

**SB 854 Climate Education**  
**March 9, 2023**

**Submitter:** Michelle Morrison

**Agency:** Hillsboro School District

**Date:** March 9, 2023

**Committee:** Senate Committee on Education

**Measure:** SB 854

I am submitting written testimony in Opposition of SB 854 (as written).

Chair Dembrow and members of the committee – my name is Michelle Morrison. I'm a lifelong Oregonian, parent, school administrator, and member of the Oregon Association of School Business Officials. Today, I'm bringing my professional perspective as the District Financial Officer for Hillsboro Schools. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

First of all, I'm a passionate supporter of climate justice and advocacy and believe education is a great way to improve the quality of life for future generations. I hope to share perspective on three of the structures already in place to move this work forward without requiring districts to forfeit other services for students under the Student Investment Account as described in SB 854.

1. Consider Climate Focused District Operations as a supplement to District Facility Plans
  - Aggregate school operations of 197 districts have tremendous consumption of energy: electric, heating and vehicle fuels (diesel, natural gas, propane)
  - The Office of School Facilities requires District Facility Plans in order to receive OSCIM grant funding and offers Technical Assistance Grants for Facility Assessments
  - Facility Plans and Reporting are required for Districts collecting the Construction Excise Tax
  - Districts may already be connected to partners like the Department of Energy and the Energy Trust of Oregon for programs like the SB 1149 Public Service Charge Revenue for energy projects
  
2. Consider an addition to current [Instructional Standards](#) and Content for Oregon Schools

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- Develop plan and content at the state level (with tribal input), consider pilots
  - Modify/add content to areas like Science, Health, Physical Education, and Social Sciences at all levels
  - Provide resources to districts to support learning, recent Hillsboro School District adoptions cost examples:
    - Kindergarten-6th Grade Health- \$800,000
    - Kindergarten-6th Grade Language Arts- \$2,700,000
    - Both adoptions had a full year of exploration, review, and piloting within the District prior to purchase and implementation (many hours of extended contract time for staff)
3. Integrate over time with support from the General Fund, not Student Investment Account
- SIA is already dedicated to services to students in the eligible categories: Well-rounded Learning, Increased Instructional Time, Student Health and Safety, and Class-size/Caseload Reduction
  - Withholding SIA funds would compromise current targeted supports to students

Ask: Identify the desired outcomes and available structures for impact. Improvements in district operations, student instruction, and stability in Student Investment Account services can ALL be met. A grant funded pilot for study of actual costs and effectiveness is preferred. Consider a cross-department Work Group that includes school leadership to develop next steps for Climate Education and eventual justice. Thank you.

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