



## Oregon School Employees Association

www.osea.org

State Office: 4735 Liberty Rd S, Salem, OR 97302-5036

P: 800/252-6732, 503/588-0121 F: 503/588-8307

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House Committee on Early Childhood  
Rep. Karin Power, Chair

Dear Chair Power and members of the committee:

The Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) represents more than 22,000 workers in nearly all levels of public education, including Head Start programs, K-12 school districts, ESDs and community colleges. OSEA members perform many of the thankless tasks that keep Oregon public schools safe and functional for students, administrators and teachers.

Public employees are regularly stereotyped as having great access to paid leave benefits, but the reality is incredibly mixed. And even with the protections of a collective bargaining agreement, the current gaps in the Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA) still directly harm our members and the family members they are often called upon to care for. Among the overwhelming majority of our members who are women and people of color, family-support responsibilities are never far from their minds.

In the context of a school year, the 180-day delay in accessing protected leave under OFLA is especially hurtful to working families. For a worker starting the day after Labor Day in the coming school year, that 180-day delay stretches all the way to March 6, 2022. It is wholly unrealistic to expect school employees to operate without protected leave for two-thirds of the school year.

This problem isn't limited to new employees either. We have seen school districts reset OFLA eligibility for employees because they are off for the summer and therefore haven't averaged 25 hours per week during that time. Needless to say, it's incredibly offensive to make school employees who've worked for the same school district for 20 years or more *wait again every year* for OFLA leave eligibility. We don't believe that the Legislature really intends for school employees to only be eligible for OFLA from early March through June, but the existing language in OFLA opens such a possibility and should be clarified as soon as possible.

**OSEA strongly urges the committee to advance House Bill 2474, to immediately resolve these and other glaring issues in the current language of OFLA.**

Thank you for your attention,

Bob Estabrook  
Government Relations Specialist