2023 Health Standards](#). More examples below:

- *Recognize the connection between environmental health, including the effects of climate change, and personal health* (Third Grade Wellness and Health Promotion, pg. 16).
- *Examine the relationship between environmental conditions, including air and water quality and climate change, on personal and community health outcomes* (Eighth Grade Wellness and Health Promotion, pg. 29).
- *Discuss the intersections between built environment, green spaces, climate change, and the five dimensions of health* (Tenth Grade Wellness and Health Promotion, pg. 33).

Integration of climate change education across core subjects and grades, and with sufficient instruction, would be challenging to implement. In our review of the bill, the State Board could potentially require that climate change education be across multiple subjects and grades – beyond relevant academic content standards such as science, social sciences, and health, which currently have climate change education integrated already. Interpreted broadly, the State Board could require climate change education in language arts, math, world languages, the arts, physical education, and other content areas, which would require districts to update curriculum and train teachers in all of these subject areas, at significant cost. Without adequate funding and support for implementation, we see this bill as an unfunded mandate for school districts.

While we recognize that there was a minimal fiscal attached to HB 3365A, it is important to note that district resources will still be needed to implement the bill with fidelity. With no additional funding, implementing this bill could further strain district budgets.

HB 3365A is filled with great intentions and admirable goals, however without clear definitions on “core subjects” and “sufficient instruction,” coupled with the absence of adequate funding for districts to support the purchase of high-quality curriculum and instructional materials, and provide upfront training and on-going professional learning – districts will be required to do more with no meaningful support and resources.

Given the broad language of HB 3365A and the potential downstream financial impacts for school districts, we will continue to register our concerns and urge you to vote no on the bill.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gustavo Balderas, Superintendent
Beaverton School District



Dr. Suzanne West, Superintendent
Forest Grove School District



Travis Reiman, Superintendent
Hillsboro School District