

Krina Lee

Testimony to the House Committee on Education

RE: HB ~~2560~~

2650

February 18, 2015

Good afternoon Chairperson Doherty and member of the committee:

I am Krina Lee, executive director of the Salem-Keizer Education Foundation. Not only are we the non-profit partner of Oregon's second largest school district, we have been an intentional community based organization partner of the three year SL3 partnership. We believe that every, child every day deserves the opportunity to be awesome.

Data:

We have been a partner and host site from the beginning of the three year pilot program beginning in 2012. Salem-Keizer reports 67% of 41,000 students qualify for free or reduced lunch, that's more than 27,000 children in the capitol's backyard that would go hungry without the summer lunch program.

But our vision and passion is much more than summer lunch

We are about feeding brains and bellies.

When children receive year round access to literacy instruction, opportunities to engage with adults, opportunities to engage in casual, hands on learning without high stakes tests or limits of a class period, learning soars and the summer slide evaporates.

We are about feeding brains and bellies.

And so is our community. SL3 takes volunteers, resources and books. SKEF has provided hundreds of volunteers who have spent thousands of hours delivering those enrichment activities, keeping libraries open and of course providing the free books.

Through our bazillion books for kids program, over 600,000 free books have been distributed statewide of which 6,000 of those have been given away through SL3 sites. And we aren't done yet.

Semiloards of free books arrive and we sort, package and deliver them and the pipeline does not end unless the venues for distributing them does.

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HB ~~2560~~ feeds brains and bellies. The one million dollar investment if spent on half of the states 570,000 students is an investment of \$3.00 per child That investment has a direct line to increasing our state graduation rates.

So, now let me ask you to SEE a child in your life....get the picture in your head of a daughter, a grandchild, the neighborhood child... Remember the conversations you have ...

Susie, What do you want to be when you grow up? Reece, Who do you want to be? Manuel, How do you want to get there?

Now, I want you to FEEL the fire in your belly, when you lie awake at night knowing that when you think about what you will do to help them get there....we know YOU WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES

AND SO WILL WE

We, the partners of SL3 will do whatever it takes to make sure every child, every day sees the cap and gown and celebrates the graduation stage,

And we will do it with the same sense of urgency as if they are all our children.

When we are talking about the summer of 2015 and the thousands of children who will feed their brains and their bellies, who will in September have their only shot at the first day of kindergarten, fourth grade or their senior year

we will NOT reach for our calendars, but we will look at our watches.

And with that same sense of urgency, passion and commitment we appreciate your commitment to summer learning, summer lunch and summer libraries and the opportunities afforded by HB 2650

