

*Please include these comments in the official record for HB 3427*

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of education funding and HB 3427. I have been an educator for over twenty years, fourteen in Oregon. I have seen the ebb and flow of funding not only as a classroom teacher, but also in my current position working at the district level.

When funding cuts happen:

- Class sizes increase. Do you want to teach an 8th grade class of 42? Or have so many Spanish I students that the class has to be in the band room during the band teacher's plan? Or have so many bodies in a room that there are not enough chairs, tables, or books? All of this happened at my middle school in 2012.
- The stress on educators, students, and families also increases. I don't feel that I built those important relationships with students and colleagues after cuts, as there was so much more grading, planning, and paperwork. I did not have the energy for the due diligence of teaching and the social-emotional health of my students. One year, I kept my toddler in daycare over spring break-although I so wanted to have family time with her-because I was so behind on grading. I have seen the effects, mental and physical, on my students as well- more anxiety, more apathy, more cases of depression, anger, and of course, those were years when we had maybe one or two counselors for 900 students.
- When our elected officials make these cuts, I want you to know that the cuts don't affect all families and schools equally. The schools that serve higher SES families, they will feel the cuts less. There might even be fundraising to support more before and after school programs or even a teacher. The schools that serve lower SES families will feel those cuts deep. In making these cuts, you are widening the achievement gap in Oregon.

Education cuts do not heal. Ever.

However, when investments are made in education, wonderful outcomes can occur. My district has been able to fund classroom libraries in every ELA, Humanities, and Dual Language LA classroom, providing students with the time and access to read books they find fascinating. This has been a game changer for many of our classrooms and students-across grade levels, schools, and program models. I've seen other wonderful results for educational investing- providing teachers time to collaborate and learn together, and also progress made in social-emotional learning and trauma informed care.

Thank you for reading this. Please support Oregon's school with stable and appropriate funding.

Best,

Kacy S. Paterson

Kacy Smith Paterson

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Newsela Certified Educator & Restorative Practices Trainer

Currently Reading: *The Heart's Invisible Furies* by John Boyne

Last Books: *The Mother Tongue* by Bill Bryson; *Girl, Stop Apologizing* by Rachel Hollis

*Pronouns: she, her, hers*