



July 22, 2020

The Honorable Lew Frederick
The Honorable Susan McLain
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
900 Court St. NE, Room H-178
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for STEM Hub Network and STEM Innovation Grants

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain,

On behalf of the Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition, which represents more than seventy employers, business and labor organizations, I'd like to express my appreciation for your support for Career Technical Education (CTE) and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and urge your continued investment in the Oregon STEM Hub Network and STEM Innovation Grant program.

As the chair of the Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition and as President and CEO of Pacific Power, I know firsthand the importance of providing students the educational and career opportunities CTE and STEM offer as they work to build a brighter future for themselves.

As communities across Oregon grapple with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis has only highlighted the critical need for community-based, collaborative organizations, like STEM Hubs, and the type of engaging, hands-on, project-based learning that is at the core of STEM education.

With schools closed and districts, educators, parents, and students adapting to statewide distance learning, STEM Hubs are stepping up:

- They are developing and sharing at-home STEM learning activities, organizing virtual field trips, internships and learning opportunities with local employers, and providing online professional development for educators.
- They are working with their regional partners to increase access for families to high quality learning materials by making these materials available at food distribution sites.

Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition
Oregon Business Council
1100 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1608
Portland, OR 97204

- They are redeploying the 3D printers from their maker spaces to produce personal protective equipment.

This type of community-based, nimble response is nothing new for STEM Hubs. It is what they do day in and day out, year-round.

Further, the expected lasting economic impact of COVID-19 means that now, more than ever, young Oregonians need STEM education. The skills and mindsets developed through STEM – problem solving, critical thinking, adaptability, innovation and design thinking – are exactly the skills that will help our young people thrive in an uncertain economy, and fuel Oregon’s economic engines.

As our students, teachers and the economy continue to navigate these challenging times, the Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition urges protection of the current investment in the STEM Hub Network and STEM innovation grant program and looks forward to continued collaboration with you to achieve Oregon’s education goals.

Thank you for your leadership during these extraordinary times.

Sincerely,



Stefan Bird
Chair, Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition

cc: Senator Arnie Roblan
Senator Chuck Thomsen
Representative Teresa Alonzo Leon
Representative Mark Meek
Representative Mike Nearman
Representative Carl Wilson

The Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition is an initiative of the Oregon Business Council. For more information, please contact Kyle Ritchey-Noll at kritcheynoll@orbusinesscouncil.org, or visit the CTE-STEM Employer Coalition website: <http://orbusinesscouncil.org/our-work/cte-stem-coalition>

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1100 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1608
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Stand for Children is a non-profit education advocacy organization focused on ensuring all students receive a high-quality and relevant education – especially those whose boundless potential is overlooked and under-tapped because of their skin color, zip code, first language, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability status.

July 24, 2020

Dear Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, and members of the Joint Education Subcommittee on Ways and Means,

During this uncertain and tumultuous time, we appreciate the work of the tri-chairs and your efforts in trying to make the education budget as whole as possible, while prioritizing education investments that support our historically and currently underserved communities.

With that, we are encouraged to see the following investments highlighted in the budget framework:

1. \$566 million dedicated to the Student Success Act which breaks down to –
 - a. \$246 million for the Statewide Education Initiatives Account – where \$133 million of that will be used to fund Measure 98 in full allowing districts to continue focus on improving and expanding programs and supports related to dropout prevention, career and technical education, and college level opportunities. The Statewide Initiatives Account will also provide funding for the statewide equity initiatives (includes statewide success plans for Black students, American Indian/Alaska Native students, and Latino/a/x students), diversifying the educator workforce, and expansion of school meals.
 - b. \$170 million for the Early Learning Account. This amount will cover most of the original funding intended for early learning programs in the Student Success Act.
 - c. \$150 million for the Student Investment Account, with an emphasis on mental health programs and supports.
2. Funding maintained for the Community College and Public University Support Fund, as well as the Oregon Opportunity Grant.

These are critical investments that must be protected and continued.

As you work to rebalance the education budget, we would like to echo support for maintaining funding for the Early Learning Hubs, Healthy Families Program, Child Care Networks and Farm-to-School Program.

We also want to share our feedback around this portion of the budget framework (see page 4.)

Various grant-in-aid programs are reduced or eliminated for which school districts can use High School Success Fund resources to backfill if they so prioritize, including reductions to Regional Promise grants, Accelerated Learning Opportunities, STEM/CTE programs, and chronic absenteeism grants.



Stand for Children is a non-profit education advocacy organization focused on ensuring all students receive a high-quality and relevant education – especially those whose boundless potential is overlooked and under-tapped because of their skin color, zip code, first language, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability status.

We recognize the challenges that come with rebalancing the budget, and that in certain circumstances consolidating programs can make sense. With that, we are concerned that reducing or eliminating these programs may cause a disruption in continuity of programming, services, and supports for students, especially students from our historically and currently underserved communities. Our hope is that before determinations are made, we can have a robust discussion around their potential impacts.

We know this is just the beginning of the process and look forward to working with you more on the education budget details.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Parasa Chanramy". The signature is stylized with loops and is positioned above the printed name.

Parasa Chanramy
Policy & Implementation Director
Stand for Children Oregon

From: [Kimberly Strong](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: In Support of Continued Funding for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:20:59 AM

I am writing in support of grant funding for reducing chronic absenteeism. I have been doing this work for the last two years and find it essential to our education improvement in Oregon.

In addition to the numerous supports Capacity Builders are known for providing on a regular basis, as schools shifted to distance learning this spring, Capacity Builders stepped up to answer their calls for guidance and assistance immediately. This included organizing a multi-organization, state-wide listening session that was rooted in equity, during which students from across the state were given a platform to inform educators and educational leaders on their experiences with distance learning. This event would not have been possible without the collaboration of three different regions under Capacity Builder leadership. This is just one example of the extensive network that Capacity Builders have created over the last three years and how they can operationalize quickly and efficiently.

When schools were calling for support in defining and improving online engagement, capacity builders took the call and created multi-tiered, systematic tools to do just that. Capacity builders have been able to guide districts in leading with care and connection, in prioritizing relationships, and in approaching families with empathy and resource during these challenging times. When teachers and counselors were calling out for concrete and immediate professional development to help them teach their students, my friend in Eastern Oregon answered that call by setting up weekly virtual gatherings for anyone who wanted to learn from each other and support each other. THIS is the work we in education want to elevate right now, and it is the work that our attendance Capacity Builders have been carrying out not just during the pandemic, but for the two years before it as well.

This IS the important work of education, pandemic or not. And it would be short-sighted to eliminate it.

Kimberly Strong

Regional Coordinator for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism

[High Desert ESD](#)

(541) 693-5786 Office

(541)639-9799 Cell

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers





Oregon AFSCME Remarks on proposed budget cuts to Early Learning and Child Care

July 27, 2020

Dear Co-chairs Frederick and McLain and members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education,

Oregon AFSCME Council 75 represents many people who work in or who are beneficiaries of the critical programs whose budgets you have to look to possibly cut. We recognize that you all don't like the choices that you are facing as too many of our public services, have long been underfunded. During testimony on Thursday, I heard many call for the need to stabilize child care and early education and I echo that advocacy.

The care providers, teachers and staff in Early Learning have long been overlooked as professionals in our education system. We have certainly made strides over the last few years, including the investments made by the legislature in the 2019 session through the Student Success Act. The seemingly small cuts to the Child Care Focus Networks, Reduction in Capacity Building, Reduction to funding for the Hubs, and reduced Funding in Healthy Families will have real impacts on providers and the kids and families they serve.

One of the tensions in our efforts to ensure quality in early education and child care is the unaffordability and inaccessibility - both in time and availability of classes – for providers. The Child Care Focus Networks is one support in the professional development structure to help child care and early learning providers get access to much needed supports and professional development. AFSCME Local 132, Child Care Providers president Autumn David relayed to me that cuts to the program would most likely negatively impact our providers in the rural areas of our state such as Eastern Oregon where community based professional development is already scarce.

The reduction in capacity building – if I'm understanding "capacity" correctly – will hamper our abilities as a state to quickly rebuild our child care system that is crumbling under the pressures brought on by the COVID pandemic. As you are all well aware, Oregon was already a child care desert for infant and toddler care with many of our counties a child care desert for all ages. COVID and the additional health and safety standards, reduced number of kids allowed in care with limited group numbers have increased costs for our providers. While by definition many child care providers, in-home and centers, are for profit, the margins are slim if they exist at all and have been wiped out. As I dropped off my youngest child today, I got my report on how many calls they had received from parents or other providers asking if they have room for a child because their program is closing. Sadly a regular occurrence that was once rare. While building capacity may seem impossible at the moment,



Oregon AFSCME Remarks on proposed budget cuts to Early Learning and Child Care

maintaining capacity is essential without that, our statewide child care desert for infant and toddlers will certainly expand to preschool and school aged as well.

Healthy Families is another area of intervention and prevention that helps give families much needed tools in parenting and wrap around supports. While the work might look different right now, it is certainly worth every effort to help support families who may otherwise need more costly interventions without this program.

While the proposed cuts may seem small the impact downstream will be felt in a much bigger way and we ask that you keep in mind the really impact to these already underfunded yet incredibly important services. We look forward to working with you to find solutions to these difficult problems.

Thank you for your continued work.

Respectfully submitted by Eva Rippeteau, political coordinator, Oregon AFSCME Council 75



To: Senator Betsy Johnson
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Representative Dan Rayfield
Senator Lew Frederick
Representative Susan McLain

Cc: House Speaker Tina Kotek
Senate President Peter Courtney

Re: Special Session Priorities

Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020

From: Children's Institute

Distinguished Oregon Legislators,

For more than 15 years, Children's Institute has advocated for a future where a child's potential is not limited by their race, income, disability, home language, or zip code. We now face unprecedented times, as the coronavirus pandemic has severely impacted our state's public health, education, and social support systems.

Though young children have not contracted COVID-19 in large numbers, [real-time research](#) is showing that many are suffering disproportionate impacts due to multiple and interrelated economic, educational, health, and social challenges created by the pandemic. Young children in low-income families and those impacted by systemic racism are struggling the most.

While we recognize that Oregon faces a \$2.7 billion shortfall in the current budget, we ask you to hold fast to your commitment to the bold and visionary promise made to young children in 2019. Why?

The children now being born represent the most racially and ethnically diverse generation of Oregonians since our state's founding. They will enter kindergarten in just five short years, just as Oregon is likely emerging from the depths of a recession caused by this pandemic.

Despite Oregon's increasing racial and cultural diversity, thousands of young children lack access to early learning opportunities that meet their cultural and linguistic needs. We do not have enough early care and education programs to meet the needs of the low-income children who are currently eligible to participate. For too many children, opportunity and achievement gaps are present before kindergarten and continue to widen throughout their K-12 years. Current [educational and economic analysis](#) is predicting that the pace of growing achievement gaps will only quicken as a result of the pandemic.

Even before COVID-19, 40 percent of Black children, 34 percent of Latino children, 31 percent of Native children and 20 percent of all children in Oregon were [living in households below the federal poverty level](#), with [rural poverty rates higher](#) than in urban areas.

That means now, more than ever, we must act to close opportunity gaps for our youngest learners, and proactively work to reverse anticipated learning losses. Specifically, we ask you to:

- Protect the 20 percent commitment to early childhood made in the Student Success Act, and fully fund the investments made in young children in the 2019 session.
- Protect investments in early childhood systems and programs funded in the General Fund, including the Early Learning Hubs, Focused Child Care Networks, Healthy Families Oregon, and Employment Related Day Care. These are also critical investments for children of color and children in low-income families.
- Create a budget decision-making process that is inclusive of parents and early childhood providers — those most impacted by your decisions.

These investments are an important first step in building a system that ensures young children of all backgrounds in Oregon can thrive. We know that you share this vision with us, and we thank you for your continued work and leadership in service of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Swati Adarkar

President & CEO
Children's Institute

Ken Thrasher

Retired CEO
Fred Meyer & Compli

Bob Harding

President, Chief Operating Officer
Pacific West Bank

Mary Louise McClintock

Senior Education Strategy & Policy Advisor
Oregon Community Foundation

Sue Miller

Chair
Early Learning Council



July 22, 2020

Joint Ways and Means Education Subcommittee
900 Court Street
Room H-178
Salem, Oregon 97301

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for your leadership during these challenging times. Last year, the Oregon legislature passed historic legislation that included record levels of funding for early learning programs, including the expansion of the Oregon Pre-Kindergarten Program (OPK). Over time, those investments will help many families and children, who come from different backgrounds, and otherwise would not have access to early learning programs and the basic services we provide.

We strongly support the recommendations made in the Co-Chairs budget that protects the Early Learning Account and the OPK program from budget cuts. We greatly appreciate the work done to date by this subcommittee to keep programs fully funded amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As budget discussions continue, we look forward to working with you to preserve the critical investments that have been made in early learning with the passage of the Student Success Act.

If across the board agency reductions were enacted, OPK programs would have been hit especially hard. An estimated 1,300 children and their families would not have been served by our programs and any expansion of services would not have been able to move forward. This would have a drastic impact on low-income Oregonians who rely on the critical services local Head Start programs provide.

