



VOICES UNITED.
OPPORTUNITY REIMAGINED.

5/20/21

House Committee on Education
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for SB 232A

Dear Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chairs Neron and Weber, and Members of the Committee,

Our Children Oregon's (OCO) mission is to be a voice and force for the common good for all Oregon children, ensuring all children have the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. OCO is the result of the merger between two historic Oregon non-profits: The Children's Trust Fund of Oregon and Children First for Oregon. We elevate data and lived experience to prioritize children and center communities. We continue to connect a community of 115 advocates, coalitions, and organizations through The Children's Agenda, a legislative agenda championing equitable state legislative policies and shared investments to improve the lives of Oregon's children and their families.

SB 232A: Support Diversification of the Educator Workforce is part of the 2021 Children's Agenda and supported by many of our partners. SB 232A builds on the work of the Educator Advancement Council, Oregon Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and others to assess, strengthen and expand current efforts in order to accelerate the diversification of the educator workforce. The specific emphasis on determining goals and long-term planning, as well as a path for identifying and recommending future legislation, will ensure that this work continues to move forward into implementation.

The [Educator Advancement Council 2020 Educator Equity Report](#) outlines recent data on the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of Oregon's educator workforce, and highlights the current inequities among teachers and administrators across the state. While the number of ethnically/linguistically diverse educators in Oregon schools has increased in the past few years, it is still outpaced by the rate of growth of Oregon's ethnically/linguistically diverse student populations, a gap that needs to be closed. The report also emphasizes the importance of educator diversity and representation for the educational and broader well-being of students, especially for BIPOC students. Studies have demonstrated lower rates of highschool dropout and higher test scores for

The Children's Agenda

is a broad slate of equitable investments and policy solutions to meet the holistic needs of Oregon children, youth, and their families.



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BIPOC students taught by BIPOC educators, and improved perceptions of BIPOC teachers for white students. These improvements in educational outcomes have immense potential for addressing racial inequity at the societal level.

The report provides a summary of current programs that support ethnically/linguistically diverse educators throughout various steps in their professional development. These include the Oregon Teacher Scholars Program which provides grants to ethnically/linguistically diverse students in educator preparation programs; the EAC's 10 Regional Educator Networks throughout the state that create goals and strategies for hiring, supporting, and retaining culturally/ethnically diverse educators; and local Grow Your Own (GYO) programs that allow districts to create their own strategies to support recruitment and retention of ethnically/linguistically diverse educators. These GYO programs are promising to support the EAC's goals in specific and localized ways, but they require more research on which specific programs and methods are most effective to be fully implemented and utilized by districts.

We urge your support of SB 232A as a part of the effort to research, assess and expand the efforts to improve educator diversity for the benefit of Oregon's next generation.

Thank you for your consideration,

From the Our Children Oregon Team,
Avery Krantz-Fire, Policy Intern
Chis Coughlin, Policy, Advocacy, and Engagement Director
Jenifer Wagley, Executive Director

View the 2021 Children's Agenda at www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2021-childrens-agenda