



Superintendent

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Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

I serve as Superintendent of North Clackamas School District, a district serving approximately 17,000 students in Milwaukie, Oak Grove, Happy Valley, and parts of Clackamas County. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the critical importance of Oregon's 2025-2027 biennial budget decisions for the future of our students.

I strongly support the \$11.4 billion investment in the State School Fund (SSF), as proposed in the Co-Chairs' budget framework. This funding is vital for us to maintain staffing, core programs, and support our students' academic and social-emotional needs. This aligns with NCSD's commitment to adequate, reliable funding for student success.

We urge you to address long-overdue gaps in special education funding. Our district serves 17% of students with disabilities, exceeding the 11% cap. Because this cap is outdated, we redirect about \$1.9 million yearly from our general fund to cover these essential services, impacting services, and our goal to improve instructional practices for each student. Further, this does not address the unique funding needs for students with high-cost disabilities.

We ask the Legislature to:

- **Vote YES on HB 2953 to raise the Special Education cap, with additive dollars.**
- **Vote YES on HB 2448 to fully fund the High Cost Disability Account at 100% reimbursement.**

Much is right in Oregon schools. Through the [Oregon Strong](#) campaign, superintendents across the state are sharing what's working, including our district's updated approach to literacy instruction with a focus on research-based and data-informed strategies. This work is already showing promising results.

Now, though, is the time for serious investment in adequate and sustainable funding for Special Education. Our special education staff provides crucial support, enabling students to thrive, which aligns with our mission to empower graduates. However, sustainable funding is essential. Students with disabilities deserve every opportunity, requiring meaningful investment.

Thank you for your commitment to Oregon's public education and for considering these vital investments that align with North Clackamas School District's vision of empowering all students to succeed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shay James

Superintendent, North Clackamas School District