

Submitter: Sofia Puorro  
On Behalf Of:  
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Measure: SB283

I acquired my Oregon teaching license this fall and began my first year as a 1st grade teacher at a public school in Milwaukie, Oregon. My class size is 25 students, several of whom have Individual Education Plans and others who have specific needs that have not yet been identified by the Special Education Department. Though a 1st grade teacher typically has consistent support from classified staff throughout the day, due to the workforce shortage, I only have support for 30 minutes a day from 2 educational assistants who are in charge of reading intervention groups. Because of the lack of support I was receiving in my position as a first year teacher, I resigned two weeks ago. The lack of proper staffing in public schools makes any position unmanageable, especially for new educators. It is imperative that the Department of Education take action to address the workforce shortage so that our public schools do not become increasingly understaffed as time goes on. Working in public education has been especially challenging recently due to the many changes and residual effects cause by the pandemic and educators need sufficient incentive and compensation for the work they do. I still care deeply about public education and I want to return to an elementary school teaching position in the future, but I will not be able to do so until there is sufficient support and compensation to make the position manageable. I've spoken to many new educators who feel the same way, so the problem needs to be addressed.