

## Help Recruit and Retain More Educators

Our education leaders and board members serve over half a million students in Oregon across 197 school districts and 19 Education Service Districts.

Given all the complex workforce challenges we continue to face – prior to – and now as we recover from the pandemic, our students continue to be resilient, and our educators and staff are working tirelessly to meet the challenges of the moment. Whether it is adjusting schedules to prioritize student mental health needs or covering staffing shortages on short notice, our leaders, teachers, and staff have stepped up – taking on more than what they originally signed up for – to provide the best education possible for our students.

**Having the ability to pay hiring and retention bonuses is one of many critical strategies we need in order to recruit and retain our educators and staff, especially in hard-to-staff positions.**

But when Oregon’s Equal Pay Act went into effect, it made these hiring and retention bonuses illegal. The Legislature exempted these bonuses twice on the heels of the pandemic, recognizing their necessity to address workforce shortages, particularly in industries like education most strained by the pandemic, but their ability to continue this exemption expired with the Governor’s State of Emergency in September 2022.

**We need your support in helping reinstate our ability to provide hiring and retention bonuses.**

Across Oregon, staffing shortages are limiting our ability to connect and care for students and exacerbating our workforce. Our educators and staff are overwhelmed, burned out, and many are leaving the profession altogether. This impacts our operations significantly from transportation and nutrition services, to teaching, learning, and instruction.

In the face of such a significant workforce shortage, it is critical that schools are able to utilize every resource available to attract and retain educators and staff.

**HB 3205 would once again allow schools to pay hiring and retention bonuses, ensuring that Oregon’s schools are on an even playing field with other states when it comes to recruiting and retaining educators.**

After many years of online learning and pandemic-related disruptions, Oregon’s students deserve every opportunity to learn and develop in fully staffed schools with quality educators. HB 3205 will help make that a reality. **We urge you to pass HB 3205.**



### Contact:

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