

Submitter: Kayley Harrington

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1555

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 1555. As the parent of a first grader in public school, I am deeply invested in strengthening and improving Oregon's education system. The issue is not abstract for my family; it directly affects my son's daily experiences and the foundation of his future. We love our local community school and are grateful for the dedication of its teachers and staff. At the same time, it is clear that our schools need greater support and resources to meet the needs of all students.

Education in Oregon faces significant challenges. Schools need to be fully funded and adequately staffed. Students deserve safe learning environments, including access to counselors, social workers, and other mental health supports. Teachers should be fairly compensated and supported in their work, and districts need to have the resources necessary to retain and sustain high-quality educators. All students should have access to meals at no cost. Families and students need to be assured that schools are safe spaces where immigration enforcement cannot harm them. These are the areas where meaningful reform and investment are urgently needed.

While it is important to examine and improve our education funding models, SB 1555 is not the right approach. The bill would significantly alter the state's education goals, including removing explicit commitments to safe learning environments, high expectations, and parental involvement. These goals are foundational elements of strong schools. As a parent, a social worker, and public school advocate, I believe these priorities should be strengthened, not eliminated.

Through taking out these goals, the bill narrows education goals, focusing on data points, not students or communities. Creating metrics that focus on test scores changes school environments. It leaves many students behind, including students of color and students in rural communities, adds stress for students and teachers, and limits opportunities for a well rounded education.

Oregon's students and educators need thoughtful, comprehensive solutions that address real gaps in funding and support. SB 1555 does not move us in that direction. I respectfully urge you to oppose this bill.

Sincerely,
Kayley Harrington, LCSW, MPH
Oak Grove