

To: House Committee on Education
From: Sara Schmitt, Oregon Education Association
RE: Support for HB 2656, Elevate Student Voice Act

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Wright and Hudson and members of the committee—

My name is Sara Schmitt, I teach third grade in Beaverton and I am here today with the Oregon Education Association to express my support for House Bill 2656, the Elevate Student Voice Act.

I support this bill because I believe the educational experiences of our students need to be considered when we measure the effectiveness of our state's investments in public education.

In my 18 years of experience as a teacher, I have seen the variety of the ways that we gather data and assess student learning. Teachers use formative assessments during our daily work with students to give us timely, informative and accurate information about how to support academic growth. We also use statewide, standardized assessments to gather data on student performance and outcomes. But what has been missing is a tool to gather information directly from students about their learning environments.

Luckily, the Student Educational Equity Development SEED Survey has been developed to do just that, and we have an opportunity to use student voice to make a more comprehensive accountability framework. Implementing the SEED Survey and the Student Health Survey across the state would give us the most complete picture of how investments in public education are supporting student learning and success.

Despite our best efforts, there can sometimes be a discrepancy between the intentions of district leaders and school staff, and the actual impact on students. These surveys help us measure the success of our public schools *from the perspective of our students*. They ask about whether students have access to high-quality books and technology; whether they have access to challenging coursework and a well-rounded education, with art, music, career and technical education classes; and they ask about whether students feel safe in school and have a trusted adult either in or outside of school. Including this information in our accountability framework can help the state and ODE to better target resources and support where it's needed most.

Thank you for your time today and I encourage the committee to vote YES on HB 2656.

Sara Schmitt
Oregon Education Association