



CONFEDERATION OF OREGON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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TO: Members of the House Education Committee

FROM: Craig Hawkins, Executive Director

COSA appreciates and supports Gov. Kitzhaber's long-term strategic plan for improving Oregon's investment in education at all levels. The concept of strategic investment aimed at driving high-priority outcomes has merit on the state level, just as it does on the local level, where districts budget, to the extent possible, based on the highest priorities in their own strategic plans.

We are encouraged by the conversations COSA and other organizations have been having with ODE and OEIB staff about HB 3233. We are particularly intrigued by the potential of the proposed Quality Teaching and Learning Network, which seeks to build on existing public and nonprofit capacity and provide much-needed education services and resources, including professional development for teachers and leaders. Training and support for the implementation of the critical initiatives -- Common Core State Standards, new evaluation and assessment systems, ELL strategic plan, closing the achievement gap, proficiency-based grading -- that will improve student performance and move Oregon toward its 40-40-20 goal, is essential. COSA is invested in all of these initiatives, and in providing professional development leaders and educators need in order for these initiatives to be successful. This training takes time, as does the ongoing collaboration of educators and leaders that focuses on student data and performance. Time for collaboration and training is perhaps our greatest need.

Like HB 3233, the concepts outlined in HB 3232 have the potential to positively contribute to improved education outcomes in Oregon, with a special and admirable emphasis on improving outcomes for underserved students. We support these concepts; we also believe they deserve greater articulation and focus, and that they would benefit significantly from having education leaders and other stakeholders at the table.

Further discussion is also needed about how to fund the strategic investments outlined in HB 3232 and 3233. As you know, after years of cuts, our districts sorely need every available resource in the next biennium to protect school days, class size and critical programs for students.