



Representative Hoa Nguyen
Oregon House District 48

HB 3026 - Modifications for Scholarship Requirements

5/7 Senate Education Committee

Thank you, Chair, vice chair and members of the committee. For the record, I am State Representative Hoa Nguyen, for House District 48, which includes outer Southeast Portland and North Clackamas County.

In my role as an educator, I have worked with students across a variety of backgrounds, and with a wide range of lived experiences. I have seen firsthand how important it is for teaching staff to reflect their student bodies, and be able to connect to the lived experiences of their students.

It is for this reason that I am writing in strong opposition to Section 5 of HB 3026-A. This amended section removes the clear, equity-focused language which prioritizes the admission of “culturally and linguistically diverse” educators, and broadens the requirement to include individuals with “diverse backgrounds or experiences.”

[ORS 342.437](#) states that “As a result of this state’s commitment to equality for the diverse peoples of this state, the goals of the state are that: (a) The percentage of diverse educators employed by a school district or an education service district reflects the percentage of diverse students in the public schools of this state or the percentage of diverse students in the district. (b) The percentage of diverse employees employed by the Department of Education reflects the percentage of diverse students in the public schools of this state.”

According to the [Oregon Department of Education](#), there are only 14% of Oregon’s educators who identify as people of color compared to Oregon’s student’s in which 42% identify as people of color or multi-racial. Our educator workforce is not representative of our student population.

To be clear, the standard of “culturally and linguistically diverse” is not equivalent to race-based hiring, but simply means that educators whose lived experiences, language fluency, and cultural insight better enables them to form crucial connections with the students and families they work with.

This includes, among other factors, prospective educators who would bring fluency in Spanish, Slavic, ASL, or Indigenous languages to districts in desperate need of teachers and staff members who could help overcome linguistic barriers. It includes

educational students who grew up in communities with strong Slavic, Hispanic, or other influences who could bring those cultural competencies to classrooms, enabling students to feel seen and represented. Regardless of racial background, what is important is what the candidates for the Oregon Teacher Scholars Program bring with them a specific capacity to serve Oregon's diverse, multilingual and multicultural schools and school districts.

Oregon's public schools serve students with over 80 different native languages and from a vast array of cultural, geographical, and socioeconomic backgrounds. For students and families who come from historically marginalized backgrounds, it is often very challenging to fully engage with their schools, and access all available resources. Teachers who can bridge that gap are invaluable, and produce transformative outcomes in their classrooms and communities.

The "culturally and linguistically diverse" requirement which was deleted by the adopted amendment in Section 5 prioritizes exactly those types of scholarship candidates, and provides support for prospective educators who would make this kind of transformative change in the classroom.

For this reason, I strongly urge you to amend HB 3026-A to remove the changes made to the Oregon Teacher Scholars Program, so that it can continue promoting equity and making a positive difference in our classrooms and communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.