Children eligible for OPK come from diverse families with different backgrounds. Not all of our children speak English. Our programs provide essential services to children from communities of color, as well as lower income families living in urban and rural communities. We work and help families with children who have special needs. Generally, families eligible for our programs earn less than 100% of the federal poverty level, are currently homeless, in foster care or from families receiving TANF or SSI benefits.

During these trying times, more parents and families will need immediate help. We've seen record levels of unemployment and individuals filing for unemployment insurance and hundreds of thousands of Oregonians out of work as a result of COVID-19. This pandemic has

created an enormous demand on the essential services our programs provide – and we are doing our best to help those families in most need – all across the state.

Across the state, Head Start programs are working to help where they can. Local Head Start programs and employees are providing emergency child care for front line workers with children up to 5 years of age. Programs are distributing food boxes and learning kits to families in need. There are a lot of great examples of Head Start programs stepping up to help support their communities and Oregon's most vulnerable families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our programs are providing summer learning – and preparing to move forward with school in the fall in compliance with safety regulations recommended and required by the Early Learning Division. It is critical that programs continue to offer, as we serve a growing population of families who have historically relied on the services Head Start programs provide.

As you know, Head Start programs support critical language, literacy, and emotional development for 3-4-year-olds and prepare them for entry into kindergarten. Programs help educate children, parents, and connect them with other vital social services, such as dental and health care. OPK programs provide support for parents and give them the tools they need to help care for their child. Programs provide students with breakfast and lunch, and a safe environment to learn and play during the day.

Head Start has a track record of success. Children who attend OPK are more likely to read by third grade, attend college, and receive a post-secondary degree. We believe everyone, regardless of their race, religion, or income level should be given opportunities to succeed.

We recognize that today's hearing is a step in the process, and that until the pandemic has ended the state will face ongoing budget concerns. We are committed to working with you and your staff, and the Early Learning Division, to keep our programs running so we can provide essential services that families impacted by COVID-19 so desperately need.

Thanks again for your leadership during such difficult and trying times and for your continued support of early learning programs. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,



Donna Schnitker

President, Oregon Head Start Association

July 22, 2020

Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Room H-178
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Continued Funding of Chronic Absenteeism Grant

Dear Committee Members:

It would be a simple mistake to make to believe that work around chronic absenteeism is suddenly no longer relevant, or greatly diminished in importance in the wake of a global pandemic. Granted, “Every Day Matters” may not be the exact message we wish to elevate right now. But it is a terrible injustice to assume that schools no longer require the assistance of knowledgeable guides to help them navigate the changes the pandemic has wrought upon our educational systems.

In fact, eliminating the funding for the chronic absenteeism grant would take away valuable capacity building guidance and assistance when Oregon needs it the most. Chronic absenteeism remains a leading indicator of inequity, and we learned much about the inequities within our schools as schools moved to distance learning last spring. Schools scrambled to fill in the holes families faced in trying to support the ongoing education of their children. It was our chronic absenteeism capacity builders who helped connect districts with businesses and non-profit organizations to bridge the digital divide. It was our capacity builders who built networks for our teachers, administrators, and counselors to give them a forum to exchange ideas on distance learning, discuss better ways to engage students and families, and share community resources for families struggling to make ends meet.

This coming year, these inequities remain, as does the need for schools to find supportive solutions for them. Additionally, our capacity building expertise will be lost in helping schools create the Ways of Being and Doing necessary for creating welcoming, more inclusive environments. Our expertise in training the administrators of our schools in tiered supportive systems that identify students who need more support early in order to increase their chances of experiencing success and satisfaction will be lost. Our expertise in supporting schools in the implementation of continuous improvement science and associated processes will be a void. Our expertise in training and supporting schools in the implementation of student voice will be sorely missed in a time when a pandemic and the still-raging Black Lives Matter protests make it more important than ever. And our expertise at connecting our schools and districts in communities of practice where they have the opportunity to discuss one another’s successes and barriers will cease to exist.

You see, the capacity builders for chronic absenteeism serve a very different role than the funds allotted through the Student Success Act. One can certainly be forgiven for conflating the two. On paper they sound like a redundancy. However, the capacity builders truly understand *how* to use the resources provided in the Student Investment Account to truly impact the school’s ability to create environments where students *want* to be there, and students who need support to be there consistently can get it. The chronic absenteeism capacity builders aren’t just experts in regular attendance, we are school improvement experts. We have been trained, and, in turn, train schools how to create welcoming,

inclusive, supportive environments that maximize their available supports and streamline their processes to ensure that all students acquire the support they need to be successful and satisfied in school.

In our two years as capacity builders, we have elevated the importance of student voice, guided schools in the analysis of their systems and their effectiveness, helped them implement teaming around data to identify students in need early, and organized data teams around equity. Two of our ESDs have created dashboards under our direction that have become the models for future dashboards around the Student Investment Account indicators. We have hosted trainings in Parent Teacher Home Visits, family, educator and student engagement through climate surveys, mentoring programs, restorative practices, and social emotional learning programs. We have connected McKinney Vento coordinators in our various districts, and developed a guide on supporting some of our most vulnerable populations, such as our youth navigating homelessness. And there is so much left to do.

Our schools greatly value the networks we have created. Our superintendents and district personnel value the support we have provided. And we have created robust teams for improvement in joining our Student Success Act liaisons and our Regional Educator Network colleagues. Our families need the supports that we have built and continue to build now more than ever. I heartily recommend that you leave in place the funding for the chronic absenteeism grant.

Sincerely,

Ross Davis

Regional Capacity Builder

Linn, Benton, Lincoln, and Lane Counties

To Whom It May Concern:

I am saddened to hear that the funding/support for the Every Day Matters work is being considered not important enough to fund.

Now, more than ever, our students and families who are disproportionately disadvantaged deserve the support that has come with the Every Day Matters work.

Going into this coming year (with the uncertainty COVID 19 has afforded us) without the social-emotional resources, the community connections resources, and the care and connection facilitations that the Every Day Matters Department has provided for the past several years is scary and disappointing.

Now, more than ever, our students and families deserve, need, and depend on this great work that the Every Day Matters department has provided.

Respectfully,

Concerned parent, disappointed community member, civil rights advocate, and enthusiastically optimistic educator in the great State of Oregon.

[Landon Braden](#)

In addition to the numerous supports Capacity Builders are known for providing on a regular basis, as schools shifted to distance learning this spring, Capacity Builders stepped up to answer their calls for guidance and assistance immediately. This included organizing a multi-organization, state-wide listening session that was rooted in equity, during which students from across the state were given a platform to inform educators and educational leaders on their experiences with distance learning. This event would not have been possible without the collaboration of three different regions under Capacity Builder leadership. This is just one example of the extensive network that Capacity Builders have created over the last three years and how they can operationalize quickly and efficiently.

When schools were calling for support in defining and improving online engagement, capacity builders took the call and created multi-tiered, systematic tools to do just that. Capacity builders have been able to guide districts in leading with care and connection, in prioritizing relationships, and in approaching families with empathy and resource during these challenging times. THIS is the work we in education want to elevate right now, and it is the work that our attendance Capacity Builders have been carrying out not just during the pandemic, but for the two years before it as well.

This IS the important work of education, pandemic or not. And it would be short-sighted to eliminate it.

- Kimberly Strong
High Desert ESD

I submit this letter in support for continuance of the Chronic Absenteeism Grant. At this time, we find ourselves in uncharted territory in the midst of a global pandemic. We, as capacity builders, educators, administrators, parents, and concerned stakeholders have learned even more over the past 5 months just how important our roles are for student engagement, creating a culture of care, and providing meaningful, relevant educational opportunities for our students. As schools across Oregon scrambled to meet the needs of all of their students during Distance Learning for All, it became clear that inequities still exist for so many of our students and their families. Chronic absenteeism coordinators and their program partners (Instructional Services, Regional Educator Network, CTE, ELL, SSA) answered the call for support, working tirelessly to connect networks of counselors, educators, and administrators in an effort to bridge the gap of those inequities.

As we face so many challenges moving forward, it is more important than ever to find supportive solutions to filling inequity gaps. Capacity builders do just that. For the past two years, capacity building teams have offered expertise and training in tiered support systems, implementation of student voice, data translation, connection networks and problem-solving engagement barriers for the schools within their regions. Strong relationships have been formed between capacity builders, administrators and educators to this point, but there is much more work that needs to be done.

Again, it is more important than ever that student engagement and creating a culture of care environment take a leading role in combating education equity gaps. Please consider this recommendation to continue the Chronic Absenteeism grant funding into the 2020-2021 school year.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrissy Nelson
Regional Capacity Builder
Serving Morrow, Baker, Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa Counties



July 23, 2020
Oregon State Legislature
Joint Interim Committee on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Room H-178
Salem, OR. 97301

College Board Testimony in Support of Retaining PSAT Funding

Good morning Education Subcommittee Co-Chairs McClain & Frederick and Joint Ways & Means Committee Members. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on proposed budget cuts. My name is Terry Whitney and I represent the College Board in Oregon in my role as Senior Director, State Government Relations.

Founded in 1900 to expand access to higher education, the College Board is a mission-driven not for profit organization that connects students to college and career success and opportunity. Today our membership is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success—including the SAT and the Advanced Placement (AP) Program . The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, especially first-generation students, educators, and schools.

Across our nation and in Oregon, state and local education leaders are working tirelessly to prepare for the next academic school year. Among the many decisions they must consider is when and how to assess student learning. On July 20, CCSSO Executive Director Carissa Moffat Miller issued the following statement on the importance of high-quality assessments in our education system and how states are working to meet the needs of students in this unprecedented year.

“The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) believes high-quality assessments are one crucial way to measure student learning, identify inequities, and drive the right supports for students. Exactly how

those assessments are given may look different in this current environment, and states are working hard to make plans to best meet the needs of students in their state in the 2020-21 school year.

“CCSSO has long supported and advocated for high-quality annual assessments as one important tool among many to drive equitable outcomes for all students. Robust, meaningful assessments provide a consistent measure to show how students are performing, where progress is being made, or which students need additional supports. These assessments come in many forms to allow schools, districts, and states to gather critical information on student learning.”

The PSAT is one of these assessments that many students and educators have come to rely on to determine individual strengths and weaknesses while students are progressing through their secondary education experience. In 2007, the legislature had the foresight to adopt legislation directing the Oregon Department of Education to “contract with a nonprofit entity to administer a nationally normed assessment, in collaboration with the department, to all students in grade 10 who are enrolled in a public school.” (ORS 329.488 Nationally Normed Assessment)

The legislature took this bold action to continue building a statewide college-going culture and to assist parents and educators with key information on individual student academic needs.

I would like to take a moment to outline to the committee the potential impacts that would result in the loss of PSAT funding to participating school districts:

- The loss of a normed national assessment that provides students, families and educators with a methodology to determine the college and career readiness of public-school students
- The inability for public institutions of higher education and scholarship organizations to use Student Search Service to reach out to potential students about opportunities at Oregon public and private colleges and universities
- The loss of the ability for schools and districts to use of PSAT scores to identify students with “AP Potential,”—in other words, students with the potential to succeed in Advanced Placement courses.

Through the use of PSAT scores, AP Potential helps more students take challenging college-level coursework in high school that prepares them for post-secondary education.

Additionally, in 2019 the legislature enacted a new revised AP credit policy for Oregon public colleges and universities, providing more opportunity for students to earn college credit through their successful performance on AP Exams, which also plays a key role in providing tuition cost savings for Oregon's students and families.

In fact, in May 2019, Oregon public and private high school students took a total of 21,386 AP Exams that resulted in scores of 3, 4, or 5. Based on students' opportunity to earn at least 3 college credits for each AP Exam score of 3 or higher, this represents an estimated 64,158 college credits. At an average rate of \$374 per credit hour, the total potential cost savings for the state's students and families was nearly \$24 million.¹

All of these negative impacts from the potential loss of statewide PSAT funding would hit low-income and historically underrepresented communities the hardest, reducing exposure to educational advancement opportunities for the students who need it most.

In closing, we respectfully request that as you determine cuts to sustain the State School Fund that you remember why you directed ODE to conduct a 10th-grade assessment RFP and the potential impact to students in the 162 school districts statewide that provided PSAT to their students in 2019.

Thank you,

Terry N. Whitney

Senior Director, State Government Relations

TWhitney@collegeboard.org

202-591-5546

¹ These estimates are based on Table 5 of the 2019 College Board report, *Trends in College Pricing*. This report indicates that the average in-state tuition and fees at Oregon public four-year colleges is \$11,220 per year or \$374 per credit, assuming 30 credits were taken by a full-time student. These estimates also assume that all of the 21,386 exams taken in Oregon were applied toward college credit.



Oregon PTA testimony for Joint Subcommittee on Education 7/23/2020

Oregon PTA support for education budget rebalance plan

We appreciate and support the use of available revenue and education stability funds to protect the \$9 billion education budget, continue M98 support and to advance equity plans to support students from diverse backgrounds and to grow our own diversified work force. We support investments in special education, nutrition and early intervention programs. Student Success investments in mental health and wrap around care are critical. Oregon PTA supports the blue print for education and support programs.

Hybrid or Off Campus School Year: need for childcare is growing more important

There is a growing awareness that the virus infections in parts of Oregon may make it nearly impossible to bring students and staff safely back into on site education. Many children will be left home while the adults in their families are working in essential and financially necessary employment to keep families housed and fed. Oregon PTA shares the concerns raised in testimony before the committee about a plan for child care for children who will otherwise be left alone or under the care of other children.

