



February 12, 2026

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

RE: SB 1572 – Student Discipline / Essential Skills

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

I am writing on behalf of Foundations for a Better Oregon (FBO) to oppose SB 1572. FBO is a partnership of five major Oregon philanthropic organizations committed to ensuring Oregon's systems support every child to learn, grow, and thrive. **While we applaud the sponsor's attention to important issues facing our K-12 education system, including the Oregon diploma, the provision on student discipline holds significant risk for both students and educators.**

To create safe and successful schools, the rights and needs of teachers and students can and must co-exist. Educators need and deserve effective tools, resources, and support to sustain a positive learning environment, even (and especially) when children are struggling. Likewise, kids need and deserve to be included and supported in their schools and classrooms, even (and especially) when they are struggling. To address growing challenges with student behavior, this bill (Section 1) calls for discipline strategies that are exclusionary, punitive, and invite unchecked bias and misuse—all of which put teachers and students at risk, and none of which are proven to improve student outcomes. **Instead, our state should strengthen wraparound services and practice evidence-based interventions that proactively provide students and educators with the support they actually need.**

With respect to the provisions of SB 1572 relating to “Essential Learning Skills Required for Graduation” (Sections 3-12), FBO strongly agrees with revisiting the pause on demonstrating Essential Skills to earn a high school diploma. Oregon students and educators have worked hard to improve graduation rates over time, but the pause has left Oregon's diploma vulnerable to questions about student achievement.



Without a valid, reliable, and comparable indicator of student knowledge and skill across the state, we cannot definitively assure families, employers, and post-secondary institutions that graduation means students are prepared for college and career. It is critical for student success and K-12 system strength that Oregon's diploma requirements include meaningful demonstrations of proficiency in critical skills, including but not confined to reading, writing, and math.

Sincerely,

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