



CONFEDERATION OF OREGON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

707 13TH STREET SE, SUITE 100, SALEM, OREGON 97301

TELEPHONE (503) 581-3141

FAX (503) 581 9840

6-6-17

TO: House Committee on Education

FR: Morgan Allen, Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA)

RE: Senate Bill 182

Co-Chair Smith Warner, Co-Chair Monroe and members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education:

On behalf of COSA's over 2300 statewide members, I would like to offer comments regarding Senate Bill 182. Our members agree and support the policy goals behind the legislation. They know that high-quality teacher preparation and ongoing professional development and learning are critical to improving student achievement and graduation rates.

The work of the Council on Educator Advancement, which informed the language of SB 182, was developed by some of the best and brightest educators and stakeholders in our education system. However, our members have questions about how that work will be implemented in Senate Bill 182 and would like to see resolution to some outstanding issues before we can fully support the bill. These issues include:

- **Ongoing Funding for Dyslexia-Related Teacher Training**

The passage of Senate Bill 612 in 2015 required significant training and professional development for a large cadre of teachers (likely 700-800) related to working with students who have dyslexia. Based on recent meetings with ODE, it is estimated that this training and related costs could approach \$2 million in the 17-19 biennium and \$1 million in subsequent biennia. SB 612 identified the current Network as the source of funds to pay for these dyslexia trainings. SB 182 needs to include language and a pathway to ensure that these funds are available in the 17-19 biennium and beyond.

- **Remove the SSF Carve-out "Escalator"**

When the Network for Quality Teaching and Learning was created in 2013 it was funded via a new State School fund "carve-out." This carve-out included language that increased the fund at the same rate as the overall growth of the SSF. For example, if the SSF allocation grows by 10% the Network carve-out grows by 10%. In real dollars, the 13-15 carve-out was

\$33 million dollars; because of this “escalator” the fund may reach \$40 million dollars in 17-19.

Other carve-outs, such as funds for students with serious special education needs or English Language Learners, do not automatically receive a boost each biennium. Our members believe that the Network “carve-out” should no longer get this preferential treatment after the 17-19 biennium.

- **Inclusion of School Districts, ESDs and Administrators in Decision Making**

Current language in SB 182 contains no requirement that school districts or ESDs must be partners in local educator networks. Similarly, language about including school administrators in the work and deliberations of SB 182 is ambiguous. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that the work of the Council and networks support the student achievement and professional development goals of local school districts.

Because SB 182 allocates State School Fund dollars, our members cannot support programs that do not ensure that K-12 stakeholders are involved in the decision making process.

- **Unclear Governance**

As drafted, SB 182 creates a state level Council of indeterminate size and make-up and local educator networks of indeterminate number, size and make-up. Beginning in the 2019-21 biennium, these entities are given control of approximately \$40 million dollars of State School Fund monies to direct at their discretion.

Our members appreciate the intent to remove competitive grant processes that disadvantage many districts and limit the impact of current funds. Senate Bill 182 includes appropriate sideboards on how the money may be spent; we are not yet comfortable with the proposed governance structure and are awaiting further details on how decisions about which programs and proposals to fund and support are made.

In summary, our members are supportive of the concept but have raised reasonable questions about the implementation and roll-out of the work envisioned by SB 182. Ultimately, our school districts need a State School Fund appropriation of at least \$8.4 billion to avoid cuts and layoffs and we believe all budget discussions, including SSF “carve-outs,” need to be considered in that context.