

Submitter: Heather Wulff
On Behalf Of: Farm to School
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

I'm testifying to support funding for the farm to school grant program. As an educator for 13 years, I have personally witnessed the benefits of the program. Integrating farm to school programs into the classroom plays a vital role in enhancing students' educational experiences while promoting healthier lifestyles and stronger community connections. By incorporating lessons on local agriculture, nutrition, and sustainability, educators can provide hands-on learning opportunities that align with science, math, and social studies curricula.

These programs encourage students to understand where their food comes from, make informed dietary choices, and develop a deeper appreciation for local farmers and the environment. Additionally, farm to school initiatives can inspire lifelong habits of healthy eating and civic responsibility, fostering a generation that values both personal well-being and community resilience.

I am asking the legislature to support:

\$12M for Farm to School in the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) budget
\$1M for Farm to School in the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) budget
Fully funding HB 3435, School Meals for All

With the elimination of federal funding sources and the rising costs of food, supplies, and staffing, a modest increase in funding is crucial for the sustainability of this important program.

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