



**COALITION OF
OREGON SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS**

Coalition of Oregon School Administrators
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Date: May 14, 2025
To: House Committee on Rules
From: Morgan Allen, COSA
Subject: House Bill 3881 - Apprenticeship Requirements for School Districts

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazen and Pham, and Members of the House Committee on Rules:

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 House Rules Committee not to advance House Bill 3881.

It is important to put on the record that our concerns about the legislation are not based on the goals to expand opportunities for apprenticeship programs or to help train up the next generation of skilled workers in the building and construction trades. Our concerns are with changing the requirements for the Oregon School Capital Matching Program, also known as OSCIM, and creating barriers for school districts who need the most support to help build and modernize their schools and facilities.

Background - The Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching Program (OSCIM)

In Oregon, school construction projects are funded by local capital bonds approved by voters in the school district; our local communities tax themselves to build and maintain their local schools. In the early 2010's it was clear that there was a growing gap between districts that regularly pass bonds and those that struggle to pass bonds. Many districts were still operating schools 50, 75, and even 100 years old that desperately needed replacing.

In response, the Legislature created the Office of School Facilities at the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching program (OSCIM) in 2015 with the passage of SB 447. Under the leadership of chief sponsor Sen. Richard Devlin, SB 447 passed with unanimous bi-partisan support and created state matching grants in order to provide fiscal incentives for local voters to support school capital construction bonds in their communities.

The original grants were between \$4 and \$8 million, and a majority of the state bond funds available every session are prioritized to go to districts with higher levels of student poverty and lower assessed property values. In 2023, the Legislature increased the grant amounts to between \$6 and \$12 million to reflect rising construction costs.

The program has been a massive success - since 2016, half of the school districts in Oregon have passed a bond and received a matching grant. I've uploaded the list of districts in OLIS for your review. And after next Tuesday's election, the program will award its 100th OSCIM grant since the program started less than a decade ago.

Changing OSCIM Risks Increasing Barriers For School Districts Most in Need of Support

Because of the success of OSCIM, our members are greatly concerned that House Bill 3881 fundamentally changes what has been a highly successful program to incentivize Oregonians to build and modernize school buildings across the state. We believe the bill will instead create an additional barrier for school districts that the program is specifically designed to support - those who can least afford to invest in their school facilities - from accessing the program due to their inability to find local contractors, or any contractors, who can meet the threshold hour requirements for employing registered apprentices. Additionally, it is unclear whether the bill applies just to the OSCIM money, or all the bond money as well.

There are still billions of dollars in deferred maintenance and new construction needs in school districts all across Oregon. We cannot risk anything that will add new barriers and costs to school projects, or likely reduce the number of bidders on school projects, particularly outside the I-5 corridor, who cannot meet the apprenticeship requirements.

Let's Partner to Address the Twin Crises in School Facilities and Skilled Worker Shortages

In K-12, we fully understand the needs of our partners in the building and construction trades to create the next generation of skilled workers. That's why you see so many districts across Oregon reinvesting in CTE programs and doubling down on programs that are helping our students start their careers in the trades successfully.

We are willing to work with the Legislature, the building trades, contractors, and other partners to figure out how to tap into the resources at our disposal to meet the goals of HB 3881. But we cannot support changing what is inarguably the most successful K-12 facilities program in Oregon's history.

OSCIM has helped leverage hundreds of millions of dollars in bonds that otherwise would not have passed and ensured that thousands of Oregon K-12 students have a safe and welcoming school building in their neighborhood.

Our greatest concern is that HB 3881 could have the opposite effect on OSCIM and fewer districts will be able to utilize the program to help pass a bond in their community. Let's not risk the overwhelming success of the OSCIM bond matching program and work together to find a better way to help meet the workforce needs of Oregon in partnership with our K-12 school districts. Thank you for the time today.