



**Clackamas Education**  
SERVICE DISTRICT

TO: Senate Committee on Education  
FROM: Jada Rupley, Superintendent, Clackamas Education Service District  
DATE: February 26, 2018  
SUBJECT: HB 4044

Chair Roblan, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for giving attention to such a critical issue as teacher recruitment and retention, particularly for our most vulnerable students. Clackamas Education Service District supports HB 4044 with its amendment to support educators supporting students with disabilities.

In addition to providing regional support to Clackamas County school districts, we serve 1,400 students in early intervention and early childhood special education, 270 children in Head Start preschool classrooms, and 250 students in school-age special education. Teachers are the number one in-school influence on student achievement, and we know gaps and high turnover will negatively affect the children we serve.

We struggle to recruit and retain the highly qualified staff we need at Clackamas ESD, especially special education teachers and bilingual educators. We compete for teachers with neighboring Washington State, where entry level teaching salaries are significantly higher. And it shows. In February, and we still have open teaching positions for this year.

Like hiring, retention is similarly problematic, and in Oregon, teacher turnover costs our state \$40 million a year.<sup>1</sup> Mentor programs work to reduce teacher attrition rates, and are particularly important for the classrooms that serve the highest need students. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to find mentors for the specialized positions that serve our highest need students.

Oregon's network of education service districts are uniquely positioned to develop regional mentoring models, and Clackamas ESD supports the potential partnership in a group whose parallel focus could address challenges in hiring and retaining quality educators. I would look forward to an opportunity to work in concert to adequately staff our schools, support our teachers and serve our students.

Jada Rupley,  
Superintendent  
Clackamas Education Service District

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<sup>1</sup> *Fast Facts: Mentoring Retention.*  
<http://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/mentoring/Documents/mentoringfastfacts3retention.pdf>