



March 24, 2023

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyndall Mason, I am a public affairs consultant for the Oregon Education Association. We represent more than 41,000 educators, classified staff, and specialists in Oregon's public K-12 and Community College systems. This testimony is regarding SB 1045.

In May of 2022, the Secretary of State issued a risk report as a follow up to their statewide public-school K-12 audit previously published. The report itself identifies 5 areas of risk for our state's public school system. Those risks included things like unfettered online charter schools, chronic grant funding public school programs and projects, and lack of clarity around the authority and oversight capabilities of the Oregon Department of Education. SB 1045 appears to address the latter of those issues.

The Oregon Education Association has leaned heavily on the risk report as the framework for our policy platform in the 2023 regular session, and we are pleased to see the Governor's office take up components of the risk report that give us a blueprint for a more stable and effective statewide public school system. The Oregon Department of Education absolutely needs to clarify its role in supporting school districts that are lagging behind the rest, and its ability to enforce expectations when the needs of students are consistently not being met.

As we move through this session, OEA looks forward to a continued partnership on these concepts, specifically the centralization of a statewide system that needs support. It is of utmost importance that our members, from the educators in the classrooms to the bus drivers getting them to and from school safely, are supported through what will be a difficult process of change to our system. While our members agree that accountability for school districts feels vague and unenforceable now, it will be critical that creating that needed accountability doesn't land inequitably on our already over worked and under resourced professionals working on the ground with our students.

Thank you for your time today and we look forward to the next round of conversations on this.

Sincerely,  
Kyndall Mason  
Public Affairs Consultant, Oregon Education Association