We have talked with families who are forced to leave kids alone or in difficult situations with limited support for school work as well as who is caring for the children. The pressure on those families is intense as the plans for fall schooling are still difficult to know and could be changed if/when a virus outbreak occurs. Issues of equity and access are our concern. We must have an affordable childcare plan for all who need it. State support will be needed to keep our children safe and engaged.

Equitable state wide access to childcare, food and academic support critical to Oregon's future

Oregon PTA joins teachers, school staff, community and volunteers as well as care giving adults and families in urging support for childcare particularly for those children who are in households likely to not be able to afford or access child care.

Our primary concern is that children and youth of Oregon know that they will be safe during the day and have the support necessary to make distance or online learning work for all Oregon children. The virus and economic crisis costs should not be unduly carried by our Oregon children and their families.

Thank you for the wise plan to rebalance our state budget. Please stretch our resources a bit more and make sure all children have a safe and supportive option when school is not available.

Kristi Dille Oregon PTA president



To: Education subcommittee, Joint Committee on Ways and Means
From: Lori Sattenspiel, Legislative Services Director
Re: Principles for the Second Special Session
Date: July 23, 2020

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Chairs McLain and Frederick, member of the subcommittee:

On behalf of more than 1400 locally elected board members from 197 public school districts and 19 Education Service Districts, I write in support of the funding alterations contained in the Co-Chairs principles for the Second Special Session of 2020.

The principles document demonstrates a legislative commitment to prioritize public education, first and foremost by keeping the State School Fund whole at a \$9 billion allocation for the duration of the biennium. This commitment to education at a time of budget crisis will provide a source of stability for students and families across Oregon.

This budget also invests in critical statewide programs, including maintaining full funding for the High School Success Fund (Ballot Measure 98), full funding for statewide early learning initiatives as part of the Student Success Act, and partial funding for the Student Investment Account portions of the Student Success Act.

This budget document demonstrates that legislative leaders have learned lessons from the recent past. One lesson was to avoid devastating cuts to public education, like those that were enacted as a result of the Great Recession of 2008. Public education in Oregon has still not recovered fully. Another lesson comes from the work of the Joint Committee on Student Success which heard overwhelmingly that equity, safety, and student mental health were the areas to prioritize. This document demonstrates those lessons learned, and the legislature deserves a commendation for attempting to keep public education whole.



W&M Education Sub Committee Testimony

7.23.2020 – Jody Wisner

The \$150 million moved from Student Success to backfill the education budget in today's proposal is at crosshairs with the goals of the Student Success law. When enacted, the CAT revenue was designed as new, separate, and additional money for education and early childhood, not as backfill for an inadequate General Fund allocation. Now is not the time to do less for high risk kids, STEM, dropout prevention, or early childhood. And there is no reason to do so.

There are \$250 million dollars of new CARES Act tax breaks that will stay in the pockets of rich taxpayers, because you do not have before you in the coming special session a bill to disconnect from four CARES Act provisions that will enrich the already rich at the expense of these children. Legislators need to act now, before 2020 taxes are filed to disconnect from these provisions.

One of those provisions will ONLY benefit Oregon couples with more than half a million dollars of 2020 income, the average of whom will actually have more than \$4 million of 2020 income. It changes the loss limitation law. Will you cut \$90 million in support for kids to help these taxpayers retain more income?

Another provision lets taxpayers use their current (2020) losses to reduce taxes in previous years, going back to 2013, and receive checks from DOR for the taxes they owed and paid in the past. This provision will be a \$91 million revenue loss. The third provision moves the limit on how much business interest expense a taxpayer can deduct in a single year at a GF cost of \$44 million. ([These are LRO numbers](#)).

Now, "charitable giving" sounds good, better than business interest expense or net operating loss. But the CARES Act charitable giving provisions are also mostly designed for the wealthy. We wonder if the one for "regular folks" was designed to mask the tax benefits for wealthy donors.

Fifty percent of Oregonians do not itemize on their Oregon taxes. Under the CARES Act, they will be able to claim \$300 of charitable giving in addition to their standard deduction, reducing their taxes by no more than \$30. That \$30 is in sharp contrast to the expected tax filer savings of \$1.4 million each using the loss limitation provision.

Unfortunately, this provision is unlikely to actually increase charitable giving. Few taxpayers even know about this \$300 deduction. They will likely learn about it in 2021 when they prepare to file their taxes. They will then claim whatever donations they had made during the year, at a GF cost of \$7.5 million.

For the wealthy and for corporations, giving limits were expanded by CARES. The benefit for individuals goes to those who can afford to give non-profits more than 60% of their 2020 income. Under CARES, they can donate 100% -- and owe no Oregon or federal taxes. Corporations get an

increase in their limit from 10% to 25% of income. Eliminate our connection to this CARES Act provision, and the wealthy will still get Oregon tax deductions when they give away up to 60% of their income, as will corporations when they donate 10% of income. The cost of these changes is estimated at \$17.5 million, and the donations can stay in Oregon, or go anywhere else.

We urge you to insist that Oregon disconnect from these four elements of the CARES Act – now. Filing season will be open when you meet for the 2021 session, and we've rarely seen legislators enact retroactive tax law that isn't a benefit for the affected taxpayers. The General Fund needs this \$250 million this biennium and the smaller amounts in coming biennia to avoid the budget cuts you are facing and to address the expanded needs brought on by COVID. These are \$250 million in taxes that were owned until changes were slipped into the law in March. They are changes that increase inequality, and hamper your ability to serve the vulnerable.

You have a choice. Hurt our kids by making cuts, while cutting checks to the wealthiest, or not. What will you decide?

We read the bills and follow the money



W&M Education Subcommittee

Jody Wiser: Spoken Testimony – 7.23.2020

When enacted, the CAT revenue was set up as NEW revenue, separate from the General Fund, for NEW spending for education and early childhood.

Thus, the \$150 million moved from Student Success to backfill the education budget in today's proposal is at crosshairs with the promises of the Student Success law, it takes \$150 from new programs for high risk kids, mental health and early childhood and funds old ones.

And there is no reason to do so.

There are about 12 tax provisions in the CARES Act. We're concerned about the first 4 listed in the LRO document linked in my written testimony. They total \$250 million dollars of new tax breaks snuck into the CARES Act, \$250 million that will stay in the pockets of the already rich taxpayers, **unless you disconnect.**

Legislators need to act now, before 2020 taxes are filed to disconnect from these provisions. The legislature has no habit of taking tax breaks away from the wealthy retroactively. So this is work for 2020. This is \$250 of 2020 taxes, there are additional, smaller amounts lost in out biennia.

This issue is not just a revenue issue. It is also a wealthy divide issue, and an issue for the People of Color Caucus.

The benefits of these four measures will overwhelmingly go the very wealthy, and they are overwhelmingly white.

You have a choice. Hurt our kids by making cuts, and cut checks to the wealthiest, or disconnect. Will you insist that these new tax breaks, created by Congress in March of this year, be addressed, this year?



Coalition of Oregon School Administrators
707 13th Street SE, Ste. 100
Salem, Oregon 97301
Phone 503-581-3141
www.cosa.k12.or.us

7/22/2019

TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Education

FR: Morgan Allen, COSA

RE: Testimony regarding Co-Chair Budget Rebalance Plan for ODE, the State School Fund, and the Student Success Act

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, and members of the Committee

This is a crisis moment for our schools and our students. There is little doubt that the upcoming 2020-21 school year is likely be the most challenging in Oregon's history. Even as superintendents, principals and educators across the state wrestle with planning for the upcoming school year, the virus continues to set the agenda. And in many of our school districts, reopening schools in person or through distance learning continues to be hotly debated.

But not up for debate is the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on schools and students, particularly our historically underserved and marginalized students, students of color, migrant students, and students navigating poverty. We need the Legislature to step up and protect the historic investments in K-12 made during the 2019 Legislative Session. We know for a fact that it will cost more, not less, to operate schools during this pandemic - for an average-sized school district (roughly 3,600 students), following the Centers for Disease Control guidance for re-opening schools are estimated to cost \$1.7 million next year.

Our members are greatly heartened by the budget framework presented in the Co-Chair Budget Rebalance Plan. By protecting operational budgets provided by the State School Fund and prioritizing equity focused and early learning initiatives statewide with Student Success Act funds, we can help lessen the impacts of COVID-19 on our most vulnerable students and communities.

Our members urge you to implement all of the key recommendations of the budget plan, including:

- Protecting the State School Fund investment of \$9.0 billion by utilizing \$400 million from the Education Stability Fund
- Fully Funding Measure 98 as part of the SSA Statewide Initiatives

- Fully funding the equity focused plans included in the SSA Statewide Initiatives, including the African American/Black Student Success Plan, the Latino/a/x Student Success Plan, and the American Indian/Alaska Native Student Success Plan
- Full funding for Section 48 of the Student Success act to diversify our educator workforce and provide resources for district “Grow Your Own” initiatives
- Providing at least \$150 million in the Student Investment Account (SIA)
- Providing full funding for the expansion of child nutrition programs in the SSA Statewide Initiatives
- Fully funding programs in the Early Childhood Initiatives, including full funding for Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) expansion and the Equity Fund for early learning
- No budget reductions to key special education related grant-in-aid programs managed by ODE (Regional Programs, LTCT, EI/ECSE, etc.)

During the 2019 session, for the first time in the nearly three decades since the passage of Measure 5 in 1990, the Oregon Legislature seized on the convergence of once-in-a-generation conditions and made a transformational investment in our students, our schools, and the future prosperity of Oregonians. Those investments are needed now more than anyone could have ever anticipated to reinforce Oregon’s commitment to equity and continuity of learning for our students.



July 22, 2020

Senator Lew Frederick, Co-Chair
Representative Susan McLain, Co-Chair
Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Legislature

Via email at jwmed.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

ESD Role in Supporting School Districts in the Implementation of the Student Success Act

Dear Senator Frederick and Representative McLain:

Oregon's nineteen education service districts (ESDs) have sincere respect for the work you are doing to balance the State's budget and to prioritize education expenditures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input into that process by highlighting some of the work done by ESDs in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) in the implementation of Oregon's Student Success Act (SSA).

ESDs were written into the Statewide Education Initiatives Account (SIA) section of House Bill 3427 (2019) to provide "technical assistance to school districts in developing, implementing and reviewing a plan for receiving a grant from the SIA". ESDs were also tasked with "coordination with the department (ODE) in administering and providing technical assistance to schools districts, including coordinating coaching programs...". ESDs have embraced this role in providing technical assistance for the SSA work over the past year. Each ESD has hired at least one person to serve as the Student Success Act (SSA) Liaison working both with local districts and with ODE. These ESD liaisons have met weekly with ODE staff assigned to this project since early November and were instrumental in supporting local districts in completion of their SSA plans for submission to ODE by April 15.

The Liaisons played an integral role in assisting districts with understanding the SIA process and application through ongoing communication support tactics including hosting workshops; providing templates, worksheets, and drafting application components; ensuring completion of all required components and adherence to timelines; and, the utilization of an equity lens throughout all stages, all of which resulted in empowerment through clarity for districts as they progressed through the

decision-making process. Technical assistance for data collection included the creation, collection, and analysis of surveys for stakeholders including students, families, and educators, as well as supplying pertinent data collections including 5-year historical data and 5-year trajectory data for identifying disparities and designing longitudinal performance growth targets. Liaisons acted as connectors for districts to community-based organizations, ODE, programs and partners for collaboration, and the community at large. Liaisons also acted as facilitators for community engagement meetings and stakeholder and steering committee meetings. Multiple resources were brought forth by liaisons for consideration and incorporation into district plans including software for engagement, assessment tools and additional sources for support for mental and behavioral health for students.

Funding at the current level would allow ESDs to continue and enhance this work for 2020-21. The focus will shift to technical assistance for implementation of the approved district plans. Liaisons will also be supporting districts with identifying pertinent strategies and additional resources for successful implementation within the new framework for schooling for the 2020-21 year. Over 80% of the SSA Liaisons have taken on the additional role of Reopening Advisor to assist districts with designing their Operational Blueprints for reopening by mirroring procedural steps already developed through the SIA process. It is anticipated that the liaisons will be a critical link in the reopening of schools by providing important and time-sensitive information and clarification to local districts, assisting in the development of learning options aligned with SSA plans, supporting schools in providing opportunities for underrepresented students to access district education models, and support for the use of best practices for learning, student engagement, and assessment in distance or hybrid instructional models.

