



February 1, 2022

Chair Senator Michael Dembrow  
Vice-Chair Senator Chuck Thomsen  
Members of the Senate Committee on Education

**Re: Support for SB 1521 -- Basic Employment Protections for Superintendents**

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education--

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of **SB 1521**, a bill that has the goal of providing leadership stability in our schools and educational service districts.

FACT Oregon is the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, designated Parent Training Information (PTI) Center serving Oregon families as they navigate Special Education services. We help thousands of families each year navigate raising a child experiencing disability by providing peer delivered support, training, and resources. We support and equip families, wherever they may be on their journey. The outcome of our work is families with high expectations for their child and a vision for the future where our schools and communities are accessible, welcoming, and embrace that disability is natural.

Students with disabilities were already struggling to access their education before the pandemic, but it's clear that COVID-19 and the shift to Comprehensive Distance Learning for a big chunk of the last two years has created even more barriers and educational challenges for students with disabilities.

At a time when school leadership should be supported to be laser-focused on centering the needs of underserved students and closing the achievement and opportunity gaps for students who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, we are instead seeing examples across our state of superintendents being fired or disciplined by school boards for merely following the law or for no cause at all. We will not improve student outcomes until we have stability in our schools, and providing some basic employment protections for superintendents is critical first step to making this happen.

Thank you for considering this testimony. ***We urge you to vote "yes" in support of SB 1521.***

Ava Bartley, Policy Director  
FACT Oregon