

I returned to education this year after taking 13 years off to start a family. I have worked as a substitute, a long term sub and acquired a temporary position in November.

I have already been laid off for next year and told that the chances of a rehire are slim as my district will be cutting 200 positions. My passion is working with "At Risk" youth who are disengaged with school. I work to establish a connection with them to keep them coming, get them talking, and make sure they know they have at least one adult who cares about where they end up.

My current caseload is right around 360 kids. It is impossible to connect with each of them, I am still struggling with names of several of them as I have not been with them the whole year. Each day I feel that I have let someone down by not being able to give them more of my time and attention. Kids are failing and I don't have time to do anything about it.

Discipline is out of control. There are not enough adults in the buildings to help supervise the amount of high needs kids that are now in the schools. We have no where to send disruptive kids, so the whole classroom (all 38 kids) suffer the consequences of a few. My school is listed as a 1:20 ration of adults to children - there is absolutely no way that number is correct.

When you ask an administrator to remove a student it can take 10-15 minutes because they are so busy putting out other fires. The school walkie talkies sound more like police scanners than a school communication system.

The fact that Oregon schools are rated so low in the nation is an embarrassment to the state. We need to make difficult decisions, we need to get rid of ineffective teachers and leadership, we need to focus on the needs of the students - it is time to act.

In no way am I suggesting a blank check be handed over with no oversight. The PPS audit clearly showed that there is gross mismanagement of available funds. All districts need to be audited.

I am absolutely shocked by the disparity I have seen traveling between schools and districts. I have brought forward safety and equity concerns that have not been addressed - there is such distrust that many things go unreported because of the belief that "nothing will happen" or there will be retribution.

As a parent, an educator, and a life long Oregonian I beg you to act on behalf of our schools. While there are amazing things happening every day that we can all pat our backs for, there are many more areas of deep concern that need to be addressed immediately.

Respectfully,

A teacher who cares and no longer has a job.

Amy Frewing
6936 SW 11th Drive
Portland, OR 97219
503-539-0577