



1/19/23

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyndall Mason, I am a public affairs consultant for the Oregon Education Association. We represent more than 48,000 educators, librarians, specialists and other classified staff in Oregon's public K-12 and Community College systems. This testimony is on behalf of SB 215, in support of our members who are part of the Oregon Association of School Libraries, in addition to being members of OEA, who are asking for an amendment to SB 215.

In May of 2022 the Secretary of State's office released a risk report detailing the 5 greatest risks to public K-12 in Oregon. Three of the five risks that were outlined in the report deal with monitoring, oversight, and meeting Division 22 standards and expectations. The report details that performance monitoring support is crucial to school improvement, transparency is required to foster timely results, and that clear and enforceable standards for Division 22 are in dire need. In other words, creating clear and enforceable expectations, while fostering a culture of support and transparency will be key in improving our public-school systems, not lowering standards.

As we grapple with statewide concern around literacy, lowering, or removing, school library standards seem to be the antithesis of what students and educators need right now. The risk report lays bare the need define accountability and the authority of the Oregon Department of Education while at the same time securing sufficient and sustainable funding for schools, rather than the lack of clarity and the inconsistent investments in new projects public schools are currently experiencing.

What public schools need right now are strong and sustainable library programs with high standards and clear support from the Department of Education. With this perspective OEA supports the work of our members through the Oregon Association of School Libraries in the removal of line 24 on page 15 of SB 215.

Thank you for your time today.

Sincerely,

Kyndall Mason

Public Affairs Consultant, Oregon Education Association