

FROM THE DESK OF

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March 21, 2025

As a parent of a current first grader, as an educator in our *excellent* community college system, and as a lifelong learner - I am appalled at the proposed budget. *Especially* as the Federal DOE is being *axed*? I am perplexed, and horrified that the legislative branches at the OR State level would even *consider* any proposed budget short of *increasing funds* to public education.

In inflation-adjusted dollars, Oregon schools are still reeling from a \$500 million cut in funding in the 2023-25 biennium [*Source: Quality Education Commission*].

The identical budget proposals for the State School Fund from Governor Kotek and the Co-Chairs of Ways & Means make those 2023-25 cuts permanent and will lead to further cuts for some school districts. **The proposed budget doesn't invest in schools but rather maintains the current, inadequate status quo.**

Again I say - in the current political landscape: to whom does this make logical sense?

Since 2011, Oregon has not once spent the recommended amount on public education and every biennium that the Legislature underfunded education, state test scores dropped to new lows.

I see the effects of this, first-hand, in both the lack of resources for my child and all of their peers, and in my classes at the collegiate level.

Adjusted for cost of living, Oregon is 31st in the nation for per-student-funding and Oregon spends \$1700 dollars less per student when compared to states such as Louisiana or West Virginia. [*Source: Oregon PTA calculation based on data from the National Center on Education Statistics and the Council for Community and Economic Research*]. **As student enrollment has dropped and chronic absenteeism has risen, districts' cost per student have increased** leaving limited financial room to invest in research-aligned, evidence-based interventions.

What an astounding indicator of esteem to have on each of your CVs!

As we have already faced severe budget shortfalls, and made cut upon cut - **which other programs or staff do you believe should be cut from our schools?** If we are to 'run government like a business' - then you need to demonstrate that you understand the fundamentals of business, specifically: *without revenue, a business cannot operate costs*. In order to operate, then, the business *either* needs to a) increase revenue, or b) reduce costs.

*You have all signed on to reduce costs. How about we just **try** increasing revenue? See how that works?*

I make this modest proposal - not as a business professor, nor business owner - because I believe in being data informed. Two independent groups of experts [*Quality Education Commission and the American Institute for Research*] have determined that **Oregon actually needs to increase its school funding to achieve better outcomes for students.**

We urge the legislature to give schools and students a chance and the necessary resources to improve outcomes. **The current status quo is not working, and, frankly, neither is the current legislative branch.** Not for our children, not for us as a state.

All best, and, I suppose, resting on 'hope' -

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Concerned Parent
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