A small, rural superintendent/principal commented on the value of the ESD SSA Liaisons as follows: *This is the first time that the State of Oregon has provided additional support for small, rural schools in the implementation of required initiatives. For those of us that are small and rural, having this support allows us to solicit feedback and information from our stake holders and develop appropriate plans of action to meet the needs of our students while still performing our jobs within our district.* We urge you to consider maintaining the current level of SSA funding for ESDs for us to continue this work in a high quality, efficient and responsive manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Peterson

Executive Director

From: [Pam Greenough Corrie](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: MHCC written response
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:58:23 AM
Attachments: [Virtual Services Report 7.22.20.pdf](#)
[Virtual Services Report 7.22.20.docx](#)

Mt. Hood Community College Head Start has provided continued support to Head Start families throughout the pandemic. The attached report demonstrates how Head Starts are able to provide services to our most vulnerable children and families. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Pam Greenough Corrie

Head Start/Early Head Start Executive Director
MHCC Child Development & Family Support Programs
Main Office: 503-491-6111. Direct line: 503-491-6117
Pam.Corrie@mhcc.edu



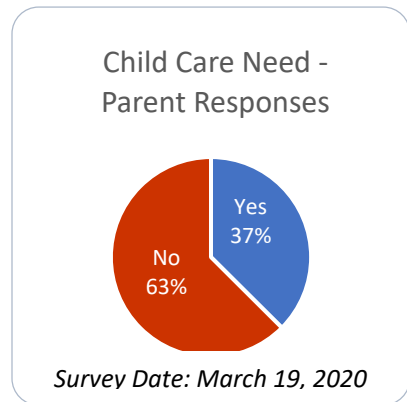
Child Development and Family Support Programs



Transition to Virtual Services – Spring 2020

On Monday, March 16, Mt. Hood Community College’s Child Development and Family Support Programs stopped in-person services to children and families in response to an executive order issued by Oregon Governor Kate Brown on March 11. Initially, our intention was to use the closure time to thoroughly clean our classrooms so that we could safely reopen April 1. Within days we received guidance that reopening April 1 would not yet be safe, so we altered our planning strategy from returning to in-person services to determining how best to support our families and community.

While we were formulating our new service model, we were also gathering information and making plans on how to provide child care for families of essential workers, and how best to support safe operations at child care centers in Multnomah County. We sent a survey to 1,589 parents asking about their child care needs, and received 392 responses. Although we did our best to make planning decisions based on the information we collected, as conditions of the pandemic changed, so did our parents’ support needs. We quickly learned we had to be flexible in our planning.



[CDFS Virtual Services Plan](#)

Spring 2020

To guide our transition to virtual services for our early childhood education programs (Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care Partnerships, Parents as Teachers and Preschool Promise), our administrative and area content staff met daily together and with local and state community and government leaders. Our Education, Family Services and Health & Nutrition Managers then developed content and infrastructure for providing those services, along with training for staff on how to deliver our new service model. We launched this new model on March 30.

Successfully supporting our families required coordinated collaboration in all service areas of our program. After implementing our new service plan, we continued to monitor the possibility of returning to services through ongoing meetings with local and state health and government officials. By April 16 we made the determination that we would not operate as child care facilities for essential workers, and suspended in-person services for the remainder of the school year. Instead, we continued to provide our virtual services model. The following information highlights our efforts.

Education

Activity Bags

When we re-opened for services with our new virtual model, the first thing our education and family services staff did collectively was to reach out to each family to conduct a needs assessment. We asked if families needed support in various areas, and the area requested most was school readiness. Many parents requested activities for their children at home, so our Education and Site Managers shopped for supplies, lots of supplies. Assistant Teachers, Classroom Aides and Program Assistants (35 in total) spent two days, working in shifts to maintain social distancing, assembling 1,300 activity bags containing items such as crayons, paper, glue sticks, water color paint palettes, stickers, pompoms, and masking tape. Head Start activity bags also contained tweezers and scissors, and Early Head Start activity bags also contained contact paper. Our staff then distributed these bags to 1,150 families.



Virtual Classrooms

We created the structure for our education virtual services through ClassDojo, using it as an online platform to provide virtual classroom environments. Each teacher set up a classroom to create connections with families, communicate activity ideas for parents to do at home with their children, and hold

Children Participated in



Zoom Circle Times

groups such as circle time to provide children socialization opportunities. A total of 824 families signed up for ClassDojo, with an average of 15 families in each class. Our classroom staff held 217 circle times through Zoom, and five children attended each circle time on average.



Families Signed Up In ClassDojo

Parent-Teacher Conferences and Kindergarten Transitions

Teachers completed 528 spring parent-teacher conferences in Head Start, and 43 in Early Head Start. Our teachers also provided support to the 619 children who are transitioning to kindergarten in the fall, connecting them with school resources and completing 388 kindergarten transition forms. Our Early Head Start and Child Care Partnerships staff completed 77 applications with parents for enrolled children who are eligible to transition to Head Start.

Supporting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math in the “Classroom”



Over the past several months at our Sunrise Center, we have partnered with TERC, University of Notre Dame, and OMSI to continue to support science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) engagement for families during the pandemic. Through the Head Start on Engineering initiative, the project team developed instructional videos of science and

engineering activities to share with families through ClassDojo. The team also shared a series of “Sparks!” [activity cards](#) with ideas for fun and easy ways that families can learn together at home and support children’s development.

More recently, the team recruited 10 Head Start families to participate in piloting new Head Start on Engineering activities. Each family will receive two bi-lingual (Spanish/English) activity kits, delivered in sanitized boxes to family homes. After exploring the activities and materials, families share their feedback and improvement ideas through a videoconference interview with project team members. This feedback will then be used to inform the relaunch of the program this coming fall.

MHCC Head Start on YouTube!



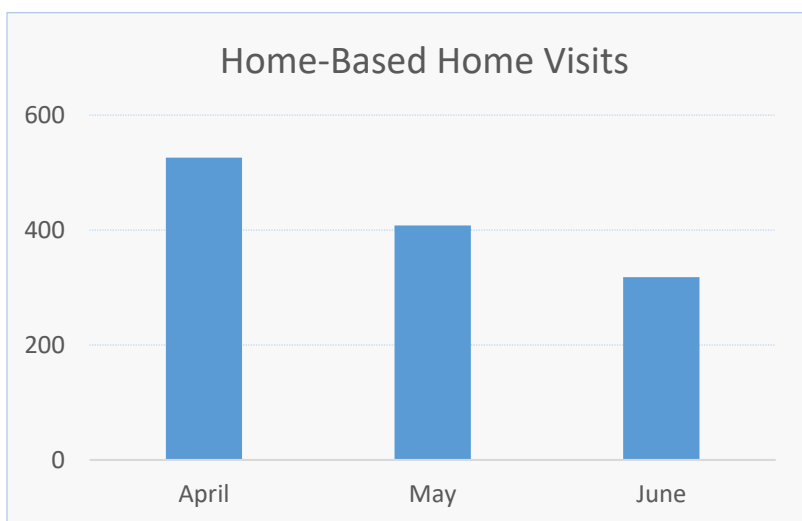
We launched the MHCC Head Start YouTube Channel on April 28th. We have 33 subscribers and five videos available to view so far. We invite you to learn about apartment gardening with Teacher Colleen: [Apartment Gardening](#)

Staff Resources

For staff, our Education Team sent out a weekly [Education Newsletter](#) (9 total) with helpful ideas and resources. Our Education Specialists also created an online library of resources for staff to draw from, with age-specific resources, organized by year, from birth to five. These will be resources we continue to build as we look ahead to the services will be providing in the fall of 2020.

Home-Based Services

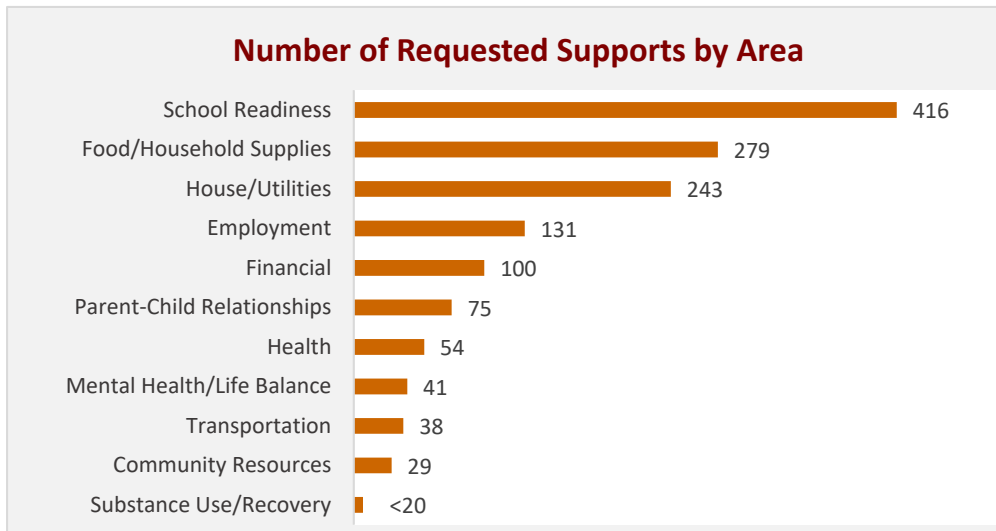
In our Early Head Start, Head Start and Parents as Teachers home visiting programs, we continued to provide virtual visits with families using the technology platform that was most convenient for each individual family. Some families met through video applications such as Zoom, Facebook video, Google Hangouts and FaceTime, some families met through phone calls, and some met through text messages.



Overall, we completed 1,245 virtual visits with home-based families during the months of April, May and June.

Family Services

When our program reopened to deliver virtual services, our initial focus was to connect with each family to understand where and how we needed to focus our resources and supports to best



meet their needs. We successfully contacted 89% of enrolled program families, and tried to reach an additional 9% without success. Of the families we successfully connected with, 62% shared they had at least one need.

School readiness was the most requested area of support, which reinforced our decision to create activity bags for families. The second most identified need was household supplies such as toiletries, diapers and food. We connected families with local food resources including school districts that were providing breakfasts and lunches, organizations providing food boxes, organizations providing food delivery if families did not have access to transportation, and provided 37,836 diapers and 54 boxes of baby wipes.



Connecting Families with Resources

Overall, our families identified a total of 1,713 needs between the end of March and the end of May, and we helped families resolve 1,292 of these requests. The following dashboard provides a snapshot and additional details of the needs of families in our service area.

[Family Support Service Needs Dashboard](#)

Parent Newsletters

We provided a [Parent Newsletter](#) for families, sharing the latest health information available, recipes to try at home, educational activities to do with young children, and helpful community resources based on feedback from families. We sent the newsletter out weekly by email and text to our program families, translated into English and Spanish. The newsletters received over 4,000 views, with almost 900 parents taking the time to read them in-depth. We also shared community resources and information through our website and Facebook pages. While we were moving to virtual services, we saw a 200% increase in traffic to our [website](#), and the number of people our [Facebook](#) page reached increased 313%.

Health

Providing Services Safely

Our Health Team has been instrumental in informing our initial and current ongoing plans to reopen in-person services. Our Health and Nutrition Manager has attended numerous meetings with the Oregon Health Authority to stay up-to-date on the latest information and guidance on how to safely open. She also met regularly and reached out to other Head Start programs to discuss best practices for implementing safety measures such as wearing masks, using personal protective equipment, completing health and temperature checks, and creating cohorts to minimize exposure to COVID-19 for both children and staff.

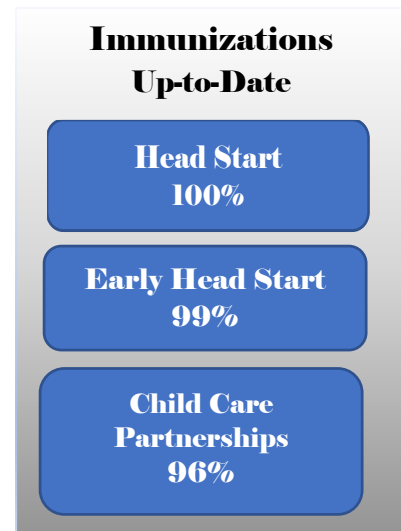


Preparing for the Future

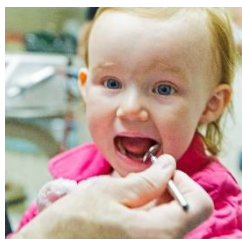
Realizing that paperwork is a major component of receiving and tracking health information for our children, our Health Specialist turned some of our paper forms into fillable PDFs and created a form for our Nutrition Screening that allows for data entry directly into our client database, ChildPlus. She also gathered our otoacoustic emissions (OAE) machines and had them recalibrated so that they are ready when we are able to provide in-person services again.

Virtual Health Services

Our Health Team has continued to support the health of children in our program while our physical locations have been closed, remotely sending health care providers 102 faxes, and receiving 75. We followed up on ensuring children had established medical and dental services, with 99% of children having confirmed medical homes and 96% of children having confirmed dental homes. We updated all immunization statuses through the end of the year for enrolled children in our program. Additionally, we reviewed 200 dental events of children needing follow-up, and through the follow-up documentation done by our family services staff, identified that 59% of children needing follow-up this year have received it.



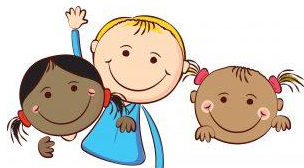
Focus on Dental



Ensuring children receive dental care has historically been an energetic focus for our program. To increase children's access to dental services, we began partnering with D3 in 2015. D3 is a local partnership of organizations that provides community-based health care. For our program specifically, they provide in-person services in our classrooms and at periodic health events we hold annually. Because of this partnership we have seen significant increases in the number of children who receive dental exams and who are

identified as needing follow up. To continue with that success, our health team identified 143 children still needing follow up, and D3 will continue to work with these families to help them get care during COVID-19 dental treatment restrictions. Our Health and Nutrition Manager has also been meeting with D3 regularly to discuss what services will look like in the coming year, including the creation of videos for teachers and family services staff to share with families.

