

Good morning,

My name is Reed Scott-Schwalbach. I am a high school Spanish teacher and the president of the Oregon Education Association. I am speaking in support of funding the K-12 biennium budget with \$10.3 billion and \$855 million for community colleges.

I stand before you today representing 41,000 classified, licensed, community college and pre-service educators. Our members are deeply dedicated to their students, and need to know that the state is as dedicated to funding that will ensure that educators and students can succeed.

Across our state, students are thriving when they are in schools with the adequate staffing and resources. Recently I spent some time with students with complex needs. Some students only communicated with sounds, and other students required wheelchairs that needed to be pushed by someone else. When it was time for library, I watched the librarian, because the class size was small, be able to take the time to individually engage each student in the group, and when one student became overstimulated, because there were multiple staff on hand, that one student was able to move away from the group for one-on-one instruction and the other students continue on with their lesson.

Funding less than \$10.3 billion will mean cuts to programs like the one I just described and to staffing from PreK to Community College. Staffing cuts and resource shortages create instability for our students. When students have to constantly have to guess who their bus driver will be, or shell out extra dollars to cover course fees, their positive school experience is diminished. Schools that are short staffed and under resourced do not become the safe, consistent places developing youth and eager learners so desperately need. What kind of message are we sending if that is what the state allows to happen?

The constant shortage of educator personnel over the last 3 years has created an enormous amount of stress, hardship and instability for public schools and the communities we serve. We must invest now in schools to put very best, highest quality educators and resources in front of our most vulnerable: our children. They deserve nothing less than the best we can offer.

Thank you for your support.