



**COALITION OF
OREGON SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS**



OAESD
OREGON ASSOCIATION OF
EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICTS



June 8, 2021

TO: Senate Rules Committee
FR: Parasa Chanramy, on behalf of COSA, OAESD, and OSBA
RE: HB 2001 Testimony

Good Afternoon Chair Wagner, Vice Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Rules Committee:

My name is Parasa Chanramy and on behalf of the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators (COSA), Oregon Association of Education Service Districts (OAESD), and Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA), we urge you pass House Bill 2001A, a bill that is focused on retaining our culturally and linguistically diverse teachers during layoff decisions. We strongly believe and know that a diverse workforce is crucial to best meeting the needs, and ensuring the success, of each and every student in Oregon.

In addition to supporting HB 2001A, our organizations are also deeply committed to advancing initiatives that diversify our educator workforce so that we can better serve students across Oregon. From advocating for the Educator Equity Act to securing funds for Grow Your Own Programs -- each of these efforts are complementary to one another.

We know that Oregon still has a long way to go in order to realize the goals of the Educator Equity Act. Here are some key takeaways from [Oregon's 2020 Educator Equity Report](#):

- *In 2018 – 2019, diverse teacher candidate (n = 857) enrollment in educator preparation programs increased almost fifty percent, however the overall cohort completion rate was only 59 percent (n = 351).*
- *In 2019 – 2020, the percentage of racially, ethnically, and/or linguistically diverse educators is much greater for educational assistants (19.74 percent) than teachers (11.7 percent) or administrators (12.5 percent).*
- *Growing student diversity continues to outpace the incremental increases in educator diversity.*

One of our top priorities this legislative session is to advocate for policies and investments that will help our districts recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce, especially in the face of budget challenges.

Over the last several months, we worked with the Speaker's office, Oregon Education Association, Oregon School Boards Association, Oregon Association of Education Service Districts, and Stand for Children on developing the updated bill before you.



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In the updated bill, we'd like to highlight Section 1b which focuses on “cultural or linguistic expertise.” Although we have not seen widespread layoffs recently, when they happen our districts generally begin reductions with their most recent employees; and those newer teachers are more likely to be our most diverse teachers. So, during layoffs, districts lose a disproportionate percentage of diverse staff because of the current statute on seniority. And our members worry that budget cuts will have a detrimental impact on our workforce, our schools, and our students, especially given all of the challenges of navigating this global pandemic and our current K-12 budget outlook for the State School Fund.

That is why the inclusion of “cultural or linguistic expertise” in statute is critical to helping recognize and retain diverse teachers.

Through HB 2001A, districts shall consider any of the following factors:

1. A teacher’s ability to speak another language other than English, particularly languages that are spoken by students in the district;
2. A teacher’s completion of a teacher pathway program that is implemented by a teacher pathway partnership and that has the primary focus of increasing the number of culturally or linguistically diverse teachers; or
3. A teacher’s current assignment when 50 percent of their assignment is in a school or program where at least 25 percent of the student population is diverse.

HB 2001A is designed to help further protect the progress that our state has made in diversifying our teacher workforce, and retain teachers who can best serve the diverse needs of our students in Oregon.

Representation matters. And having a diverse workforce will help students feel seen, valued, and supported in their education journey.

Without this bill, we know that our culturally and linguistically diverse teachers -- many of whom have been hired in the last five years -- will be disproportionately impacted by reduction-in-force decisions due to budget cuts. That would be devastating for our students and our state.

We believe that this bill would be a tremendous step forward -- one of many -- our state must take in order to retain a diverse workforce that reflects Oregon students. We also recognize that the work of HB 2001A alone is not enough, and that we must continue to do more to transform our systems and practices so that we are supporting, promoting, and retaining our diverse educators.

Once again, we urge you to vote yes on HB 2001A. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.