



May 14, 2013

Co-Chair Rod Monroe
Co-Chair Betty Komp
Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Legislature

RE: SB 271

Dear Co-Chair Monroe and Co-Chair Komp,

Research is clear that teachers have the most significant impact on student learning in the classroom. Every Oregon student deserves a great teacher and every Oregon teacher deserves the tools and supports to do their best work. 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.

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. 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 and transfers the program to ODE and requires collaboration with a group of stakeholders to administer the program. 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.

Chalkboard Project supports the -1 amendment that strikes the section of SB 271 that instructed ODE to expend \$500,000 of federal grant dollars on this program. It has become clear in our conversations with the Oregon Department of Education that this is not a viable option due to federal regulations on the use of those funds. We understand that funding for the Professional Development Network and Clearinghouse is included in HB 3233, currently under consideration by this committee.

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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. We urge you to support SB 271 and the proposed amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Hildick".

Sue Hildick
President
Chalkboard Project