



8550 New Hope Rd.
PO BOX 160
Murphy, OR 97533
541-862-3111

February 14, 2023

Good Afternoon Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Casey Alderson, I am employed as the Deputy Superintendent for the Three Rivers School District and I am testifying on SB 283. While I understand the current bill supports a study, I'd like to provide my unique perspective for some of the experiences in Southern Oregon.

In my role as Deputy Superintendent I also serve as the Human Resources Director. There is no doubt that classified staff are the backbone of the District and provide our students with meals, transportation and other crucial supports on a daily basis. Oftentimes, our classified staff are parents of students in the school building, leaving their working schedule to be determined by the school day. Others are retired community members who are bound by Social Security and Medicare/Medicaid or PERS hour and wage restrictions. The other type of classified employee we hire most frequently are college students, enrolled in educator prep programs, who need flexible schedules to attend in-person classes, complete practicum requirements or student teaching requirements. Currently, we do not have a classified staffing shortage - our classified positions are filled and continue to be filled - but placing minimum hour requirements on these folks who need a specific working schedule makes me fear we may create a secondary education shortage in the classified ranks. As an alternative, and because classified staff are so valuable, a suggestion would be to continue to remove the barriers to school district employment like the cost of pre-employment fingerprinting, background checks, food handlers and ODOT certifications and to provide for paid time off for those folks in educator prep programs (who will be future teachers in Oregon) to complete practicum and student teaching.

In addition, I'd like to provide some background on the discipline process for classified staff. Our collective bargaining agreement with the classified union provides a 60 day probationary period followed by bi-yearly evaluations. In the event a classified employee is dismissed outside of their 60 day probationary period, it is because of issues that are serious in nature that constitute gross misconduct or neglect of duty that violate Three Rivers School District Work Rules. Being familiar with the ORS that defines Just Cause and the dismissal process, I worry that adding Just Cause protections to classified staff will become costly with potential additional financial burdens such as attorney fees, sub costs while on paid administrative leave, the length of time to appeal to Fair Dismissal Appeals Board and the inability to rehire a position in limbo. Classified employees are non-exempt in the eyes of Fair Labor Standards Act and Oregon is an

At-Will state. If districts are abusing their power by unlawfully terminating classified employees, that should be handled through the Collective Bargaining process and the Bureau of Labor and Industries.

Thank you for your time and consideration on these important topics.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Casey Alderson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Casey Alderson
Deputy Superintendent
Three Rivers School District