

TO: Chair Roblan, Senate Education Committee
FROM: Kylie Grunow, Chalkboard Project
DATE: April 17, 2015
RE: SB 216

Chalkboard Project urges your support of SB 216 and the -1 amendments. The bill provides important changes to the statutory description of the Network for Quality Teaching & Learning, particularly around the School District Collaboration Fund and the Oregon Beginning Teacher & Administrator Mentor Program.

Briefly, the Network was created by HB 3233 in the 2013 session and is **the only statewide system of supports for Oregon's educators**, the most important in-school factor on a student's success.

SB 216's refinements to the Network statute improves the School District Collaboration Fund by allowing a nonprofit to administer the program and providing the opportunity for participating districts to explore additional innovative practices beyond the four primary components.

As we stated in our testimony during the public hearing on SB 216:

- ODE has had to do a yeoman's job over the last few years to administer a multitude of new grant programs, including the Collaboration Fund.
- It would behoove both the state and the participating districts if a nonprofit were able to administer the program in the 2015-17 biennium. This would allow work with ODE to solidify the foundation of the program at the state level while freeing up some of their time, resources and capacity to address other critical issues and programs where this type of public-private partnership is not available. We believe the only way it can be taken to scale and truly create systemic change is as a state program.
- Any nonprofit that is selected to do this work (we would advocate that this needs to be a competitive process) needs to be held to a high standard to ensure that this opportunity to leverage a public-private partnership further improves a program that is changing the culture of our districts and significantly improving student-learning outcomes.
- You'll find in the public record a letter signed by several superintendents from current Collaboration Fund districts stating their support for a nonprofit administrator as a way to ensure the program can meet the current and growing demand for years to come.

It is also important to note that in the School District Collaboration Fund program, almost all of the program dollars are given directly to the participating districts. The work of the School District Collaboration Fund is done at the district level and this is where the dollars are directed.

Finally, in the original hearing there were concerns expressed by Chalkboard and other stakeholders regarding changes to the Oregon Mentoring program. The -1 amendments are the result of a collaborative process to address those concerns.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 216 and the -1 amendments. We urge your support and we'd be happy to answer any questions: Kylie Grunow ([503-707-9653](tel:503-707-9653)) or Phil Donovan ([503-522-3023](tel:503-522-3023)).