

Submitter:

Jacque Dixon

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB2900

As a veteran teacher with nearly 20 years of experience teaching in Portland Public Schools, I wholeheartedly support reducing the probationary period for educators. When school districts are forced to make staffing cuts time and time again due to budgetary constraints, it's the teachers with the least experience and educators of color that are hit the hardest. As a proud Latina, much of my work throughout my career has centered around supporting educators of color. The state of Oregon and its school districts say they want to support educators of color, yet the supports to ensure longevity in their careers are not always there. If we want a diverse workforce that reflects our diverse student body, we should put those supports in place so when an early career educator gets laid off and is forced to go to a neighboring district, they do not have to start the probationary process all over. This probationary status oftentimes limits their contractual benefits and rights. It's time we start treating educators like the professionals they are, and lift this three year probationary period. In order to recruit and retain high quality educators, we need to make some changes to create better support systems. Passing HB 2900 is a step in the right direction, for building a stronger, more diverse teaching force in Oregon.