

Honorable Arnie Roblan, Chair  
Senate Education Committee

February 9, 2017

Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee,

Over the past decade, Chalkboard Project has come alongside educators to help lay the foundation for an innovative, effective, evidence-based, and sustainable system of support for educators driven by the expressed needs of Oregon educators.

Research confirms that teachers are the single most important in-school factor for student success. Research also confirms that teaching excellence takes years of practice and preparation supported by a system informed by practice. Groups like the Distinguished Educators Council and the Distinguished Leaders Council have been instrumental in helping Chalkboard to identify educators' most pressing needs in their schools and classrooms, and to elevate emerging best practices for addressing those needs.

In that vein, we applaud Governor Brown's executive order to convene some of Oregon's most distinguished educators to work in collaboration with legislators, agency directors, philanthropists, and other education partners, as the Council on Educator Advancement, to revisit our existing structure and to develop recommendations for building a comprehensive, evidence-based, and seamless system that aims to empower the teaching profession and lift student outcomes.

Senate Bill 182 promises to create a new opportunity to leverage innovation dollars and the good work happening across many districts in the state. It will help build a systemic approach to improving educator effectiveness and a system nimble enough to respond to the changing needs of students, educators, schools, districts, and communities.

In our almost 15 years of working with educators in the field through programs such as the School District Collaboration Fund and TeachOregon, we have seen firsthand that when teaching and learning decisions are in the hands of educators, innovative practices take hold, teacher satisfaction increases, and student outcomes improve. Practitioners have shown us the way.

Over the past decade, philanthropy has been a strong partner to the state and districts by piloting innovative programs that improve teaching and teaching conditions. We will continue to be a strong partner to the state in that way. I urge your support of SB 182.

Sincerely,

Sue Hildick, President  
Chalkboard Project