

Support for HB 4022

Oregon Imagination Library Program

February 3, 2026

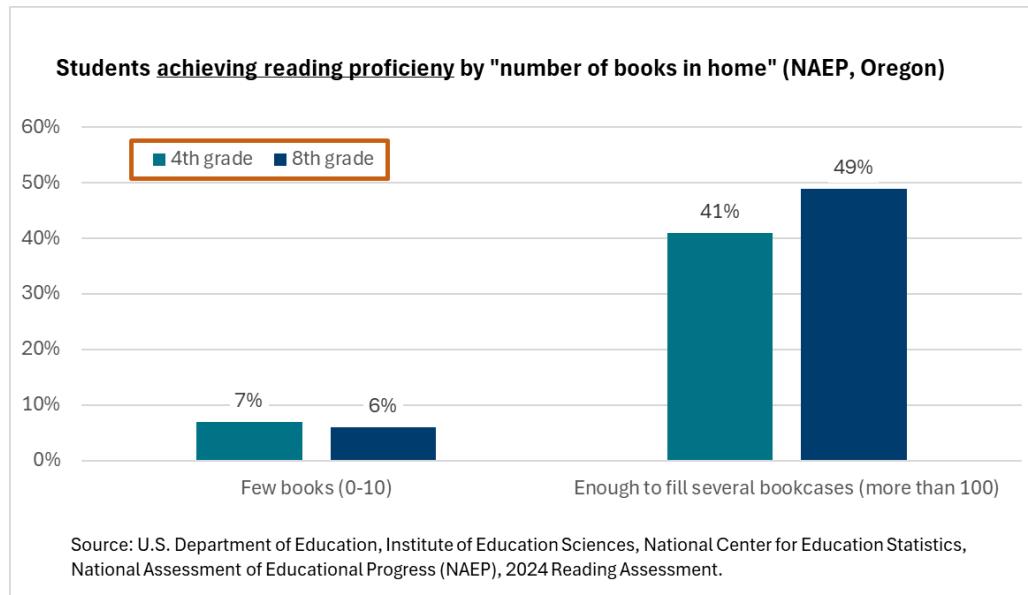
Chair Hartman, Vice-Chair Scharf, Vice-Chair Walters, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Oregon PTA and the thousands of parents, educators, and community members we represent statewide, we urge your support for HB 4022, which establishes the Oregon Imagination Library Program in policy.

Early literacy is one of the strongest indicators of long-term educational success yet too many Oregon children enter kindergarten without consistent access to books at home. The early access to books provided through the Oregon Imagination Library Program supports school readiness and strengthens family engagement by encouraging reading at home from an early age.

According to 2024 data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), children in Oregon who live in households with less than 10 books are almost six times less likely to be proficient in reading in 4th grade than children in households with more than 100 books.

The results are even more pronounced at the 8th grade level. Only 6% of children living in households with few books (0-10) scored proficient, while 49% of children with more than 100 books scored proficient.



The Oregon Imagination Library Program will ensure that children across Oregon receive books regardless of location or cost barriers. By building early reading skills before children enter kindergarten, the program helps create more confident learners and better-prepared peer groups statewide. Early investments in literacy reduce the need for more costly academic interventions later in a child's education. This is particularly important as many school districts had to make cuts to their own library programs (see appendix A).

PTAs have a long history of supporting libraries and literacy in our school communities. Every year across Oregon, PTAs host book fairs, volunteer in libraries, and support Oregon Battle of the Books. Parents understand the importance of reading and the joy of sharing a good story with their children.

Receiving a book each month helps families establish consistent reading routines at home and empowers parents and caregivers as a child's first teachers. The Oregon Imagination Library Program supports families who want to give their children a strong start and a lifelong love of reading.

HB 4022 is a meaningful investment in Oregon's youngest learners and the families who support them. For these reasons, Oregon PTA respectfully urges your support of HB 4022.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Robin Roemer, VP for Legislative Advocacy
Oregon PTA

Appendix A

Library staff (FTE) to student ratio

Statewide total FTE

Licensed librarians 176.2
Library support staff 686.7

Districts shown in red: No library staff in the district (neither licensed or support)

Striped districts: No licensed librarian in the district

According to the Oregon Association of School Libraries, Oregon ranks 48th in the nation in both licensed librarian per school and per student (FTE). Mississippi has a ratio of one Librarian FTE per 595 students while Oregon's ratio is one Librarian FTE per 3,455 students. (Source: 2025 State of School Libraries in Oregon)

