

Justin Parker



1631 NE 10th Pl. • Canby, OR 97013 • Phone: 360-970-5411
E-Mail: justiparke33@hotmail.com

Date: May 9, 2013

Oregon State Legislature
Joint Ways and Means Education Sub Committee

To Whom It May Concern:

It is a true privilege to be able to write to you regarding the benefits of proficiency-based education. Since my first contact with this amazing educational system, I have experienced firsthand how proficiency-based education has benefitted our students, our staff, and our school. A number of years ago, I had the amazing opportunity to work with my Social Studies department colleagues at Shelton High School (Shelton, WA) to convert and implement proficiency-based teaching, learning, and grading in our classes. The process was challenging, rewarding, and enjoyable, and the results we have seen have been truly extraordinary. I could go on-and-on about the benefits of proficiency-based education, but I thought I would point out a simple few excellent examples of why this system is so crucial for students in Oregon.

Proficiency-based education is student-centered and provides a firm foundation for the increased learning that takes place. From the very outset, in a proficiency-based classroom, students are made aware of the standards and objectives they are working toward. At its root, proficiency-based instruction shifts the mindset of all involved to think differently about how they approach education – mindset matters! For students, they realize that failure is simply not an option! Unlike the antiquated traditional educational system, student are no longer discouraged from the often tedious instructional and grading practices – with proficiency-based instruction, they are propelled with the belief that all students can achieve success at a high level, and that no matter how long it takes, the end result is proficiency in the content area. In my experience, students truly appreciate the openness and responsibility this allows them. The expectation and goal is for the student to know the subject or content area, no matter how long it takes! Persistence, effort, and a positive outlook are just a few of the many by-products of working in a proficiency-based educational system.

In the end, it is about stewardship. As educators and public servants, we have been given a tremendous opportunity to make an impact on the next generation of Oregonians – shame on us if we do not do our very best to ensure that they are given the best education possible! Proficiency-based education does this! And though this is about helping students achieve high academic success, it is much more about leaving a positive legacy. Proficiency-based education simply does more for developing their life skills than traditional educational practices. Since we began proficiency-based education, my colleagues and I have seen this firsthand. It is a powerful tool, and well worth the investment through your support of **HB 3233**.

Sincerely,

Justin Parker
Social Studies Teacher