

Honorable Committee Members,

As a parent, property owner, and educator I urge you to support nothing less than \$7.5 billion as the State School Fund grant allocation for Oregon public schools in the 2015-2017 biennium. Without this level of funding most Oregon public school districts will be forced to reduce funding for music, art, career/technical education and other essential programs that fall outside of the reading, writing, and mathematics courses that focus on Common Core curriculum. As a parent, I know how important programs like performing arts, manufacturing, and agriculture education are to creating well-rounded, academically and socially successful students. Yes. The Common Core basics are important but they must be integrated with other subjects to meet the needs of all students.

As a property owner, I am concerned about the "haves and have nots" inequitable funding between school districts in Oregon. I feel fortunate that local option and bond levy funding was supported by voters in the three counties I have lived - Lane, Douglas, and Benton. In Eugene 4J, Oakland, and Philomath School Districts, voters recognized the need to fund educational programs and facilities that could not be afforded through State School Funding. Unfortunately, most school districts in Oregon do not have the capacity to add funding beyond the property tax limitation level and, due to personal financial variables with voters, there are inequities in K-12 funding throughout our State.

As a superintendent of schools, for the past 20 years I have worked with staff, community committees, and elected school board members to identify quality educational programs and attempt to align limited resources to adequately fund these priorities. Unfortunately, the \$5/\$1,000 property tax limitation, coupled with the State School Fund grant allocation each biennium have reduced our ability to fund our program priorities at an adequate level. In Philomath, based on the \$7.255 billion K-12 State School Fund allocation being discussed by elected leaders, we will be forced to reduce staffing, cut school days, and, essentially, reduce opportunities for students to learn - \$350,000 in reductions. Voters in Philomath, like voters in Eugene 4J and Oakland, have supported additional funding for schools that has not be afforded through the legislature, making these districts some of the "haves." Unfortunately, a \$7.255 billion State School Fund allocation will create more "have nots." Over the long term, the K-12 public school districts in Oregon will not be able to support necessary programs for students under the budget allocation being discussed. I urge you to provide at least \$7.5 billion in K-12 State School Funding grant to Oregon schools during the next biennium.

Thank you,  
Dan Forbess  
Superintendent  
Philomath School District  
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