

Testimony to the Senate Education Committee
March 23, 2017

Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee,

I am Gary Peterson, Executive Director of the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input regarding the proposed Senate Bill 706.

Oregon's ESDs have long been strong supporters of professional development for educators across the state by serving as providers, facilitators and hosts. Indeed, one of the reasons why ESDs have been so involved is that they have the capacity and geographic representation to reach every educator in every district across the state. No other public entity is as well-equipped to deliver such professional development to Oregon's teachers, administrators and support staff.

As ESDs, we also support and believe in efforts to provide instructional resources to teachers and other educational professionals. Such instructional resources come in a variety of ways including support for curriculum development, and assisting educators by enhancing their knowledge and understanding of strategies for effective teaching and assessment. We agree on the idea of a coordinated, statewide approach, based on local district needs, to provide such resources. As an example, a specific area currently in need of such an approach is the integration of the Next Generation Science Standards into the curriculum and instruction in Oregon's classrooms.

While we support the idea of providing professional development and instructional resources through education service districts, we have two primary concerns about the SB 706 in its current form. First, we believe that the proposed model for professional development related to curriculum and instruction in the areas of mathematics, science, English and social studies is readily implemented in education service districts through the existing local service planning process without additional legislative action. Each ESD is required by statute to develop a local service plan in the areas of technology, special education, school improvement and administrative services which is subsequently approved by the local boards of the component school districts. Should local districts desire professional development related to curriculum and instruction for their staff members, they could request the inclusion of such development in the local service plan.

Second, without a designated funding source not currently being used for other education purposes, the effective implementation of SB 706 would effectively become an unfunded mandate for the selected pilot ESD. Funds would need to shift from other programs and services in order to implement SB 706.

Finally, we respectfully suggest that key pieces of SB 706 are, or potentially could be, incorporated with SB 182 in the creation of the Educator Advancement Council. For example, the current language in SB 182 refers to establishing professional educator priorities which reflect local needs, enhanced access for educators to high quality professional learning, strengthening and enhancing evidence-based practices that improve student achievement, and, supporting the implementation and delivery of academic content standards. (SB 182, Page 6, lines 19, 29, 34-35, 45) We as ESDs believe that such priorities for professional development are important for Oregon's educators and are poised and ready to support the work of Educator Advancement Council upon its creation.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

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