

February 10, 2026

Chair Lew Frederick
Vice-Chair Suzanne Weber
Members of the Senate Education Committee

RE: SB 1555-5 / Modernize the Quality Education Model to Deliver Outcomes for Kids

Dear Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

123 NE 3rd Ave.
Suite 208
Portland, OR 97232
betteroregon.org

I am writing on behalf of Foundations for a Better Oregon (FBO), a partnership of five major Oregon philanthropic organizations committed to ensuring Oregon's systems support every child to learn, grow, and thrive. **We support Senate Bill 1555 with the -5 amendment, and applaud the Legislature for acting with urgency to retire Oregon's broken Quality Education Model (QEM) and replace it with a modern cost model that aligns with our state's K-12 accountability strategies and improvement goals.**

Modeling the cost of a high-quality education is not just a financial exercise. It should clearly connect Oregon's education investments and costs to a critical ultimate purpose: improving student outcomes. Unlike the biennial state budgeting process, which aims to fund current services and is agnostic to quality goals, **a cost model should illuminate the path to a high-quality public education system by estimating long-term costs in line with Oregon's specific goals to improve student outcomes and school quality.**

The -5 amendment meets the mark by asking independent nonpartisan experts to build an accurate and actionable cost model that intentionally links to Oregon's new K-12 accountability and improvement law (Senate Bill 141). This approach will ensure the new cost model follows evidence-based best practices for student learning and success, accounts for different needs in different communities, and remains laser-focused on reaching Oregon's goals to improve education outcomes.

Though the QEM's retirement is long overdue, we recognize the long line of Quality Education Commission (QEC) members who volunteered extensive time and energy to better understand the conditions and costs that drive a





high-quality public education system. As the state transitions to a new approach, **we urge the Legislature to ensure the design and implementation of the new cost model integrates the professional judgment and lived experience of students, families, educators, school administrators, community leaders, and education researchers.**

Thank you for your leadership and continued partnership in support of Oregon's K-12 students. **We strongly encourage the Committee to support Senate Bill 1555-5 this session.**

Sincerely,

Anna Higgins
Director of Policy and Systems Strategy
Foundations for a Better Oregon

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