



**COALITION OF
OREGON SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS**

Coalition of Oregon School Administrators
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Date: April 24, 2023
To: House Committee on Education
From: Morgan Allen, on behalf of COSA
Subject: Support for SB 285A

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Hudson, Vice-Chair Wright, and members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Morgan Allen and I am pleased to be here today on behalf of the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) to offer our support for Senate Bill 285A, which passed the Senate on a 26-1 bipartisan vote. COSA represents over 2,800 administrators who serve in roles ranging from principals, to central office administrators, to superintendents.

Background - ODE's Office of School Facilities and the OSCIM Bond Matching Program

During the 2015 Legislative Session, after years of work by advocates for improved K-12 facilities, the Oregon Legislature created the Office of School Facilities within the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching (OSCIM) program.

The OSCIM program provides matching grants to school districts that pass a general obligation bond. The goal of the program is to incentivize local communities to invest in their district's public school facilities by offering a state matching grant. Prospective grant commitments are made to districts in advance of the bond election in order to inform communities of the potential for additional funds from the state if the local bond passes.

Before submitting an application for the OSCIM Program, districts must also submit a Facilities Assessment and Long-Range Facility Plan. School districts are also able to access funding for completing these assessments and plans through Technical Assistance Program (TAP).

Districts are awarded grants based on their position on the "priority list" or "first in time" list; when the program was created a majority of the dollars available in any biennium would be offered to less affluent districts first. The matching grants are currently up to \$4 million for every school district with a maximum of \$8 million in matching grants. The amount of matching funds a district is awarded is calculated using a funding formula created in statute and maintained by the Office of School Facilities.

COSA believes that this program has been instrumental in helping many school districts pass their bonds. Since 2015, the Oregon Legislative has appropriated about \$490 million in bond funding for the OSCIM program and about 80 districts have been awarded a matching grant.

Here is just one example of the power of OSCIM:

“I believe the matching funds from the OSCIM Program were essential to us passing our bond. The funds helped us take a building complete with an original boiler from 1947, and transform it into a space with modern amenities and safety upgrades for students and staff...I am incredibly thankful for the OSCIM Program and know this investment will be appreciated for generations to come in our community.” -Heidi Sipe, Umatilla SD Superintendent

Senate Bill 285A Provides Needed Updates to Oregon’s OSCIM program

Now that the OSCIM program is operating in its eighth year and, from our perspective, has proven an important and effective tool in improving school facilities across Oregon, it is time to make some updates.

Specifically, it is time to update the funding amounts allowed under the program that were set in statute in 2015 and modernize other provisions of the law. This is needed for two key reasons: 1. The cost of construction and building materials has increased significantly since 2015 and the current amounts do not have the same purchasing power as they once did, and 2. ODE has more sophisticated tools to help determine which school districts should be given priority for these funds so that dollars can be better targeted to those with the greatest need.

With that in mind, SB 285A proposes several key changes:

Current Law	Senate Bill 285A
<u>OSCIM Grant Amounts:</u> Minimum: Up to \$4 million Maximum: \$8 million	<u>OSCIM Grant Amounts:</u> Minimum: Up to \$6 million Maximum: \$12 million
<u>Grant Breakdown</u> Priority List - 60% of funds First In Time - 40% of funds	<u>Grant Breakdown</u> Priority List - 66% First In Time - 34%
<u>Funding Formula</u> 3 factors currently required by statute	<u>Funding Formula</u> May use the 3 factors currently in statute and other factors adopted by ODE rule
<u>Technical Assistance Grants</u> Capped at between \$20,000 and \$25,000	<u>Technical Assistance Grants</u> All increased to \$40,000
<u>OSCIM Grant and TAP Grant Increases</u> Allowed? No - amounts are set in statute and static.	<u>OSCIM Grant and TAP Grant Increases</u> Allowed? Yes - ODE will be able to increase amounts on a biennial basis based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI)

<u>TAP Grants/Tech. Assistance for ESDs?</u> Not Allowed	<u>TAP Grants/Tech. Assistance for ESDs?</u> Allows ESDs to access TAP grants and technical assistance from Office of School Facilities
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When you consider the rising costs of school district construction and materials over the past eight years, it is past time to increase the amounts available for OSCIM bond matching grants and TAP grants. The changes proposed in the legislation will allow ODE to make prudent and needed updates without constantly returning to the Legislature for statutory changes. We urge your support for SB 285A. I appreciate the opportunity to be here with you today and would be happy to answer any questions.