

# OREGON PARTNERS *for* EDUCATION JUSTICE

February 11, 2026

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

## **RE: SB 1572 - Student Discipline**

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

We are [\*\*Oregon Partners for Education Justice\*\*](#) (OPEJ), a cross-cultural network of community-based organizations, culturally specific service providers, and education advocates working together to advance a high-quality, racially just, and community-centered public education system for Oregon.

**We are writing to strongly oppose SB 1572 – specifically the provisions related to student discipline.** Inclusive and supportive classrooms are crucial for student learning. Educators need and deserve effective tools, resources, and support to sustain a positive learning environment even through challenging student behaviors.

**Unfortunately, this bill undermines inclusive learning environments by expanding educators' discretionary authority to discipline, suspend, or expel a student if the teacher determines that they are being “disruptive”.** Additionally, the bill sets up barriers to a student returning to the classroom by requiring prior written consent from the teacher who removed them; under this provision a student would be excluded for up to three more school days if the teacher refuses to provide consent and only then would the school convene a review panel.

**Over several decades, Oregon schools and policymakers have made concerted efforts to reduce – rather than expand – the use of exclusionary discipline.** Nationwide, educators, families, and researchers recognize that exclusionary discipline often leads to poor outcomes for students, including higher risk of chronic absence, course failure, involvement with the justice system, and substance abuse, as well as a

lower likelihood of feeling a sense of belonging at school.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately, when a student disconnects from school it contributes to long-term economic instability for individuals and families, strained communities and public services, and a diminished outlook for the entire state.

**Decades of data also show that students of color and students with disabilities are consistently disciplined at higher rates than their peers.** For example, in 2023-24 in Oregon schools, Black students were more than twice as likely as white students to be suspended or expelled. American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic/Latino, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students are also disciplined at disproportionately higher rates.<sup>2</sup> We know that teachers teach because they want to help students; at the same time research continues to show that:

[I]n many cases, teachers and administrators may not know they are disproportionately targeting students of color for discipline. Rather, their behavior may be based on more subtle, subconscious beliefs, commonly referred to as implicit bias. Though subtle, these beliefs, and the racial stereotyping that results from them, can create a lifetime of serious, negative consequences for racially stigmatized students, ultimately causing them to distrust their teachers and to disengage in the classroom.<sup>3</sup>

**State law and district policies already provide for a clear set of discipline criteria and protocols toward the goal of addressing problematic behavior and supporting safe and productive learning environments.** If we want to address the real problems facing educators at their root, we will invest in classroom management training so educators are better prepared to respond appropriately to student needs that arise; behavioral support services that improve the social-emotional wellness of our children; and food and housing programs that make it easier for our kids to focus and learn. Expanding the use of exclusionary discipline will take our state backwards while making lasting negative impacts on students. **We urge the committee to vote no on SB 1572.**

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<sup>1</sup> REL Northwest (2021): [Taking a Closer Look at Exclusionary Discipline in Oregon Schools After Policy Reform Implementation](#).

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Department of Education. [2023-2024 Discipline Media File](#).

<sup>3</sup> Thurgood Marshall Institute (2017) [Locked Out of the Classroom: How Implicit Bias Contributes to Disparities in School Discipline](#)

Sincerely,

**Oregon Partners for Education Justice**

Adelante Mujeres	Latino Network
Arts in Education of the Gorge	Open School Inc.
Consejo Hispano	Oregon MESA
Center for Black Excellence	Native American Youth and Family
Central Oregon Disability Support	Center
Network (CODSN)	Project LEDO
Children's Institute	REAP Inc
EUVALCREE	Salem Keizer Coalition for Equality
FACT Oregon	Self Enhancement, Inc.
Foundations for a Better Oregon	Stand For Children

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