

Submitter: Marianne Germond
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1581
Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Marianne Germond, and I live in Tualatin, Oregon, where my daughters went to school. I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 1581: School Meals for All.

SB 1581 ensures that every student can access breakfast and lunch at school at no cost, regardless of income. This is a critical step to addressing hunger during an affordability crisis and ensuring that students can focus on learning rather than experiencing hunger pains, low energy, and lightheadedness.

SB 1581 makes breakfast accessible after the start of the school day, which is super important because many students arrive late due to transportation or family work schedules. Allowing breakfast to be served in the classroom and counted as instructional time ensures students are nourished without losing valuable learning time.

The bill also reduces administrative burdens on schools by eliminating meal applications, income verification, and unpaid meal debt collection. AND it protects students from stigma and meal shaming, which no kid should have to endure.

Data consistently shows that when students have reliable access to meals, schools see improved attendance, fewer disciplinary incidents, and stronger academic outcomes. I've heard many stories from people I know that they wouldn't have gotten where they are today if they hadn't have received free meals at school when they were growing up. They make more money, and pay more taxes, than if they hadn't succeeded in school. SB 1581 is a smart investment in Oregon's students and our future.

With only a small number of schools remaining before Oregon becomes a Hunger-Free Schools state, I urge you to vote YES on SB 1581 and ensure that no child in Oregon goes hungry at school.

Thank you for your time and leadership.

Respectfully, Marianne Germond, Tualatin, OR