

SB 764 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 04/03/19

Action: Without recommendation as to passage and be referred to Student Success by prior reference.

Vote: 3-1-1-0

Yeas: 3 - Gelser, Hass, Wagner

Nays: 1 - Thomsen

Exc: 1 - Heard

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Revenue impact issued

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Meeting Dates: 2/18, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Defines class size and caseload limits as mandatory collective-bargaining issues for school district bargaining.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Class-size issues
- Lack of adequate seating
- Pay and healthcare issues
- Rural-area differences
- Behavioral issues
- Previous legislation
- Teacher capacity and caseload
- Struggling students
- Teacher retention
- Financial impact of bill on school districts
- Research on class size
- Existing K-12 costs, such as Public Employees Retirement System

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Collective bargaining is the negotiation process between an employer and a representative of employees to determine employment conditions. In Oregon, the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA), enacted by the Oregon Legislative Assembly in 1973, governs collective bargaining between public employers, such as school districts, and their employees. Under PECBA, public employers and labor organizations are required to bargain collectively in good faith with respect to employment relations, which are defined as including, but are not limited to, monetary benefits, hours, vacations, sick leave, grievance procedures, and other conditions of employment. Oregon law specifically excludes class size from the definition of employment relations for school district bargaining. Under current law, school boards and employee unions may bargain on subjects outside the defined scope of employment relations, but they are not required to do so.

Oregon law requires the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to report annually on class size. In 2018, ODE reported Oregon public schools had a mean class size of 25 students in the 2016-2017 school year, with a total of 23,958 teachers regularly assigned to 553,492 students in kindergarten through grade 12 classes.

SB 764 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Bill 764 amends the definition of employment relations to include class size and caseload limits for school district bargaining, making these areas mandatory collective-bargaining subjects.