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Teri Kimberling  
Ways and Means Committee: Funding Schools

Greetings, my name is Teri Kimberling. I have been employed with the Lincoln County School District for ten years. I have worked as a classified employee during this time. I have witnessed many changes over my time with Lincoln County School District. The one thing that has never changed is that Oregon requires highly qualified educators.

Educators instill a knowledge and understanding of learning that will lead the next generation to greatness. Educators are not just certified teachers but paraprofessionals or classified employees. A school is built by the people in it. To have highly qualified educators requires funding.

Oregon has a very large population of low-income students and families. Many students get their only meals, breakfast, and lunch, at school due to free and reduced lunch programs. They rely on the schools for their safety. When breaks come around their behavior elevates because their routine and safety are slipping away. They do not know where they will have a safe place to be during the day or where they will get their next meal. These children are the backbone of the Oregon public education system. They have the greatest need. The only way to combat this is with the proper funding.

The desperate times of recovering from the deficits of COVID-19 are not a time to cut funding from schools. The current generation of students is behind in learning due to being required to move to remote learning. According to a report in the New York Times, "Children experienced learning deficits during the Covid pandemic that amounted to about one-third of a school year's worth of knowledge and skills, according to a new global analysis, and had not recovered from those losses more than two years later.

Learning delays and regressions were most severe in developing countries and among students from low-income backgrounds, researchers said, worsening existing disparities and threatening to follow children into higher education and the workforce." (Baumgaertner, 2023) That is two years that children need to make up. The people who are supporting this generation of students require better funding. We should fund schools and education. This in return will support a better workforce. A better workforce means less homelessness. Would it not be better to fund this generation's education?

Our children deserve our best. Our future deserves the best generation yet. It is up to the people of Oregon to stand up and say "Fund the Schools". This generation's education is in the hands of the Ways and Means committee. Your hands.

Thank you

Baumgaertner, E. (2023). Students Lost One-Third of a School Year to Pandemic, Study Fin. *The New York Times*. Retrieved April 13, 2023, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/30/health/covid-education-children.html>.

