



STATE SCHOOL FUND CURRENT SERVICE LEVEL CALCULATION PROCESS (HB 2074)

BACKGROUND: For six biennia, Oregon’s efforts to calculate the “roll-up” costs of the K-12 State School Fund budget worked well and yielded broad agreement because all relevant parties were at the table early on. In addition to BAM/DAS, LFO, and LRO, advocates from COSA, OSBA, OASBO, and OEA, as well as both Senate and House members, worked cooperatively to calculate a “current service level” (CSL) yardstick by which the Governor and legislators could assess proposed policymaker budgets. In effect, the goal was to determine what a no-cuts-level budget might be for most districts. That process was revised in 2014, resulting in three biennia of disagreement between the state estimates and the education community.

HB 2074’S GOALS: To restore much of the process, originally created and then amended by Executive Order, and to place this process in statute so it no longer is subject to executive preference. The number should not be seen as a “recommended” budget level, but only a factual calculation of what it would take to provide the same level of service from biennium to biennium, accounting for such uncontrollable cost factors as inflation, contracts, mandates, and growth of enrollment. This CSL number not only helps policymakers understand how to compare budget proposals, but also, it serves as a baseline for the Quality Education Model, to describe the difference between *status quo* and the QEM’s full funding recommendation.

VALUE: Education advocates and policymakers alike deserve to clearly understand the implications of various requests and proposals by having an agreed-upon baseline with which to measure variances. Disagreements among key players cause needless confusion and delay. **We’ve seen how a better way has worked in the past; now is the time to return to that collaborative approach.**

SPONSOR: Rep. Janeen Sollman