Inclusion Services



Multnomah Early Childhood Program

We continued to partner with our local educational agency, Multnomah Early Childhood Program (MECP), in providing early intervention services to children in our program. Our Education Manager worked with MECP staff to learn their online documentation system, and referred 11 children to possibly receive services.

Multnomah Early Childhood Program has experienced challenges with families being able to access services for evaluation. Many evaluations need to be done in person, and are currently scheduled for the future. They have also experienced issues with their documentation system during the COVID-19 closure, so we are not yet able to identify services needed for children on new Individual Family Service Plans.

Program Support

Facilities

Not having activities at our sites provided our Facilities Team the opportunity to perform ongoing maintenance and plan ahead on projects needing to be completed for the upcoming school year. During our closure, the team of two staff spent time on 50 different tasks. Some of the larger accomplishments include:

- ☛ Performing Integrated Pest Management Inspections at all locations
- ☛ Completing Fire Marshal Inspections at all sites due for licensing, and making needed repairs
- ☛ Digitizing Facilities paperwork and establishing facility tracking standards (CMMS software)
- ☛ Tracking down all program filing cabinet key codes (400+) and integrating into key management plan
- ☛ Reconfiguration of 3 content areas of the program's administrative offices
- ☛ Planning, requesting bids, and coordinating contracted work at 5 locations to adapt to program expansion needs for 2020/21

Staff Training

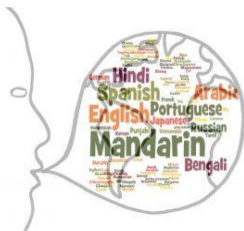
Our program closure provided us an opportunity to develop and deliver trainings for our staff. Our Training Coordinator collaborated with our education and operations teams to develop a series of nine trainings focused on the classroom with topics including science, math, understanding trauma and its impact on children, and working with challenging behaviors in classrooms. We

launched the training series on April 30 and provided trainings each week through June 4. We primarily focused on having these trainings available for Assistant Teachers and Classroom Aides, but the sessions were open to all staff interested in attending. On average, 72 staff members attended each session.

STAFF TRAININGS					
STEAM		Challenging Behavior		Trauma-Informed Care	
Bang! Squish! Leap! Supporting the A in STEAM with Infants and Toddlers	Little Scientists: Exploring Math with Preschoolers	Teachers' Choice! Digging Deeper into Challenging Behavior Part 1	Teachers' Choice! Digging Deeper into Challenging Behavior Part 2	Addressing Trauma in Classroom Settings	Examining the Effects of Toxic Stress and Trauma on the Mental Health of Young Children
Math is Everywhere: Supporting Math Skills in Infants and Toddlers		Addressing Infant and Toddler Behaviors that Challenge Us			Infants & Toddlers
				Supporting Messy Play with Infants and Toddlers	

Human Resources

Our Human Resources Team continued recruiting and hiring even though our offices were closed, facilitating five virtual sets of interviews and onboarding four new staff virtually. This was a significant change to our normal process of in-person panel interviews, and required detailed logistical planning.



We were in the process of implementing a language testing service prior to our closure, and we continued this work into the spring. We researched different service options, conducted a pilot program with the option we chose and are testing it with employees.

Technology

Moving to virtual services meant our staff had to have the technology available to be able to work remotely. To ensure our staff had the needed tools, we checked out 45 iPads, 9 laptops and 8 tablets. We distributed 16 iPads to parents to have technology at home for accessibility to virtual services. Our family services staff also helped families get connected to internet service if needed. In addition to utilizing our current resources, we evaluated and identified where we need to update our available resources for staff to be able to continue to work remotely.



In a very short amount of time, our staff learned how to use numerous online programs including Zoom, Google Voice, ClassDojo, Office 365, and web-based ChildPlus to facilitate their

work. as. At the end of March we could not imagine how we were going to learn all of these new programs fast enough to be able to effectively provide services. Now it is hard to imagine when we were not using them.

Looking Ahead



Spring of 2020 was a tremendous time for learning about our strengths, our challenges, the discomfort of needing patience during times of frustration, the importance of community, and the amazing things we can do when we have the common goal to take care of each other. We are continuing to reflect upon and use these experiences as we plan for re-opening, determining what services we can and have the capacity to provide for the 2020-2021 school year, and bound by the common goal of increasing the success of children and families by building on strengths.

United Way of the Columbia-Willamette

619 SW 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97205
503.228.9131
Fax: 503.226.9385

**United Way of the
Columbia-Willamette**



www.unitedway-pdx.org

July 22, 2020

To the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick and Chair McLain,

Please accept this brief written testimony asking the subcommittee to preserve full funding of Early Learning Hubs in the Early Learning Division budget.

Early Learning Hubs are the local early childhood system for every community in Oregon. They are the means by which families from underserved communities give voice to the design and delivery of essential services such as child care, preschool and family supports.

Our state's early care and education system depends on the local knowledge of the hubs and on the funds they have to make specific and effective investments that directly benefit the lives of children and families.

Additional information on specific impacts of the early learning hubs in Multnomah and Washington is attached.

Thank you for your consideration.

DocuSigned by:

Cindy Adams
A3AFC6FCE593424...

Cindy Adams

President and CEO, United Way of the Columbia-Willamette

Early Learning Hubs

LOCAL EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS THAT ARE ALIGNED, COORDINATED, AND FAMILY-CENTERED

Advancing equity

Early Learning Hubs are the local conveners of the early childhood system. They bring parents, community partners and school districts together to coordinate the services that support young children and their families. **In Multnomah County and Washington County our hubs are focused on building early learning systems that are free from bias and give every child what they need to learn and grow.**

Supporting children to enter school ready to succeed

Connecting families and schools in all school districts across the hub region

Hub investments create a **family-friendly school climate** and a **more successful transition to kindergarten** by:

- Focusing on what families from communities of color need in order to connect with schools
- Providing support to kindergarten teachers
- Offering social service supports and connecting families to resources
- Building parent leadership skills
- Co-designing a Sign Up for Kindergarten campaign with parents from communities of color

Engaging parents in decision-making and driving policy in their communities

Partnering with parent leaders from communities of color

In Multnomah County the Parent Accountability Council (PAC) ensures that family voice guides the hub's work. Parents from **Black, African immigrant, Asian, Latino, Native American and Slavic communities** form the council. The PAC is the hub's primary governance body and is an active partner with Multnomah County Commissioners to bring community voice into policy recommendations for the expansion of publicly funded preschool through the Preschool for All initiative.

In Washington County parents from the Early Learning Washington County Parent Advisory Committee participate on the Executive Committee for the hub ensuring that **parent voice is part of all decision-making**. In its strategic planning, the hub elevated family voice through the participation of 470 families, 368 of which were identified as being from communities of color. Parents from the PAC also participate in other governance groups and co-lead numerous projects such as advocacy work with local legislators or STEM county-wide framework.

Connecting families to the services that are right for them

Ensuring the Raise Up Oregon strategic plan includes local communities of color

This summer hubs will develop and implement the essential function of coordinated enrollment for 3-4 year olds as part of Oregon's commitment to expand quality early care and education opportunities across the state. Hubs will **directly support currently underserved families** in accessing and identifying the preschool/childcare setting that meets their family's needs. This function is an essential element in the success of Oregon's expanding Early Childhood Education system and the achievements of the Raise Up Oregon Strategic Plan.





July 22, 2020

Senator Betsy Johnson
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Representative Dan Rayfield
Senator Lew Frederick
Representative Susan McLain

To the Co-Chairs of the Joint Ways and Means Committee and the Education Subcommittee:

We are writing with regards to the Co-Chairs' 2020 Rebalance Plan for Education. We fully endorse your proposed approaches in several areas that are high priorities for Oregon Community Foundation:

- Commitment to full funding for the **Early Learning Account** in the Student Success Act, in recognition that early childhood experiences are foundational for all future learning.
- Full funding for the **Black, Latinx and Native American Student Success Plans**.
- Preservation of funding for the **Oregon Opportunity Grant**.

With a \$2.7 billion shortfall in the current budget cycle, we recognize the state is facing challenging decisions on spending and options are limited. However, we would like to call out several areas of concern for us and urge you to reconsider them:

- Reductions to funding for **Early Learning Hubs** and **Focused Child Care Networks**. Both are critical pieces of our early learning system that support locally-designed efforts to advance kindergarten readiness for low-income children and children of color, and it is especially important to maintain supports for child care providers as our economy re-opens and recovers and parents return to work.
- Elimination of second year funding for the **Reach Out and Read** program. Unlike other literacy support programs it is delivered by pediatricians who continue to see very young children via in-person and virtual visits and is a venue to support and assess parent-child relationships in a time of heightened concern about the impacts of stress and trauma for children and families.
- Reductions to the **Student Investment Account**, of great concern to us because of the potential to undermine the SIA's emphasis on equity, district-level accountability and partnership with parents and community-based organizations.
- Reduced funding for **CTE - STEM** programs. OCF supports strong state-level leadership to promote STEM and career technical education, recognizing that they are key strategies for a strong, well-rounded education that serves all students in Oregon and prepares them for the modern workforce. Continued state investment in the regional STEM hubs is necessary so we can deliver on our promise to effectively manage the \$10 million fund that was committed to OCF from the Oracle litigation settlement.

We greatly appreciate your thoughtful leadership in these unprecedented times and urge you to do all you can to minimize budget cuts that can impede Oregon's ability to prepare our young people for the future.

Sincerely,



Max Williams
President and CEO



Lane Shetterly
Chair, OCF Board Education Committee



To: Co-chairs Frederick and McLain

CC: Members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

From: Patrice Altenhofen, Executive Director, Family Building Blocks Relief Nursery and Board Chair, Oregon Association of Relief Nurseries

Date: 7/22/2020

RE: The Impact of Social Isolation on Oregon's Families

Relief Nurseries exist to prevent child abuse and neglect. We do this by partnering with parents to provide therapeutic classroom experiences for children, home visits for families, education and training for parents, and respite care. We also provide concrete supports such as food pantries, clothing closets, and diaper banks. While Relief Nurseries classrooms have been forced to close due to the pandemic, we have nimbly adapted our services to the current physical distancing restrictions by providing families access to virtual classrooms, home visits, and mental health therapy, as well as delivering resources and basic needs items to family homes through porch drop-off. Some Nurseries are also able to provide in-person respite care during this time of increased stress and isolation.

Relief Nurseries serve families with small children, newborn to age five. This age group typically represents half of child abuse cases annually. In ordinary times, the families who voluntarily choose to partner with us are facing overwhelming life circumstances and detrimental toxic stress. Families are facing stressors such as homelessness, food insecurity, poverty, substance use, minority status, lack of transportation, and isolation. Many parents are victims of domestic violence or were victims of child abuse in the past. On average, the families Relief Nurseries partner with are facing 16 of these risk factors, where the average American family faces three.

Countless families remain isolated, and largely cut off from typical community support and resources. Parents are struggling to provide food for their children and are unable to pay their rent and other bills. As time goes on, this is wearing parents down, and when you are worn down, you break down. And fewer people have their eyes on children, reflected in the drastic reduction in child abuse reports to DHS during this time.

The stories from Relief Nursery staff from around the state are heartbreaking, and staff are struggling with being disconnected from families, prevented from personally supporting children in our classrooms and families in their homes.

We know a toddler who was taken into DHS custody in the spring after his mom and her boyfriend physically abused him and gave him access to drugs. Mom had been active in Relief Nursery services then became more and more isolated as sheltering in place went on, and stopped responding to phone calls and participating in virtual home visits. Fortunately, this child's father now has custody of the child and he is back in Relief Nursery services.

A home visitor from another Relief Nursery tells the story of receiving a call from a Relief Nursery mom who felt she could no longer bear the intolerable emotions she was feeling. This mom walked out her front door and down the street, leaving her young children inside alone. She felt she could not go back home, that she could no longer care for her children.

Another home visitor was delivering a food box to a family. As soon as the home visitor pulled up to the house, she heard the enraged voice of a father's continuous yelling and cursing at his toddler and preschool aged children.

Many of the children served by Relief Nurseries have dual diagnoses – special education and mental health. We know at least one mom who does not have the means or wherewithal to handle the stress or needs of her child. She cries all the time and feels near desperation every day.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the ingrained inequities present in our system—inequities that are exacerbated during times of crisis. We know that those who live in poverty, those who are members of minority groups, and those who struggle with mental health challenges, are the ones who are impacted the hardest, and almost immediately. Many Relief Nursery families are essential workers, on the front lines keeping us healthy, safe, and fed while we shelter in place. All the while, they can't shelter in place. Most live in multi-family housing, take public transportation to get to work and live paycheck to paycheck. The loss of just one paycheck places them at risk of experiencing homelessness. Many Relief Nursery families experience the stigma of poverty, of being less educated, of being an immigrant, of being a minority. These families also experience a technology divide that during this crisis has left them even further behind when accessing education, health services, mental health treatment and other supports critical to their family's stability. Relief Nurseries serve thousands of families statewide, 25% of whom do not have a phone or a computer, or reliable wi-fi.

We are asking that the legislature hold child abuse prevention programs such as Relief Nurseries harmless as the legislature considers cuts to the General Fund *and* the Student Success Act in 2020, and the 2021 long session. Now is the time to double-down and invest in the safety and healthy development of infants and small children.

