

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301



ZENGER *farm*

11741 SE Foster Road
Portland, OR 97266
503.282.4245

zengerfarm.org

3/21/23

Co-Chairs Senator Frederick and Representative McLain and members of the Committee

I am writing on behalf of *Zenger Farm* in support of the Farm to School Grant Program in the Oregon Department of Education's budget. This Grant program provides critical funding for schools and early childhood education programs to purchase Oregon foods, hands-on farm and garden education programs, equipment and infrastructure for food producers and technical assistance for the farm to school community. Sustaining the current level of \$10.2 million dollars will support dependable business relationships between schools and food producers and maintain consistent educational programs that connect students to agriculture and nutrition

Farm School is a youth education program offered by Zenger Farm in Southeast Portland. Our mission is to connect students with the natural world and help them develop a deeper understanding of sustainable agriculture and environmental stewardship.

Through hands-on, Next Generation Science Standards-aligned science curriculum, students in Farm School learn about the interconnected cycles of the farm and wetland, what land stewardship looks like, and how their actions can positively impact the environment. Our curriculum is designed to be culturally responsive and inclusive, with a focus on building relationships and traditional ecological knowledge.

Zenger Farm will educate 1,200 (approximately 600 per season) David Douglas School District (DDSD) 5th graders as they visit the farm in the fall, winter, and spring. Each 5th-grade student in the DDSD receives 12 hours of on-site instruction over three, 4-hour field trips.

At Farm School, students have the opportunity to taste new foods, harvest fruits and vegetables, and see farming and growing food as accessible opportunities. Our educators encourage curiosity and confidence, helping students connect the dots between caring for the land and our bodies.

As an educator, we support this grant program because it builds skills for wellness and health in kids and communities. It builds a strong local food system and supports our local economy.



Feedback from Educators “ "Overall, I thought it went great! Giving young people an opportunity to get out of the classroom, move around, and be in awe and excitement about living things and ecosystems in their neighborhood is so so cool, and I think we accomplished that."

Feedback from DDS Teacher, "I love the farm school experience and I don 't think there is anything more valuable than hands on learning for students - Zenger Farm is a really great opportunity for that and I am so thankful that my students get that experience.”

I ask that you support including this grant program in the Oregon Department of Education’s budget at the current level of \$10.2 million so this program can continue to support healthy kids, schools and communities. Thank you for your time.

Jayanika Lawrence
Friends of Zenger Farm
Portland, OR

