

TO: Senate Committee on Education
FROM: Sammi Teo, Public Policy Advocate
RE: Support HB 4079 to Safeguard Students and Families
DATE: February 24, 2026



Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the House Committee on Education:

Oregon Food Bank's mission is "to eliminate hunger and its root causes... *because no one should be hungry.*" Here's the reality we face: visits to food pantries across the state are up by 50% since 2023, and cuts to SNAP will worsen this crisis. These SNAP cuts are part of a broader effort to deprive immigrants of basic needs, while also scaling up efforts to intimidate and separate families, often targeting schools and students.

Students not only depend on school as a reliable place to eat breakfast and lunch, but also as a place to safely learn and engage with one another. As students grow into adulthood, education and community are foundational to abating food insecurity. Schools must remain hubs of learning, engagement, and safety.

Students are afraid to go to school, parents fear for their children's safety at school, and school staff face uncertainty.

The Trump Administration has eliminated more than thirty years of protections for schools. Immigration enforcement actions in the areas around schools have increased. In recent months, schools and children have been forced to go into lockdown, sometimes several schools in a single day. Students are now afraid to go to school as parents fear for their children's safety at school, and school staff face uncertainty.

HB 4079 allows for clear, consistent communication procedures that staff, students, and families can rely on.

This is why we urge you to pass HB 4079 to Safeguard Students and Families. HB 4079 lays out proactive and reactive communication expectations to keep everyone safe. Consistent application and clear communication is needed so that Oregon's students, parents, and staff are able to be safe and informed when something happens in their community. Parents deserve to know when their child's safety is at risk. When we are informed, we are stronger together.

HB 4079 is part of the 2026 Immigrant Justice Package and is backed by a broad coalition of immigrant justice advocates, civil liberties groups, unions, and community based organizations. We urge you to rise to this moment and support these community-led policies to protect the freedoms of all Oregonians.

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