



10636 NE Prescott Street  
Portland, Oregon 97220  
t: 503.408.2100  
f: 503.408.2140  
www.parkrose.k12.or.us

Dr. Karen Fischer Gray,  
*Superintendent*

*Parkrose School District is an equal  
opportunity educator and employer.*

TO: House Committee on Business and Labor  
FROM: Dr. Karen Gray, Superintendent, Parkrose School District  
DATE: February 12, 2018  
RE: HB 4113

Chair Holvey, Members of the Committee:

As Superintendent of Parkrose School District, I am writing you with serious concerns about the potential impact of HB 4113 on my students.

As you are aware, Oregon's education budget is already strapped. We make tough decisions everyday about how best to serve our students with the dollars we have. Over the years in Parkrose, we have worked closely with our teachers and staff to make joint decisions about class sizes. These discussions were not required; they came about from mutual concern by all parties. And that is how these conversations should take place, driven at the local level by the individuals with the best understanding of the community and its specific needs and challenges – not due to a requirement from the State.

During our last contract negotiation with our Parkrose Faculty Association (representing certified teachers/specialists), we received a request for mandatory bargaining over class size which included the costs. This was spring 2016. The district costed out the impacts of that request for decreasing class size (which in Parkrose is not unduly large-elementary 24.4 to 1, middle school 26 to 1 and high school 27 to 1). The cost for only one classification of certified educator was over \$1,000,000! So we would have to cut our already too short school year by more than 10 days just to pay for one classification of teacher in Parkrose. They quickly dropped the request. In addition, Parkrose has successfully had a "Class Size Committee" written into its contract for years. When issues arise, we bring a team together and talk about it and resolve the issues mutually and to the best of our ability. So far, it's working.

Class size is already an allowable component of bargaining (some districts have built it into their contracts) and this is how it should remain. Statewide mandates – without attached funding – hamstringing the ability of local communities to determine the best use of their dollars for their students. Please consider the unnecessary financial burden put on schools if this bill passes. If OEA's point in bringing this up again is to make sure that the Legislature doesn't give up on funding education at an adequate and stable rate, then I totally understand that. Let us first have the funding conversation before we add additional requirements.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen F. Gray".

Dr. Karen Fischer Gray

Superintendent

Parkrose SD

Chair, Oregon Ed Equity Group

2018 Superintendent of the Year



*Every child reads, thinks critically, and graduates ready for  
college and career.*