

March 22, 2025

For the record my name is Frank Caropelo. I am the superintendent of the Reynolds School District. I'm here to speak on behalf of the 9,000 children served by Reynolds who reside east of 150th all the way to the sandy river. Our students speak over 100 native languages, and hail from as many countries. Many are the first from their families to graduate from high school, and some are the first from their family to attend school of any kind.

Even with the proposed \$11.4 Billion investment, our district will need to cut our budget by almost 15% next year. A budget that does not support our ability to serve all students diminishes the impact of critical targeted investments the Legislature has made.

I strongly support raising the 11% Special Education Cap by passing House Bill 2953, and fully funding the High Cost Disability Account by passing House Bill 2448,

I encourage you to consult the AIR report that was presented to the House and Senate Education Committees on February 26th regarding the adequacy of Quality Education Model. The AIR report validated what myself and my colleagues who also serve high needs districts have lived for a very long time. The funding we receive is not even close to sufficient to provide what our students need.

The researchers found that high needs districts need approximately \$7000 per student per year in additional funding to reach the targets set by our state. I hope that when you read the report you'll think about the children of the Reynolds School District, over 60% of whom are impacted by poverty, one in 10 are without a stable living situation, and the over who 70% are doing their best to navigate a school system in a second language.

I am supportive of the Governor's and Speakers' call for greater accountability for schools. Students in Reynolds are capable, talented, and as brilliant as any in our state. Our staff and teachers care deeply about our students and do their best to provide for them. Yet every year that I've been associated with the Reynolds School District we have lost students to violence and unsafe neighborhoods. Our students often must navigate unsafe and violent neighborhoods, the traumas caused by life in poverty, and overcome adversity just to get to school every day that most in our state are fortunate enough to never face.

I know that our students deserve our best everyday, and I know our students can rise to every accountability measure. Yet when your own research report speaks to the insufficient resources provided to districts such as our's, it feels like our

students are being set up to fail. Healthy accountability is mutual, where expectations go hand-in-hand with funding proportionate to the needs we face.

I hope this committee finds a way to reconsider how Oregon provides for our students. I hope that this committee can live up to its belief in equity and provide the resources needed to realize that promise.

Thank you,

Frank Caropelo
Superintendent
Reynolds School District

For the record my name is Frank Caropelo. I am the superintendent of the Reynolds School District. I'm here to speak on behalf of the 9,000 children served by Reynolds who reside east of 150th all the way to the sandy river. Our students speak over 100 native languages, and hail from as many countries. Many are the first from their families to graduate from high school, and some are the first from their family to attend school of any kind.

Even with the proposed \$11.4 Billion investment, our district will need to cut our budget by almost 15% next year. A budget that does not support our ability to serve all students diminishes the impact of the targeted investments the Legislature has made.

I strongly support removing the 11% Cap on Special Education funding by passing HB 2953, and fully funding the High Cost Disability Account by passing HB 2448.

Lastly, I encourage you to consult the AIR report that was presented to the House and Senate Education Committees on February 26th regarding the adequacy of Quality Education Model. The AIR report validated what myself and my colleagues who also serve high needs districts have lived for a very long time. The funding we receive is not even close to sufficient to provide what our students need.

I fully support a robust school accountability model. With the proper resources, I know our students can rise to every accountability measure. Yet when your own research report speaks to the insufficient resources provided year after year to districts such as our's, it feels like our students are being set up to fail. Healthy accountability is mutual, where expectations go hand-in-hand with proportionate funding to the needs we face. In other words, equity.

I hope this committee finds a way to really reconsider how Oregon provides for our students. I hope that this committee can live up to its belief in equity and provide the resources needed to realize that promise.

My full comments will be submitted in writing.

Thank you.