



**Date:** April 11, 2019  
**To:** Joint Committee on Student Success, Co-chairs Roblan and Smith Warner and Members  
**From:** John Larson, OEA President  
**RE:** *JCSS Legislation (HB 2019/HB 3427) – Student Success Fund and Revenue Proposal*

On behalf of our 46,000 members, who are employed in preschool programs, K-12 public schools, and community colleges, it is my honor to testify in support of your efforts to deliver \$2 billion more resources to our public education system. We believe that our students deserve the best Oregon can offer, and we appreciate your foresight and courage in moving a proposal forward.

As your 2700 miles of listening tour surely made clear, our schools are in crisis. Whether we point to the fact that a majority of our students are in poverty, the fact that our school system has been underfunded for 30 years, or the intense disrupted learning crisis, there is no doubt about our urgent need to better invest in our schools. Our members have shared with you stories of kids in trauma, overcrowded classrooms, decimated library programs, lack of breadth in school electives and enrichment, lost art and music programs, looming teacher shortages, and so much more.

And now, thanks to your thoughtful work, the Student Success Act stands poised to take a momentous step forward for our students. We appreciate the double poverty weight, the emphasis on social-emotional learning, the equity focus, the educator voice embedded in planning for investments, the extra resources for our high-cost disability costs, the significant early-learning and EI/ECSE allocations, and so much more.

We also appreciate your willingness to raise new resources to fund these critical investments. The stable and reasonable path you have chosen to gird these investments for the long haul will no doubt be seen as historic and an important turning point for our state.

Is the proposed package perfect? No, but we know that fully funding the Quality Education Model, plus adding mental health supports, and investing in pre-school would take more funding than can be realistically raised at this time. We also remain concerned about the strings attached to the \$1 billion K-12 investment account. We invite you to work with us to preserve local control, examine the forces that undermine educational achievement (and not just blame schools!), and support our collective efforts to ensure that every student, no matter the zip code, is able to attend an excellent school with a multitude of options, reasonable class sizes, personal attention and support, and resources on staff to help when a health issue arises.

We have always dreamt big dreams for our students, and we appreciate that this legislature is doing so as well. Thank you for that.

We urge you to pass the Student Success Act and continue to consider how to fully fund our schools in the months and years to come.