



Tigard - Tualatin School District 23J
Larry Hibbard Administration Center
6960 S.W. Sandburg St.
Tigard, OR 97223
503-431-4000; FAX: 503-431-4047
www.ttsdschools.org

April 14, 2021

Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward and Rayfield and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Sue Rieke-Smith. I am the superintendent of the Tigard-Tualatin School District (TTSD) providing public education to a growing and diverse population of over 12,000 students in the Tri Met, Washington County region.

On behalf of the district, I offer gratitude for the generous support received through the recently passed House Bill 5042, Summer Programs legislation, the American Rescue Plan as well as the proposed full funding of the Student Investment Account (SIA). All of these sources are specifically directed to either provide further investment in or directly address the nearly two-year impact of the pandemic on the students we serve. SIA funds are intended to meet the ongoing needs of marginalized students in the form of supplemental services leading to their success and the District has no intention of using these funds to backfill the inadequate SSF allocation intended to cover General Fund operations. ESSER funds, although significant, are one-time dollars allocated by the federal government as emergency relief in response to the pandemic and are not designed to cover the District's current service level needs. The State School Fund (SSF), not one-time resources such as ESSER, is our ongoing revenue source intended to cover our operating expenditures.

As it is the SSF that is intended to cover the District's day-to-day operations, I write you today to address the impacts of a \$9.1 billion allocation to the State School Fund as outlined in Senate Bill 5555.

For the Tigard-Tualatin School District, a \$9.1 billion SSF will create a **\$9 million operating deficit** for 2021-22, equal to the cost of **15 school days** or **82 licensed teachers**. This inadequate level of funding will set back K-12 education two biennia from the standpoint of meeting the day-to-day needs for school operations during a time of recovery. If the expectation is to use one-time funds to fill General Fund funding gaps in 2021-2023, when these funds end in two years, K-12 funding in Oregon will fall further behind in its ability to meet current service levels going into the 2023-2025 biennium.

TTSD works with intention and focus to align our allocation of investment, SSF, and one-time federal resources with the District's strategic priorities of closing the academic opportunity gap for all students. We are near completion of this year's annual General Budget and SIA community engagement process that convenes community for review and input regarding transparency and equitable allocation of resources aligned to the district's strategic priorities.

An inadequate SSF level will not only make it difficult to maintain current services for students but will also create challenges with expanding our early learning program and removing barriers for our marginalized students attempting to access extracurricular activities.

We ask that you to deploy the use of excess reserves to increase the SSF allocation in House Bill 5514 to \$9.6 B to avoid cuts to school days and our skilled teaching staff. Please continue to lead courageously, investing in our students and schools, who are our future. My thanks for consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sue Rieke-Smith, Ed.D.", with a stylized, cursive script.

Sue Rieke-Smith, Ed.D.
Superintendent