

*From the Desk of Arnie Roblan. Arnie Roblan*



## **Oregon Alliance for Education Equity (OAE)**

April 3, 2015

Dear Senator,

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

The OAE is a statewide network representing over 20 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

By voting "yes" on Senate Bill 553, you will strengthen the work currently under way to ensure more students are in the classroom, following the passage of HB 2192 during the 2013 legislative session. Passage of SB 553 will provide the necessary infrastructure to support school districts meeting the 40-40-20 goals, and offers the appropriate balance to both ensure safe learning environments for all students and teachers, and, that students of color will receive equitable learning time and treatment in schools.

Thank you for your work on this issue.

Signed,  
The Oregon Alliance for Education Equity