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On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB1045

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

WOW, the -2 on this bill is A LOT. First let me say- I commend the base bill. We need to be evaluating what is happening in our education system, because it isn't working. I would love to see a taskforce or study bill that looks at what is working and what isn't, that establishes a clear and concise goal, that gives a fiscal, that makes sense- but I believe the -2 amendment is a pipe dream that the state can not currently fulfill.

Let me say- that with my experience on the School Board I would have thought that coming into this position we would be having more discussion about the current programs, their effectiveness, the money spent, if we needed to adjust or keep going- all the things. I thought that I would SEE the education goal lined out, supported, talked about, appreciated. I thought we would all be rowing (almost) in the same direction toward "Academic Achievement" while directing our upcoming adults to be good humans. Teaching them how to navigate the world with a good education. I know, I sound so naïve, but this is what I had thought we would do. I was so excited to help!

What I have found- THERE IS NO GOAL. What is the goal of the state? For the schools that participate in the Star 360 testing- for Oregon, for 8th grade- 50%+ of our 8th graders are IN THE RED (red means NOT meeting the standard) !!!! 30% (about) are in the green (exceeding the standard), and about a split of the remaining 20% for yellow and blue (almost meeting and meet). BUT what data have we listened to for the past 8 weeks?? We have listened to how much engagement (not academic achievement) our students are having in our underserved populations. And this- this is exceeding! Is this our goal? Meeting needs of students isn't bad- but if this is our goal- let's be clear.

When we ask, or I ask the question- where are we measuring accountability- I am told- well what is success? Again- I ask- WHAT IS THE GOAL OF OUR STATE? This bill gives ODE direct oversight over school districts. BUT there is still no defined goal. Give the schools a goal- let them meet it! This is leadership!

My next huge question with this bill is - HOW ARE WE PAYING FOR THIS??? ODE currently has about 350 employees with a last years approved budget of \$344,949,280 and a new GRB of \$491,348,515. Currently ODE is staffed to oversee all their grant programs. When I asked Director Gill how many people he has staffed for compliance/standards he said ONE!!! ONE PERSON is staffed currently for

compliance and standards- There are 197 school districts- if we were to implement this bill with the -2 amendment as stated- we will be looking at needing to DOUBLE at least the current ODE staffing! Plus there will be districts out of compliance- so then what will that look like?? How are we paying for this??

I desperately want a solution for our schools. But this isn't partnership, this isn't thought out, this is even clearly defined. This is giving ODE complete control with out a clear and defined goal and purpose. No clear timeline. Just total dictatorship... I am also extremely concerned- lets say we do this- and ODE starts hiring IMMEDIATLEY to get staffed up for next year- guess who is going to work for ODE?? All the people who are currently working in the school districts in the metro areas. You will even more cripple the school districts workforce. This will be devastating to an already struggling school district...

Let's take a hard look at this. Let's go in steps. Do it right. Let's build the plane before we fly it- and that requires a well made plan. Do the base bill. Get the information. Then let's go from there.

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony. We all love kids. We all want kids to have their absolute BEST chance!! I certainly do! I know you do too!! Let's do this together! Blessings! Emily