

Re: HB 1521

I strongly oppose this bill. This bill would remove necessary accountability that the superintendent has to the community for representing their local interests.

School Board members hold an elected position which serves the local community. One of their primary functions is to oversee the superintendent and to have the right to fire the Superintendent at will. School boards must reflect the will of their constituents, or they cannot hold their positions.

We are all affected by what is taught at school. They are training the next generation. Yes, stability is important, but accountability is more important to ensure the local community has a say in what happens at school.

Several school boards fired their superintendents last year for not abiding by the will of the local community. This is how the system works. If you take away accountability to the community you take away the voice of the people, negating current law and removing any sort of accountability ensuring our students are at the center of decision making.

ORS 332.072 gives local communities control over public education because they have a very vested interest in the outcome. What other recourse would there be if the community was unhappy about the education of their children?

332.072 Legal status of school districts. All school districts are bodies corporate, and the district school board is authorized to transact all business coming within the jurisdiction of the district and to sue and be sued. Pursuant to law, district school boards have control of the district schools and are responsible for educating children residing in the district. [1965 c.100 §139]

Please oppose this bill and protect the lawful oversight of elected school board members and the voice of the local community.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of accountability and the significance of constituent voices!

Colleen Cowan