



Superintendent
Heidi Sipe

Board Members Jon Lorence *Chair*, Toby Cranston *Vice-Chair*,
Lesly Claustro-Sanguino, Travis Eynon, Veronica Gutierrez, Jorge Meza, Susana Sotelo

December 18, 2020

RE: Support for LC21 Liability Protection

Dear Co-Chair Courtney, Co-Chair Kotek, and members of the Joint Interim Committee on the Third Special Session,

Thank you for working together for Oregonians during this Special Session. I appreciate the additional effort put forth for this session and know that many of you have adapted holiday plans to help Oregon move forward together during this trying time.

I urge your support for LC21 to provide limited liability protection to educational entities in Oregon. I believe it is important to note that the protection applies if the school is operating in compliance with the COVID-19 emergency rules. This bill does not give us a waiver to ignore important safety and health guidance. Rather, it provides us with urgently needed liability protection to protect our district's future services to students in the event of a COVID related lawsuit.

Currently, without liability precautions in place, I am forced to make decisions that not only follow the guidance, but sometimes go beyond the guidance. I cannot gamble with the future opportunities for students in our schools based on lawsuits we cannot afford to fight because of the lack of appropriate insurance.

We need to get our students safely back in school and our staff and community are working together to support one another in being able to do so. Liability protection provided in LC21 will provide us with the additional support necessary to serve students on-site, with safety precautions in place.

Thank you for your consideration,

Heidi A. Sipe, EdS
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