Relief Nurseries are funded through a public-private partnership. For every dollar the state provides, Relief Nurseries raise another \$1.65 in private contributions. The \$2.8 million we were allocated as part of the SSA helped Nurseries raise the money to open 6 new sites, with 2 more in the pipeline for next Spring, expecting operating revenue to come this summer. Any reduction to either allocation will result in a direct reduction to the number of children and families served.

All children are born full of potential, yet young children who experience barriers to opportunity due to poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, language or geographic location often lack access to quality early childhood programs. **We ask that you prioritize and preserve your**

historic investments in a robust early childhood *system* that includes family strengthening programs like Relief Nursery, Healthy Families, Head Start, Early Head Start, Oregon Pre-Kindergarten, Preschool Promise, Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education, and culturally specific early learning programs. Each of these programs meets a specific need for a child and their family, and work together to ensure all children have access to opportunities as they grow, develop, and learn.

Thank you.



*Testimony to the
Oregon Legislature Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education*

Thursday, July 23, 2020

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, members of the committee: My name is Amanda Manjarrez and I am the Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs at Foundations for a Better Oregon, also known as Chalkboard Project.

Chalkboard Project is a nonprofit organization jointly led by a coalition of Oregon's largest philanthropic foundations. Working primarily at the state level, we collaborate with impacted communities and policymakers to analyze, develop, and advocate for policies and public investments that ensure every child in Oregon can learn, grow, and thrive.

As you all know, the Student Success Act was a landmark achievement for this legislature not only because it increased investments in education but because it targeted resources toward addressing the root causes of inequities across Oregon's education system.

Now, in these unprecedented times, it's clear that we can't afford to invest in everything the SSA envisioned. What's equally clear is that now's the time to reaffirm Oregon's commitment to equity and hold ourselves accountable to serving children who are disproportionately bearing the brunt of this crisis.

First, we want to thank you for prioritizing SSA investments in early learning, and we must still protect critical infrastructure like Early Learning Hubs to expand access for every child. We also applaud your support for the statewide equity plans, mental health initiatives, and the Educator Advancement Council's investments in a diverse educator workforce.

But, we are deeply concerned about diverting Student Investment Account funds from the SSA to close other funding gaps. The Student Investment Account was built on two critical concepts: First, that underserved students, their families, and their teachers know best what support they need; and second, that targeted investments in underserved students make the system stronger for all students.

When we are forced to do more with less, it's always the equity and accountability investments that fall by the wayside. Since the SSA was passed, thousands of students, families and teachers felt new hope as they engaged in district budget processes. Diverting Corporate Activity Tax funds and further reducing the Student Investment Account to \$150 million—only one-third of

what was originally promised—will signal that their voices are less important than holding school districts accountable to their needs. It begs the question of whether Oregon’s commitment to equity is real.

We’re grateful to see the Legislature prioritize children by drawing on reserve funds to avoid deeper cuts. But in this biennium and beyond, we must reckon with the fact that Black, Indigenous, and other children of color are bearing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 and prolonged school closures on top of the sustained trauma of systemic racism in our schools.

The budget challenges we are facing today will not disappear next biennium. **That’s why we are calling for the Legislature to create a work group consisting of legislators, impacted communities, and stakeholders to courageously redesign how our state funds education. Rather than continuing with a patchwork of programs and funds, we need a coherent, stable, and aligned system designed to promote equity and improve outcomes statewide.** A return to the status quo is impossible and we simply cannot continue our decades-long habit of treating Oregon’s equity investments as expendable.

Thank you for the opportunity to come before you today. I’d be happy to answer any questions.

*Amanda Manjarrez
Public Policy & Government Affairs Director
Foundations for a Better Oregon / Chalkboard Project
amanda@chalkboardproject.org*



A Recovery Plan for Oregon's Children

2020 SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION AGENDA

Facing a \$2.7 billion shortfall in the current budget cycle and anticipating legislative action, Chalkboard Project stood with a coalition of over twenty community-based organizations, education advocates, and business groups urging state leaders to mitigate COVID-19's disproportionate impact by directing resources to Oregon's most vulnerable children.

In a joint letter to state leadership, the coalition outlined core equity values that must drive Oregon's short- and long-term recovery plan for children and public education. Those values include a deep commitment to equity; meaningful community engagement; cross-sector partnership; culturally responsive and sustaining approaches; and holding ourselves accountable to making progress for children.

During the second special legislative session, Chalkboard Project urges the Governor and Legislature to provide local school districts, communities, and service providers with the revenue certainty they need to fulfill Oregon's commitment to supporting every child to learn, grow, and thrive. **When balancing Oregon's budget, the Legislature must hold equity as a guiding principle and take decisive steps to address interconnected challenges across our education systems.**

Stakeholders across sectors and communities agree: The compounding crises of COVID-19 and systemic racism require us to fundamentally shift how we think about schools and learning from birth to graduation. **A balanced 2019-21 budget must make strategic investments that address children's immediate needs while laying the groundwork to reimagine how public education works in Oregon.**

A Recovery Plan for Oregon's Children



Invest in Early Learning

Ensuring children truly recover from the disruption and trauma of this crisis requires supporting them during their most critical years of childhood development. We must keep in mind that children born now will be entering kindergarten as Oregon's economy just begins to recover.

The Legislature should honor its commitment to ensuring that at least 20% of the funds available to the three Student Success Act (SSA) accounts are transferred to the Early Learning Fund. These funds are essential for the Early Learning Division to continue building an early learning system that is seamlessly aligned with the K-12 system.

Additionally, the Legislature should mitigate cuts to early learning programs in the General Fund and prioritize targeted equity investments such as the Early Learning Equity Fund, and Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE), which are uniquely designed to serve children and families who are being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Support Educators

Helping students sustain strong, supportive relationships with their teachers is critical to children’s mental health and learning—especially when the pandemic is compounding the sustained trauma of systemic racism. Research has also shown Black, Indigenous, and educators of color as well as bilingual educators are best positioned to support historically underserved children while nurturing inclusive, cross-cultural relationships that benefit all students.¹



To ensure we don’t fall backward in Oregon’s push to grow and support a diverse educator workforce that reflects our student population, we must:

- Continue investing in the **Educator Advancement Council (EAC)** as a statewide strategy that ensures all teachers—especially teachers of color—can tailor their professional development and support networks to these unprecedented times.
- Continue investing in the **EAC’s Regional Educator Networks** to provide educators with the resources to **innovate and adapt to distance learning**, particularly in rural Oregon.
- Collaborate with school districts and labor unions to ensure any necessary layoffs **do not disproportionately impact educators of color.**

¹ Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Ensure Continuity of Learning During COVID-19

Historically underserved children and families are disproportionately bearing the brunt of this crisis and more likely to face barriers to access distance learning. Loss of learning, mental health challenges, economic instability, and sustained trauma as a result of racism are contributing to significantly worse outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and children of color. To mitigate the impact of this crisis and set our state up for a strong and equitable recovery, we must:



- Ensure that federal CARES Act funds and other state or federal relief funds are leveraged heavily and targeted to **support children with the greatest needs**, and that **culturally responsive supports** are delivered in partnership with community-based organizations.
- Use Oregon reserve funds to address near-term budget gaps. This includes **transferring no less than \$300 million from the Education Stability Fund to the State School Fund** for school district investment, and urging school districts to direct resources to reach children with the greatest need for support.
- Support state-level leadership and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to **hold school districts accountable** for students' continuity of learning, mental and social-emotional health, and physical health and safety.
- Continue to invest in **summer learning grants for Title I schools** (an SSA statewide initiative) to mitigate learning loss.

Reinforce Oregon's Commitment to Equity in Education

Oregon must advance critical statewide strategies that ensure school districts and communities across the state are moving in tandem to support an equitable recovery for children. It will be critical for legislators to address near-term needs while laying a pathway to create a stronger education system for Oregon's children.



Specifically, it is critical that the Legislature:

- **Formally charge an inclusive and diverse work group** to develop recommendations for **maximizing equity, alignment, sufficiency, and stability across Oregon's public education funding mechanisms**—including the State School Fund and the Student Investment Account—in advance of the 2021 legislative session. Now is the time for state, local, and community leaders to come together and redesign the foundational elements of a public education system that supports every child to learn, grow, and thrive.
- Honor the promise to **invest 50% of available SSA funds in the Student Investment Account** as the best mechanism for investing in equity and cultivating community engagement. School districts and communities worked intensely throughout the last year to develop local plans that advance equity and provide the social-emotional supports that students desperately need. The targeted strategies outlined in these plans are an important compass for districts' future investments.

- Continue investing in and supporting implementation of **Oregon's Statewide Equity Plans** in the SSA's Statewide Initiative Account. These plans are a vital avenue for self-determination, supporting Black, Indigenous, and communities of color to design culturally specific strategies and address systemic inequities in public education:
 - **African American / Black Student Success Plan** – \$10 million (\$6.23 million funded by the General Fund; \$3.81 million funded by the SSA)
 - **Latino Student Success Plan** – \$1 million (funded by the SSA)
 - **American Indian / Alaska Native Student Success Plan** – \$3.19 million (funded by the SSA)
- Fully fund **targeted equity investments** that support Oregon's federally recognized tribes, including:
 - **Tribal Attendance Promising Practices** – \$1.61 million (funded by the General Fund)
 - **Senate Bill 13 Implementation** – \$1.8 million (funded by the General Fund)
- Lay the groundwork to fund and implement Oregon's recently released **LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Success Plan**. Enacting the recommendations in this plan is essential to ensuring all children feel safe and supported as they learn and grow, no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation.

From: [Jenna Wallace](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: HB 2444 Testimony - Jenna Wallace
Date: Friday, July 24, 2020 4:48:00 PM

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain (and fellow Joint Subcommittee on Education members),

My name is Jenna Wallace and I am serving as the 2020-2021 Oregon FFA State Vice President. I would like to thank each of you for your hard work preserving the funding and support of FFA and Summer programs for agriculture teachers. The work you do for the State of Oregon does not go unnoticed and I thank you for your determination in creating the fairest learning environment for students. House Bill 2444 assists in creating that environment.

I would like to share with you why this student-led agricultural leadership organization means so much to me and how it impacts the lives of those around me. My journey through FFA was a spectacular one and last year, when I decided to run for a position as a state officer, I was excited and ready to learn so much more about Oregon Agriculture and FFA. After earning a position on the team and participating in a few essential training sessions, it was time for my team and I to travel around the state for a week meeting with business and industry members. I was nervous, but also very excited.

As we began meeting farmers, ranchers, and producers, I realized that those essential training sessions exceedingly prepared me (more than ever before) for in-depth conversations and questions about Oregon Agriculture. This is where HB 2444 comes into play. You see, these training sessions were only made possible through the funding focused on leadership development, provided by HB 2444. I gained many critical skills throughout my time in FFA like speaking confidence, interpersonal communication, and active listening. Those training sessions allowed me to build on my skills and represent Oregon FFA and Oregon Agriculture at a much higher level.

Oregon Agriculture is truly a diverse and wonderful industry. Through HB 2444's fundings, I am much better equipped to speak with and teach business people and FFA members about the abundance of amazing agriculture in our state. I urge you to consider my experience as you vote for budget reductions in the coming weeks. Thank you again for your hard work on preserving funds for our life-changing organization and other career and technical student organizations.

Thank you,

Jenna Wallace

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Jenna Wallace

State Vice President | Oregon FFA

E: jenna@oregonffa.com



From: [Grace Adams](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Testimony
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:30:54 AM

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain (and other committee members),

My name is Grace Adams and I am serving as the 2020-2021 Oregon FFA State President. On behalf of the Oregon FFA Association, we thank you for your hard work in preserving the support of FFA and supportive Summer programs for agriculture teachers. I'd like to take the time to share with you a little bit about my story and just how House Bill 2444 has made a positive difference in the lives of those around me.

I was born and raised in Dayton, OR, which is a quiet rural town just outside of Salem. We're known for our competitive sports team and our outstanding agriculture program. Throughout my years, agricultural education and FFA were always present. Whether it was grade school or middle school, there was always an opportunity for students to get involved in agricultural activities.

Our program has grown over the past 30 years, thanks to our long time ag teacher and FFA Advisor, Mitch Coleman, who will be going into his 31st year at Dayton High School. Mr. Coleman's dedication to our program is like no other, as he works non-stop to ensure the students within our school can be successful. But because of his dedication to bettering our program, his job has become a full time and year-round commitment.

Our FFA program sees about 300 students a year and 100 of those students show and market at our county and state fairs. The issue Mr. Coleman and many other ag teachers (who spend over 60 days during the summer working with students) face, is that schools are unable to provide the funding needed to support summer programs. With House Bill 2444 supporting FFA, it allows all students to participate and gain the skills needed to succeed from hands-on learning. We believe that students develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through the experiences they've gained being involved in agricultural education. This house bill not only offers hands-on summer programs to ALL students but financially supports ag teachers in their hard work of advancing their programs.

Thank you again for your hard work focused on education in Oregon. I urge you to continue supporting the Oregon FFA Association and our mission to provide the next generation of leaders.

