

Dear Joint Committee on Student Success,

PLEASE invest in Oregon schools!! For the 15 years I have worked in the Beaverton School District there have been budget cuts and shortages that have impacted our class sizes, programs, and essential resources. I am an elementary school teacher and teaching has become increasingly challenging due to disrupted learning and high-impact students, especially at the elementary level. With large class sizes and little support personnel or resources to help these kids, crucial academic and social learning time is being lost for ALL students.

With more and more students entering elementary school having Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) that affect their mental health and ability to function in a general education setting, we have almost daily "blow ups," which include kids throwing chairs, destroying classrooms, and causing massive disruption for ALL student learning. WE HAVE NO SUPPORT FOR THESE KIDS!!! And now with projected budget shortfalls again, we have to try and do more with even less. This is unacceptable and unsafe for Oregon students!!!

One example of how budget cuts have impacted our students; When I first started in the district every student had art class. Art, at the elementary level, helps students build fundamental skills that nurture and develop a strong academic foundation. Parents magazine states "As kids manipulate a paintbrush, their fine motor skills improve. By counting pieces and colors, they learn the basics of math. When children experiment with materials, they dabble in science. Most important perhaps, when kids feel good while they are creating, art helps boost self-confidence." Art teachers were cut early in my career, due to budget shortfalls, and students have lost much of that valuable learning. I have two of my 4th grade student, right now, writing an opinion essay about why art should be a class at school. That says a lot!!

For years, I have canvassed neighborhoods and made phone calls, working to convince people to vote for local option levies, etc... to help fund our schools and keep our class sizes low. Even when communities step up and say "Yes", it is still not sufficient. Enough is Enough!!!!

**Education needs to be #1 in everyones' minds and hearts. Our kids are the future and we need to invest in them and what is best for them. They deserve the best!!
SMALLER CLASS SIZES = more teachers, SpEd specialists, Mental Health Support and Student Success Coaches in every school FULL TIME are keys success.**

**Let's finally reach the Quality Education Model. Our students need it!!!!
Investing in our kids is key to the future and it's the most important investment that can be made.**

Thank you for your time and attention.

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