



Partners *for a*
Hunger-Free Oregon

Ending hunger before it begins.

To: Education Subcommittee of Joint Committee on Ways and Means
From: Matt Newell-Ching, Public Affairs Director
Subject: **Statement of support for HB 2038, the Farm-to-School Bill**
Date: June 21, 2017

Oregon should be the best place for ensuring students have access to nutritious meals at school so they can learn, grow, and flourish. A student who has breakfast and lunch at school is more likely to have better attendance, graduate high school, and be fully present and ready to learn in the classroom.

In 2015, Oregon became a national model for the Farm-to-School program, which reimburses school districts for their purchases of Oregon grown and processed foods and for food-based, agriculture-based or garden-based educational activities. Because of actions of the legislature, Oregon took the unprecedented step of funding the program at levels that ensures that any school can participate. Previously schools had been competing for grants because of limited funding.

We were disappointed in budget proposals that would roll back these improvements. **We strongly support HB 2038, the Farm-to-School Bill**, which maintains funding for the program.

Farm-to-School benefits kids who eat nutritious meals at schools and learn about where food comes from. Many schools have integrated nutrition and vocational education with their Farm-to-School Programs. It also benefits Oregon agriculture by connecting farms and producers with schools.

It's a win-win, and deserves to continue. We urge your support for HB 2038.