



February 14, 2013

Chair Mark Hass
Senate Education & Workforce Committee
Oregon State Senate

RE: SB 271

For the record, my name is Dan Jamison and I'm Vice-President of the Chalkboard Project.

An expanded Professional Development Network and Clearinghouse will help provide high quality resources and development opportunities to teachers throughout their careers. Passing SB 271 ensures access to those opportunities for all educators across the state.

All teachers—even the best ones—need ongoing professional support to meet the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms. Districts in Oregon already spend over \$100 million to do this with no assurance as to the quality of those opportunities.

The clearinghouse is not a new concept—the Oregon State Legislature created the Professional Development Clearinghouse in 2009. The legislation before you would build on the work done previously and turn the start of the clearinghouse into a robust network and useable tool for educators across the state.

Specifically, the legislation abolishes the cumbersome Oregon Educator Professional Development Commission, transfers the program to ODE and requires collaboration with a group of stakeholders to administer the program. The Commission was unable to keep the clearinghouse running or provide any meaningful insights over the contents of the clearinghouse.

Additionally, the bill expands the program to include developing and sharing state standards for professional development, coordination and alignment of statewide delivery, and the evaluation of professional development delivery. The clearinghouse would not merely be an online depository for information; it would be coordinated to ensure high quality and relevance.

The bill instructs ODE to expend \$500,000 of federal grant dollars on this program. Title II dollars must be used to strengthen teacher and principal quality, and the clearinghouse would provide an efficient structure to do just that. In fact, there is growing federal policy urgency around getting more Title II dollars invested in enhancing the teaching profession through initiatives designed to improve the quality of the

workforce. In the last two years, President Obama has proposed setting aside 25% of Title II professional development funds for competitive grants to "support efforts to build evidence on how to best recruit, train, and support effective teachers and school leaders." Oregon should lead in this area and ensure that Title II dollars are going directly to support teacher professional growth. We will work with ODE during the ways and means process to determine the funding details.

Professional development is one of the four areas of focus for Oregon's Chief Education Officer, Rudy Crew, and creating a clearinghouse to guide and organize professional learning opportunities is one of the top ten recommendations offered by Linda Darling-Hammond on strategic investments to support educator quality in Oregon. Supporting educators to continuously develop their skills in the classroom should be a priority for the state if we want to significantly impact teaching and learning. Please pass SB 271.

Thank you,

Dan Jamison
Vice President
Chalkboard Project