

Submitter: Zoe Davis
On Behalf Of: Oregon Schools Employees Association
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Dear Joint Committee on Ways & Means,

My name is Zoe Davis. I work in the West Linn - Wilsonville School District. I have been the lead custodian at Willamette Primary School for the last 7 years. I am a mother to a sophomore at Riverside High School, and a freshman at Clackamas Community College. I am a union member of the Oregon Schools Employees Association (OSEA) who represents more than 25,000 classified school employees in Oregon. I come before you today to seek accountability for our public schools.

As you already know, school districts across Oregon are facing huge budget deficits. Our district leaders are doing their best to cut costs at every avenue. But unfortunately our district announced the cuts of approximately 60 Certified positions on March 12, 2025. Next month, another 16 Classified staff members will be notified that they no longer have jobs in our schools. Our schools already run on a 'skeleton crew' and these cuts will have a devastating impact on our students' learning next school year. The staff cuts this year don't just hurt the personal lives of the educators, it hurts the potential for student growth and achievement.

Our class sizes will increase, and we will have less paraeducators to assist with early literacy reading groups, recess safety coverage, and our one-on-one students will not have the support they need to have a successful day at school.

As a custodian, it is my job to keep our school clean. I maintain the building, set up for special events, help with crossing guard, execute safety drills, and make sure the building is secure at all times during the school day. But because our current staffing levels don't allow us to fulfill all of our daily needs, the other things I do each day might surprise you.

*I am part of the Emergency Response Team in my building that responds to first aid emergencies.

*I fill in, in the main office when our secretary is ill.

*I help with first aid in the health room.

*I took special training to help with transferring students from wheelchairs for diaper changes.

*I help special needs students with toileting.

*I de-escalate children in the hallways, so they can return to the classroom.

*I took Crisis Intervention Prevention training so in the unfortunate event that a student needs to be restrained, I know how to do it correctly without harming the

student.

*I fill in for paraeducators for recess duty, and lunch duty, if they are absent or attending to a special needs student.

*I help restock food, do dishes, and wipe down the food service carts during lunch if one of our nutrition services people is absent.

*I have even been asked by our school counselor to check in with students because she doesn't have enough time to meet everyone's needs.

We need more hands! More trained, compassionate people to teach our Oregon students. We need more teachers, more paraeducators, more counselors, more social workers, more nurses, and more specialists to build a prosperous future for Oregon.

Oregon schools take care of children with a variety of needs. Whether it be housing, clothing, mental health, food insecurities, special needs, or learning disabilities. I truly believe that no one can be successful without having their basic needs met first. If Oregon wants a strong future, with capable, thoughtful, caring, hard working adults, then we need to focus on education and basic health services for all of our students. Oregon needs to meet each child where they are at, and build them up from there. We can't do that without your help. When we invest in schools, we invest in our communities. Successful children are the building blocks of a strong Oregon. All Oregonians need to be held accountable for our future, and our future begins in our public schools.