



Oregon School Employees Association

www.osea.org

State Office: 4735 Liberty Rd S, Salem, OR 97302-5036

P: 800/252-6732, 503/588-0121 F: 503/588-8307

February 5, 2018

Representative Margaret Doherty, Chair
House Committee on Education
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 4051 Task Force on Rural Education

Chair Doherty and members of the committee,

I am writing today on behalf of the nearly 22,000 members of the Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) in support of the Task Force on Rural Education bill, House Bill (HB) 4051.

OSEA represents employees working in urban and rural Oregon school districts, community colleges, education service districts, Head Start agencies, libraries and park and recreation districts. This includes educators in early learning, special and general education, public safety, student transportation and health and nutrition.

HB 4051 establishes a Task Force on Rural Education charged with recommending changes in state policy to support rural schools, with an emphasis on addressing chronic absenteeism, graduation rates, student mobility, serving underrepresented students and advancing post-secondary education.

The rural perspective on education and outcomes is important because the challenges rural and small school districts faces are vastly different from the challenges larger urban districts face. For example, it is not unusual for a classified school employee in Oregon's rural school districts to have two different job classifications in the same school district, to travel a farther distance to and from school or to be at school for less than the standard five day school week. Beyond these differences, classified school employees in rural districts are often required to absorb duties that are outside their job description(s) to ensure the successful functioning of the day-to-day operations of the school.

OSEA intends to engage as a stakeholder in the work of the Task Force to ensure these educators' perspective is also considered and urges the committees' support of HB 4051.

Thank you,
Soren Metzger