

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you as a parent and as an Oregon Kindergarten Teacher. I am very concerned about the proposed K-12 budget for the next biennium.

After moving to Oregon in 2012 from Arizona (ranked 47th) I can honestly say that I was shocked and disappointed to discover the limited number of days that our students attend school and that full-day kindergarten did not exist. In Arizona where I taught and the district in which my family lived students attended 180 days of school. Full-day kindergarten was implemented in 2006 (earlier in some districts) at no charge. I moved to Oregon because I wanted a better life for my children, instead I feel like we are moving backwards when it comes to their education.

It is easy to see, investments in quality early childhood programs generate returns of 3-to-1 or even higher, which translates to \$3 saved for every \$1 invested. An early investment in children's social, emotional and intellectual skills means lower grade retention and dropout rates for students later in life. (Economic Policy Institute and Committee for Economic Development)

It's time to invest in our children and to do what is right. Every day I teach my students how to think, not what to think. Please follow in their foot steps and find a way to make the change needed for their education.

Please vote to increase K-12 funding; as always, thank you for your service to the people of Oregon. If there is anything I can do to assist please let me know.

Thank you,

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Kindergarten Teacher

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