Sincerely,

Grace Adams

--



Grace M. Adams
2020-2021 Oregon FFA State President
Office: 541.737.2395 | grace@oregonffa.com
oregonffa.com

Create your own [email signature](#)

From: [Joenelle Futrell](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Oregon FFA--Written Testimony--Join SubCommittee on Education
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:23:35 AM

Honorable Joint SubCommittee on Education members,

My name is Joenelle Futrell and I work with the Oregon FFA Association as the Leadership Development Director where I build and implement leadership programming reaching over 11,000 secondary students in agriculture programs. Thank you for your work during this time to preserve support for FFA leadership and career development programs through HB 2444 funding. These dollars are crucial for us to serve these young people, involve them in in-person and virtual events, and support their college and career readiness.

Expanded FFA support has not only provided for my role to serve our now doubled membership, increasing our engagement of traditionally underserved populations, but has also allowed teachers to work with students throughout the summer on their work-based learning projects, provided resources to host 24 virtual career development events that allow students to display and receive feedback on their career skills, and ensured all students in an agriculture classroom has access to FFA's premier leadership, personal growth, and career success opportunities. Because of this funding, students I know and have interacted with, students like Isabel and Madelina, who are part of low-income and traditionally underserved families, are able to continue to engage in FFA's virtual opportunities made possible through this funding.

FFA has made an incredible difference in my life. My character and career have been positively impacted by FFA's unique ability to create buy-in and ownership of student projects, businesses, and programs and train students on 21st century skills. Most importantly FFA provided me the opportunity to be engaged in the agriculture industry, learn what a good citizen is, and to serve other people. What I have gained from FFA is irreplaceable, and I am certain the 11,000 students engaged in FFA in Oregon, and 700,00+ members nationwide feel the same way. Please continue to support funding for Oregon FFA.

Thank you for your time and support.

Best,

Joenelle Futrell

From: [Wes Crawford](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Testimony towards the Dept of Education Budget re: FFA and Agricultural Education
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:44:08 AM

Greetings Chairperson Frederick, Chairperson McLain, and Members of the Committee:

I am Wes Crawford, an agriculture educator and FFA advisor at Sutherlin High School, in Douglas County.

Thank you for the challenging task you and your colleagues are taking on as we all work to make it through the current challenges. In particular, thank you for the hard work in hopefully preserving the general school fund as much as possible; as a teacher, it was clear the importance schools held for many students during these uncertain times this past spring and it will surely be true this next year.

I am also writing to call attention to the specific grant-in-aid for FFA through the 2019 HB 2444. We were so gratified to have received such broad support. I appreciate and thank you all for efforts to preserve as much as possible the funding for the Oregon FFA Association in these challenging times. These funds are already making a positive difference, and that impact has been even more evident during the spring school closure and the uncertainty plaguing this fall.

I saw firsthand the value of being able to continue our regional and statewide programming this spring as we pivoted to virtual platforms. In a time where students were losing almost everything, the one thing that continued in our school was FFA. Students still were able to interview for scholarship programs, participate in speaking competitions, and engage in a virtual convention and benefit from leadership programming that was not what was originally intended, but was still able to be delivered because the resources and people were available to make it happen.

Further, I saw students who found purpose and motivation, and explored new areas of learning in careers. Students competed virtually in Career Development Events that were organized and put on using expanded resources and staffing who went above and beyond in pivoting and making these opportunities happen in virtual formats. We had several students who went above and beyond and

Lastly, *students stayed connected*. In a time where literally every other thing at our school beyond distance learning was cancelled and ceased, FFA continued to engage students which we all know is even more important for mental health and wellbeing in times of uncertainty. Our chapter held virtually hang outs and meetings, communicated electronically, and even put together a drive-in Spring Awards Night to celebrate the successes of our students this year.

This was a direct result of the added resources Oregon FFA had to work with to facilitate this rapid move, coordinating work with agriculture teachers from our largest to smallest high schools as well as industry to ensure students still had some opportunities, some chance to still pursue dreams and accomplish goals. It wasn't how any of us imagined, but I am certain it was the absolute best it could have been given the situation, and we have you and everyone who supported the FFA to thank.

As we move into this next year, I ask you to consider preserving as much as possible what is left of the FFA budget to ensure we can continue to serve these students. I know you have many demands to balance against a challenging budget, but there is no doubt that this is a small investment in a successful program that will continue to return great impacts on the lives of students. Thank you for your time on this matter.

Best regards,
Wes

--

Wes Crawford
Co-Chair, Advocacy
Oregon Agriculture Teacher's Association
(c) 541.231.5222
(w) www.ovata.org

From: [Allison Meadows](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Written testimony Re: HB 2444
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:08:03 PM

Joint SubCommittee on Education members,

First and foremost, thank you for continuing the grueling work to support education during these times, your hard work does not go unnoticed. Secondly, thank you for supporting FFA and summer programming; this year has seen so much growth. It is these engagement opportunities that will grab the interest of students and keep them interested in school this coming year.

I'd like to share my own story at Sherwood High School as an agricultural educator. While our suburban area continues to grow and the makeup of our student body shifts, it became apparent this last year that agricultural education remains important as ever, but what students needed was an open field to access these opportunities. With the passing of HB2444, our chapter opened its doors to all members who entered our classroom; a more diverse set of learners and career seekers. FFA provides these members with more opportunities to seek out internships and summer jobs that explore their career interests and passions. It has also built learning and mentorship relationships with community partners, not possible without funding.

Our small FFA chapter had the largest growth in the state, showing the rest of Oregon FFA that Sherwood has something to prove. Our students are coming back to a unforeseen fall in the classroom but what remains constant is the passion and engagement FFA provides. We need this more than ever.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Allison Meadows

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From: [JWMNR Exhibits](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: FW: HB2444
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 4:59:30 PM

From: Katie Partlow <katiepartlow@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:17 AM
To: JWMNR Exhibits <JWMNR.Exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov>
Subject: HB2444

Hello, my name is Katie Harris and I'm the FFA Advisor at Rainier Jr/Sr High School in Columbia County. I want to start off with thanking you for your support for HB2444. I have a front seat view of how much this funding has impacted my students' FFA experiences.

This funding allows for equal participation to all students in FFA and assures that our underserved populations have access to these opportunities with no financial barriers.

This funding pays for FFA membership which has increased membership giving more career development experiences to students. FFA membership at my school has increased from 15 students to 45 students because they have no financial barriers and this helps balance equality so everyone can participate. These hands-on FFA experiences help students transition after high school. Many of these students continue onto trade programs which are jobs in high demand and currently with not enough skilled workforce to fill them. We need to continue recruitment and exposure of these careers so we don't have another gap in the workforce.

This funding is exposing career skills to all students and it is important to keep supporting programs that develop premier leadership, personal growth, and career success to all students. I know these are challenging times and I thank you for your work to preserve this funding as much as possible.

Thank you,

Katie Harris

From: [Jenna Wallace](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: HB 2444 Testimony - Jenna Wallace
Date: Friday, July 24, 2020 4:48:00 PM

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain (and fellow Joint Subcommittee on Education members),

My name is Jenna Wallace and I am serving as the 2020-2021 Oregon FFA State Vice President. I would like to thank each of you for your hard work preserving the funding and support of FFA and Summer programs for agriculture teachers. The work you do for the State of Oregon does not go unnoticed and I thank you for your determination in creating the fairest learning environment for students. House Bill 2444 assists in creating that environment.

I would like to share with you why this student-led agricultural leadership organization means so much to me and how it impacts the lives of those around me. My journey through FFA was a spectacular one and last year, when I decided to run for a position as a state officer, I was excited and ready to learn so much more about Oregon Agriculture and FFA. After earning a position on the team and participating in a few essential training sessions, it was time for my team and I to travel around the state for a week meeting with business and industry members. I was nervous, but also very excited.

As we began meeting farmers, ranchers, and producers, I realized that those essential training sessions exceedingly prepared me (more than ever before) for in-depth conversations and questions about Oregon Agriculture. This is where HB 2444 comes into play. You see, these training sessions were only made possible through the funding focused on leadership development, provided by HB 2444. I gained many critical skills throughout my time in FFA like speaking confidence, interpersonal communication, and active listening. Those training sessions allowed me to build on my skills and represent Oregon FFA and Oregon Agriculture at a much higher level.

Oregon Agriculture is truly a diverse and wonderful industry. Through HB 2444's fundings, I am much better equipped to speak with and teach business people and FFA members about the abundance of amazing agriculture in our state. I urge you to consider my experience as you vote for budget reductions in the coming weeks. Thank you again for your hard work on preserving funds for our life-changing organization and other career and technical student organizations.

Thank you,

Jenna Wallace

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Jenna Wallace

State Vice President | Oregon FFA

E: jenna@oregonffa.com



To: Joint Sub Committee on Education
From: Jeff Papke
RE: HB 2444 Funding

On behalf of myself as an educator and more importantly my students, thank you for working hard to protect education in Oregon and making sure schools are meeting student needs. These are challenging budget times and it is refreshing to see a state legislature who understands the importance of public education funding and the long term impact it will have on our state.

As part of that funding I must bring your attention to HB 2444 and it's continued funding even in these challenging times. HB 2444 provides vital financial support to Oregon FFA and its programming....support that cannot be replaced like other grant-in-aid programs.

When we were quarantined back in March and moved our instruction to a virtual platform, the struggle for all teachers was engagement of our students.

As I experienced the engagement level of students in other classes and other teachers, I was amazed at how I did not share the struggles and consternation they expressed. Each day in each class I continued to have a high attendance rate, higher than other teachers. Students were engaged in class and were completing their work. As I reflect on why I have to point to the activities FFA provided my students....activities organized and orchestrated by our Oregon FFA Association state office. Opportunities and activities that kept my students engaged and excited about their educational experience during times more challenging than any of us could have foreseen. These opportunities included classroom activities, CDE's, and a virtual state convention. For educators we had a weekly virtual hangout where we could support each other and learn from each other. We had weekly topics chosen by the teachers that were burning topics we needed help with so we could be better educators during this trying time. On average over 60 teachers across the state "hungout" each week. These were also hosted and coordinated by the Oregon FFA state office. These hangouts helped me more and my students more than I can express. As a teacher, I was depressed when we were quarantined. I wanted to be in my classroom with my students. I did not want to connect with them over video. Through the hangouts I learned I wasn't the only teacher feeling this. These hangouts provided a time we could lament with each other but also pick each other up. We also were expressing the same struggles and challenges. Together we could share ideas and learn from each other. This helped me be a more positive role model and better teacher for my students. What might seem like a small act had an incredible impact on students across the state. We were fortunate to have a state entity in our Oregon FFA Association office to plan and coordinate activities like these.

FFA activities kept the students engaged...even after the end of school. Bend FFA's Beginning Parliamentary Procedure Team qualified to compete in the state Parliamentary Procedure (Parli Pro) Career Development Event. This event was scheduled to happen March 20th. This contest is best held face to face. We kept

postponing the contest in the hopes we might be able to compete in person. It became evident this couldn't happen safely so we modified the contest and finally scheduled the contest for June 25th. Our team started practicing in December, 2019. They practiced twice a week while in school through March 13th. We moved our practices online starting April 7th. Between April 7th and June 25th, these team members, all high school freshmen, practiced twice a week for 2-3 hrs a practice....at their choosing. Even when given the chance or asked to take a week off, they declined. Parli Pro practices became their "hangout". It was their chance to socially interact with their advisors and classmates. They could connect with each other while also learning how to run a meeting and learning about current topics affecting the industry of Agriculture in Oregon and across the world. It became a time we could talk about Covid-19 and how it was affecting us. It gave them a reason to get up in the morning and not play video games. I am proud to say their hard work paid off and they won the state competition. After we won several team members wanted to continue practicing....practices had become a bit of a lifeline and they wanted (almost needed) them to continue. We are not practicing but we are connecting periodically over video to give them an opportunity to talk and interact with each other. Oregon FFA provided the opportunity for us to connect with these students and give them a "lifeline" in these trying times.

Next school year will be just as challenging as last year. Students need to have a reason to engage in school. Oregon FFA provides that reason and that opportunity. Continued funding of HB 2444 is more vital than ever.

We need to provide funding to Oregon FFA and other CTSO's so we can provide those reasons for students to engage and want to attend classes.

Thank you for your support of our students and for leading our state through these challenging times!

Jeff Papke
Instructor, Agriculture Science and Technology Dept, Mt View HS
Advisor, Bend FFA
Past President, Oregon Agriculture Teachers Association



OREGON
FFA FOUNDATION

July 22, 2020

Dear Chairperson Frederick, Chairperson McLain, and Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Education:

I'm an eastern Oregon native, a graduate of Oregon State University, and now a Portland resident. I'm also President of the Oregon FFA Foundation and an avid supporter of Career and Technical Education programs in our high schools. I appreciate that you value CTE programs and understand the importance of providing adequate funding to them. ***I urge you to maintain the funding made available to these programs through HB 2444***, which provided much needed funding for agricultural education.

Agricultural education is a proven CTE model. Although rooted in agriculture, these programs provide students with practical skills and prepare them for career success. Students who participate in these programs leave high school prepared to be leaders in their workplaces and communities. Agricultural education programs and FFA (formerly Future Farmers of America) also instill in students a commitment to civic engagement and community service. These students will be Oregon's next generation of leaders, and we must invest in them today!

