

April 6, 2015

Letter of Support for HB 3511

My name is Daniel Velasquez and I am, and have been, the Computer Science teacher at Southridge High School in Beaverton for the last 13 years. I also serve as the advisor for the Engineering Club at the high school. Prior to becoming a teacher, I was a lead software engineer at some of the software development companies in and around the Portland metro area.

I feel very fortunate that I am able to teach my students the following range of classes during the school day: Web Design, Java Programming, Robotics, Computer Hardware, and Computer Game Design. My program is one of the largest in the state and my hope is that we can replicate my success to as many of the other schools in the state as possible. Sadly, most Oregon schools have little or no computer science-related classes.

When I first started as a computer science teacher 13 years ago, I was able to attend my first SuperQuest teacher conference presented by the Oregon Computer Science Teachers Association (OCSTA). These conferences were invaluable to me as I was getting my program off of the ground and today as well.

Now, I go to the conferences either as a presenter or an attendee. As a presenter, I am able to share with other teachers my enthusiasm for computer science and suggest how to light the fire in our future computer scientists. As an attendee, I learn from other computer science teachers new and innovative ways to get students excited about technology.

By what I teach and what I do, I insist that computer science classes and programs should be available to all students in the state of Oregon. My entire teaching career is predicated upon this ideal.

There are many activities and programs that can make this ideal become reality. OCSTA and their SuperQuest program, ORTOP in support of robotics, programming contests across the street at Willamette University; all of these programs are vital resources that need to be available to support computer science teachers.

Please support of HB 3511. The grants made available by this bill will help ensure that our kids can achieve successful and prosperous careers in technology and computer science. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Daniel Velasquez
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Southridge High School, Beaverton, Oregon