

SB 754 Tax Credit for Rural Oregon Nursing Faculty

When I arrived to Chemeketa Community College our faculty load was down 2 faculty. Since then some have come and gone. However, we have maintained that negative number.

At the end of last academic year, we lost three faculty to retirements and moving on to other jobs. We were fortunate to hire two new faculty but they are green having never taught in a nursing program. Mid way through this academic year, we were able to hire one more faculty member, again green in the education knowledge area. That brings are total to a negative two faculty.

Next year we will be losing three more faculty to retirements. This will bring our numbers of faculty to be negative five if we cannot find someone to replace them. Each year after we plan on 1 – 2 more retirements.

The point of the data is to show that; 1. I have had a job opening for the nursing program continuously since I arrived in 2014, and 2. We have never been at full capacity for our nursing faculty.

As a faculty group, we just approved a 10% increase in pay to help attract more nurses. Whether this helps remains to be seen.

At Chemeketa Community College, we are more fortunate than other schools with the number of faculty we employ and the wage we pay. We would like to have 13.5 faculty for our 48 students but every year we fall short of that number and obviously, the situation is not getting better.

As an ONA member who sits on the Education Cabinet, I have heard other ONA (nurses) talk about their desire to teach but they just cannot do it because they cannot afford to take the pay cut. They recognize that there are times during the year that they could take on PT/on call work but many facilities do not allow that only once or twice a year for a few months.

I can tell you in addition to my concerns for my school I know that every community college have had openings and the outlook is not getting better. All of us have faculty that are planning retirements. Yes, I have been fortunate to hire some new people this year but when they have never taught in the nursing classroom, that has its own set of challenges.

With the current Senate Bill 754 definition of rural, if made into law, may help 9 out of 16 Community Colleges. I would ask that you reconsider this only being offered for nurse educators who work in “rural” locations as we all are faced with retirements and low pay.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill!

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