



Oregon Alliance for Education Equity (OAE)

April 27, 2015

Dear members of the House Education Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Alliance for Education Equity (OAE), we hope that you will vote to support Senate Bill 553-A, which addresses student discipline practices in the K-12 school system.

The OAE is a statewide network representing culturally-specific, English Language Learners (ELLs), and advocacy organizations throughout Oregon. The mission of the OAE is to ensure that schools promote equity, eliminate disparities, and value diversity so that all students are prepared to become successful adults.

In the 2012-2013 school year, 1 of every 28 African-American students was either suspended out of school or expelled, compared to 1 of every 100 Caucasian students. The rate worsens by 5th grade to 1 of every 12 African-American students, compared to 1 of every 36 Caucasian students. As more students have, and continue to be pushed out of classrooms, they lose valuable instruction time, and their chances of reaching graduation and success diminish.

SB 553-A will strengthen the framework in effect from HB 2192 and help districts meet the 40-40-20 goals. SB 553-A would allow a school to suspend or expel students under age 12 for only dangerous or harmful behavior, striking a balance between ensuring safety for everyone in the classroom, and, ensuring historically-underserved students will receive equitable learning time and treatment in schools.

Thank you for your work on this issue.

Signed,
The Oregon Alliance for Education Equity

