



To: House Committee on Education  
From: Richard Donovan, Legislative Services Specialist  
Re: House Bill 2001  
Date: February 23, 2021

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Chair Alonso Leon, Vice Chairs Neron and Weber, and members of the committee:

On behalf of OSBA membership, including 197 school districts and 19 Education Service Districts, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2001. HB 2001 would change the way that school districts are required to handle reductions in educator staff positions so as to allow districts to continue to employ “diverse” teachers, as defined in ORS 342.443, the Educator Equity Act of 2015.

For at least thirty years, since the passage of the Minority Teacher Act of 1991, Oregon law has had the stated goal of making “the number of minority teachers, including administrators ... proportionate to the number of minority children enrolled in the public schools of this state.” Oregon has never reached that goal. According to the 2020 Educator Equity Report, while almost 40% of Oregon’s students may be considered diverse, barely 10% of Oregon teachers could.

OSBA supports creating and retaining educators that represent the diversity of our students. Both current law and existing collective bargaining agreements make that challenging. HB 2001 would take a step towards addressing those challenges. The changes proposed in this bill would give school districts the ability to continue to employ qualified individuals that represent Oregon’s diversity during times when school districts must make tough budget decisions.

Admittedly, HB 2001 could pose a challenge for labor relations and existing collective bargaining agreements in some districts. However, the goal of the bill is to make Oregon’s educator workforce is diverse and representative of our students. If that means school districts must work with employees collaboratively to do so, then that seems to be work worth doing.

We support and look at ways to continue to diverse our workforce. Thank you for your time and consideration.