

JOINT TASK FORCE ON STATEWIDE EDUCATOR SALARIES

Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov>



RECOMMENDATION PROPOSAL

For questions or assistance filling out this form, please reach out to task force staff:

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Please submit one form per policy recommendation. There is no limit on the number of forms you may submit for discussion.

Task force members are encouraged to collaborate. If you collaborate, please submit one form per recommendation and list all group members' names.

Name(s) of submitter(s):
Lisa Ledson, Sarah Wofford & Iris Hodge
What problem are you trying to solve?
Addressing the ongoing challenges in recruiting, retaining, and supporting special education and other hard-to-hire educational assistant positions in Oregon.
Title of proposal (25 words or less):
Monetary retention payments for paraeducators.
Value/Finding/Goal Number:
Finding 9: Despite efforts in all parts of the state, Oregon does not sufficiently recruit, retain, support, or compensate special education and other hard-to-hire educator positions. Recent workforce and labor economics studies indicate that unfilled vacancies in special education and other hard-to-hire areas continue to





be a problem. Unfilled positions result in inadequate services for vulnerable student populations, particularly in special education.

Goal 9: Improvements to Oregon’s compensation and working conditions will help districts recruit, retain, and support special education professionals and other educators in hard-to-hire positions. Schools will be able to fill hard-to-hire vacancies and better serve Oregon special education students and other vulnerable populations.

Detailed description of proposal (50 words or more):

Legislature Recommendations:

1. Incentive Pay and Compensation:

- Provide a yearly stipend of \$8,000 or a \$5 per hour increase for classified staff (educational assistants) working directly with disabled students and offer tuition reimbursement to address staffing shortages.

2. Manageable Workloads:

- Ensure manageable workloads by capping caseloads for educational assistants. In order to meet the needs of students in self-contained classrooms, a student who is assessed for the need of 1:1 support needs will at no time have their educational assistant support more than one student at a time.

- In classrooms with students with moderate to severe Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD), if an educational assistant is assigned to support more than their designated 1:1 student exceeding one hour of instructional time or personal care time, per day, they shall receive a stipend of \$100 per additional student per day.

3. Supportive Environment:

- Foster a supportive environment where Special Education educators feel understood and appreciated.



Enforcement:

How will the legislature make sure the policy is followed?

The legislature will ensure compliance with the policy through the following measures:

1. Monitoring and Oversight:

- Establish a monitoring and evaluation committee to oversee the distribution of incentive pay and tuition reimbursement (BOLI).

2. Caseload Management:

- Enforce caseload caps and require regular reporting from schools on workload management (ODE).

3. Feedback System:

- Implement a statewide feedback system for Special Education educators to report their experiences and address their concerns (ODE).

Reporting mechanisms:

What information will be collected so the legislature knows if the policy is working?

To evaluate the effectiveness of the policy, the legislature will collect the following data:

1. Incentive and Tuition Program Data:

- Track the number of staff receiving incentive pay and tuition reimbursement and assess their impact on staff retention and shortages.

2. Workload Metrics:

- Gather reports on caseload sizes, staff workload, and the use of administrative helpers.

3. Educator Feedback:

- Establish a statewide system for collecting feedback from Special Education professionals regarding their work environment, job safety, and satisfaction.

State agency responsible for implementation:



ODE, BOLI