I am a product of agricultural education and FFA. Today, I live in downtown Portland and work at Stoel Rives. But I grew up on my family's farm just north of Vale, Oregon. Agricultural education and FFA are the reason I chose to attend OSU, rather than leave Oregon to attend an out-of-state college. At OSU, I discovered my passion for natural resources law and policy. This passion took me to Georgetown Law where I received my law degree. My connection to Oregon, particularly our ag and natural resource industries, bought me back to begin my legal career. Today, I represent clients in natural resource industries, including water suppliers, forest products companies, agribusinesses, and manufacturers.

I regularly see the positive impact agricultural education and FFA are making on our students. The funding made available through HB 2444 is a sound investment in quality, proven educational programs. ***I urge you to maintain this funding to invest in Oregon's next generation of leaders and ensure that agricultural educators are adequately compensated for their work!***

Sincerely,


Kirk B. Maag

From: [JW Dippold](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Date: Sunday, July 26, 2020 8:19:14 PM

Good morning committee co-chairs Frederick and McLain and members of the committee,

Hello, I'm JW Dippold and I am going into my senior year at Imbler Highschool. I am my FFA Chapter's President and the Eastern Oregon FFA District Secretary. I always heard that organizations can save lives but I didn't believe it until I became involved in the FFA. I have struggled with my mental health for the past four to five years of my life and the FFA gave me a reason to not give in. It allowed me to pour myself into something larger than myself and hold my life accountable as people were depending on me. The FFA made me start to value my life again and make me want to wake up in the morning.

This is until quarantine started. As everything shut down and all of my favorite events began to get canceled, I started to become hopeless again. This is until online FFA events started up again. They gave me a reason to wake up in the morning and become productive again. I can honestly say that the FFA saved my life and that I would not be the person I am today without the FFA. I want to thank you for your support of Oregon FFA Programs of Study Grant in Aid through the Oregon Department of Education as a whole. You saved my life and the lives of thousands of others by helping to create something that we can believe in.

Sincerely,

JW Dippold

Eastern Oregon District Secretary

Imbler FFA Chapter President

This email has been sent by a Imbler School District student email account. By using this email system you agree to our Acceptable Use Policy. Inappropriate use of this account will result in suspension of this Google Account.

From: [Megan Dilson](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Need for HB2444
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 12:40:03 PM

Dear Sub joint Committee,

My name is Megan Dilson and I am the Gervais High School FFA advisor. I wanted to thank you for your support for our students especially in these challenging times. It was brought to my attention through ODE that HB2444 is going to be cut/reduced. I can tell you 100% that my small school will be impacted greatly by this cut. Without HB2444, I would no longer be able to increase recruitment of my agricultural program due to students lack of funding. Gervais is considered a poverty school and many of my students rely on HB2444 funding to help them attend leadership conferences, Career Development Events, cover membership, and become active in an association that helps students transition after high school. Over the past several years with HB2444, my membership has increased from 20 to 50 students in my program all because they do not feel restrained by any financial obligations as they had to in the past. It helps balance equality and diversity in my program and students don't feel ashamed they can't attend due to payment as HB2444 covers a huge majority of any of these events. Many of these students continue after high school to leadership programs, and hands-on/ or technical trades which we are short of in this Nation. We need to keep recruitment up of students in agricultural pathways as everyone has to eat!

Aside from helping pay for student funded activities, HB2444 pays for an online record keeping system called AET which each of my students utilizes to learn about record keeping and personal checks and balances. I believe in today's economy that this is an important skill set to have which students will keep with them long after high school.

Lastly, as I said before, Gervais is a poverty school and due to this my district is unable to pay all the hours I have dedicated to my students. HB2444 has been a lifesaver in providing the grant program to help teachers receive some compensation for what they have worked. Without HB2444 I would be working over \$5,000 worth of hours for free, and as an educator it hurts my cost of living greatly. I love my job greatly, but I also need to be realistic about my needs as a teacher. I am asking that you please not make drastic cuts to HB2444.

We need HB2444 to continue to help provide all these personal growth, career leadership, and academic success experiences for all our students as well as help compensate our educators after working long hours without pay.

Thank you,
Megan Dilson

Sent from my iPhone



BAKER FFA CHAPTER

2500 E Street
Baker City, OR 97814

541-524-2600
www.BakerFFA.com

July 22, 2020

Hello Joint SubCommittee on Education Members,

I appreciate the time and hard work you have taken to ensure the education of the youth of Oregon is handled and cared for in the best way possible. I also want to, thank you for your continued efforts to preserve funding for FFA and summer programs through HB 2444.

In these times of uncertainty I have found that my students have started to turn to the comforts of FFA and agriculture to help provide them with guidance through this pandemic. They crave the feeling of normalcy and I have witnessed my chapter officers stepping up to the plate to help ease the transition to the new learning format that we are gearing towards. FFA has given students the tools to be able to adapt and make the best at every situation. I believe they will make it out of this pandemic stronger because of the career and life skills gained through their agriculture classes and FFA.

HB 2444 has been a blessing for all agriculture programs and FFA members as it has alleviated stress to state staffing, provided leadership tools and training to all levels of FFA, and opened many more doors for students to be able to attend conferences and leadership trainings by lessening the financial burden. With the additional state staffing we have been able to adapt quickly to all the changes over the past months, and we have preserved the integrity of the FFA organization.

It is hard some days to look past the gloom of COVID-19 and wonder what the future will look like for my own child, but after being given the opportunity to visit with students this summer while conducting their agriculture experience project visits, I am given hope that there will be a brighter future tomorrow. My students take a great deal of pride in their projects and their work, and are developing their skills to be outstanding members of society.

By investing in HB 2444 you are investing in the future success of Oregon. Agriculture is the foundation of any successful society. Without it we would have fewer jobs, a hungrier society, and realistically no tools and materials to fight the battle against COVID-19. With your support for HB 2444 you are ensuring a brighter future for Oregon. I appreciate all your hard work and hope you will find the heart to support Oregon FFA.

Sincerely,

Nicole Merchant
Ag Teacher/FFA Advisor
Cell: (541) 519-3868
nicole.merchant@bakersd.org

From: [Joenelle Futrell](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Oregon FFA--Written Testimony--Join SubCommittee on Education
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:23:35 AM

Honorable Joint SubCommittee on Education members,

My name is Joenelle Futrell and I work with the Oregon FFA Association as the Leadership Development Director where I build and implement leadership programming reaching over 11,000 secondary students in agriculture programs. Thank you for your work during this time to preserve support for FFA leadership and career development programs through HB 2444 funding. These dollars are crucial for us to serve these young people, involve them in in-person and virtual events, and support their college and career readiness.

Expanded FFA support has not only provided for my role to serve our now doubled membership, increasing our engagement of traditionally underserved populations, but has also allowed teachers to work with students throughout the summer on their work-based learning projects, provided resources to host 24 virtual career development events that allow students to display and receive feedback on their career skills, and ensured all students in an agriculture classroom has access to FFA's premier leadership, personal growth, and career success opportunities. Because of this funding, students I know and have interacted with, students like Isabel and Madelina, who are part of low-income and traditionally underserved families, are able to continue to engage in FFA's virtual opportunities made possible through this funding.

FFA has made an incredible difference in my life. My character and career have been positively impacted by FFA's unique ability to create buy-in and ownership of student projects, businesses, and programs and train students on 21st century skills. Most importantly FFA provided me the opportunity to be engaged in the agriculture industry, learn what a good citizen is, and to serve other people. What I have gained from FFA is irreplaceable, and I am certain the 11,000 students engaged in FFA in Oregon, and 700,00+ members nationwide feel the same way. Please continue to support funding for Oregon FFA.

Thank you for your time and support.

Best,

Joenelle Futrell

From: [Wes Crawford](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Testimony towards the Dept of Education Budget re: FFA and Agricultural Education
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:44:08 AM

Greetings Chairperson Frederick, Chairperson McLain, and Members of the Committee:

I am Wes Crawford, an agriculture educator and FFA advisor at Sutherlin High School, in Douglas County.

Thank you for the challenging task you and your colleagues are taking on as we all work to make it through the current challenges. In particular, thank you for the hard work in hopefully preserving the general school fund as much as possible; as a teacher, it was clear the importance schools held for many students during these uncertain times this past spring and it will surely be true this next year.

I am also writing to call attention to the specific grant-in-aid for FFA through the 2019 HB 2444. We were so gratified to have received such broad support. I appreciate and thank you all for efforts to preserve as much as possible the funding for the Oregon FFA Association in these challenging times. These funds are already making a positive difference, and that impact has been even more evident during the spring school closure and the uncertainty plaguing this fall.

I saw firsthand the value of being able to continue our regional and statewide programming this spring as we pivoted to virtual platforms. In a time where students were losing almost everything, the one thing that continued in our school was FFA. Students still were able to interview for scholarship programs, participate in speaking competitions, and engage in a virtual convention and benefit from leadership programming that was not what was originally intended, but was still able to be delivered because the resources and people were available to make it happen.

Further, I saw students who found purpose and motivation, and explored new areas of learning in careers. Students competed virtually in Career Development Events that were organized and put on using expanded resources and staffing who went above and beyond in pivoting and making these opportunities happen in virtual formats. We had several students who went above and beyond and

Lastly, *students stayed connected*. In a time where literally every other thing at our school beyond distance learning was cancelled and ceased, FFA continued to engage students which we all know is even more important for mental health and wellbeing in times of uncertainty. Our chapter held virtually hang outs and meetings, communicated electronically, and even put together a drive-in Spring Awards Night to celebrate the successes of our students this year.

This was a direct result of the added resources Oregon FFA had to work with to facilitate this rapid move, coordinating work with agriculture teachers from our largest to smallest high schools as well as industry to ensure students still had some opportunities, some chance to still pursue dreams and accomplish goals. It wasn't how any of us imagined, but I am certain it was the absolute best it could have been given the situation, and we have you and everyone who supported the FFA to thank.

As we move into this next year, I ask you to consider preserving as much as possible what is left of the FFA budget to ensure we can continue to serve these students. I know you have many demands to balance against a challenging budget, but there is no doubt that this is a small investment in a successful program that will continue to return great impacts on the lives of students. Thank you for your time on this matter.

Best regards,
Wes

--

Wes Crawford
Co-Chair, Advocacy
Oregon Agriculture Teacher's Association
(c) 541.231.5222
(w) www.ovata.org

From: [Grace Adams](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Testimony
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:30:54 AM

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain (and other committee members),

My name is Grace Adams and I am serving as the 2020-2021 Oregon FFA State President. On behalf of the Oregon FFA Association, we thank you for your hard work in preserving the support of FFA and supportive Summer programs for agriculture teachers. I'd like to take the time to share with you a little bit about my story and just how House Bill 2444 has made a positive difference in the lives of those around me.

I was born and raised in Dayton, OR, which is a quiet rural town just outside of Salem. We're known for our competitive sports team and our outstanding agriculture program. Throughout my years, agricultural education and FFA were always present. Whether it was grade school or middle school, there was always an opportunity for students to get involved in agricultural activities.

Our program has grown over the past 30 years, thanks to our long time ag teacher and FFA Advisor, Mitch Coleman, who will be going into his 31st year at Dayton High School. Mr. Coleman's dedication to our program is like no other, as he works non-stop to ensure the students within our school can be successful. But because of his dedication to bettering our program, his job has become a full time and year-round commitment.

Our FFA program sees about 300 students a year and 100 of those students show and market at our county and state fairs. The issue Mr. Coleman and many other ag teachers (who spend over 60 days during the summer working with students) face, is that schools are unable to provide the funding needed to support summer programs. With House Bill 2444 supporting FFA, it allows all students to participate and gain the skills needed to succeed from hands-on learning. We believe that students develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through the experiences they've gained being involved in agricultural education. This house bill not only offers hands-on summer programs to ALL students but financially supports ag teachers in their hard work of advancing their programs.

Thank you again for your hard work focused on education in Oregon. I urge you to continue supporting the Oregon FFA Association and our mission to provide the next generation of leaders.

Sincerely,

Grace Adams

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Grace M. Adams
2020-2021 Oregon FFA State President
Office: 541.737.2395 | grace@oregonffa.com
oregonffa.com

Create your own [email signature](#)

From: [Allison Meadows](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Subject: Written testimony Re: HB 2444
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:08:03 PM

Joint SubCommittee on Education members,

First and foremost, thank you for continuing the grueling work to support education during these times, your hard work does not go unnoticed. Secondly, thank you for supporting FFA and summer programming; this year has seen so much growth. It is these engagement opportunities that will grab the interest of students and keep them interested in school this coming year.

I'd like to share my own story at Sherwood High School as an agricultural educator. While our suburban area continues to grow and the makeup of our student body shifts, it became apparent this last year that agricultural education remains important as ever, but what students needed was an open field to access these opportunities. With the passing of HB2444, our chapter opened its doors to all members who entered our classroom; a more diverse set of learners and career seekers. FFA provides these members with more opportunities to seek out internships and summer jobs that explore their career interests and passions. It has also built learning and mentorship relationships with community partners, not possible without funding.

Our small FFA chapter had the largest growth in the state, showing the rest of Oregon FFA that Sherwood has something to prove. Our students are coming back to a unforeseen fall in the classroom but what remains constant is the passion and engagement FFA provides. We need this more than ever.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Allison Meadows

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