

Testimony – Ways and Means Education Subcommittee  
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Co-Chairs Comp and Monroe and members of the committee,

Life in public education in Oregon is entirely like a roller coaster. Good morning, my name is Deborah Barnes, a teacher in the North Clackamas School District and President of the North Clackamas Education Association representing nearly 850 educators. Because of the instability of public education funding, our Association lost 25% of our members five years ago. The school year, for the first time in my position, we added educators, reduced class size, returned days, and brought back middle school track. We did so because of the increase in public education funding. However, we are still down nearly 200 teachers, we still have 3 furlough days this year, and we need to replace over 1600 student computers that are over 7 years old as we prepare to begin SBAC testing.

The roller coaster ride was on the ascent to the top of the first peak during the last legislative session. Now, with concerns that we may yet again be facing inadequate funding, that peak may make the cars start the scary ride down, again.

As we move into the planning for our next school year we are planning for the implementation of full day kindergarten, new state standards resulting in the need to purchase new curriculum and textbooks, and the move to new state education department standards are student time in the classroom. I can see over the top of that first peak on the roller coaster and I'm frightened.

Oregon must move forward. Even though we are still not at the funding level required until the Quality Education Model, we will need at least \$7.875 billion.

This level of funding will enable us to return class sizes, along with nurses, counseling, and special education caseloads, to near prerecession levels. The state revenue will enable our district to purchase the needed curriculum expected by teachers, parents and students.

North Clackamas doesn't just provide a quality education for our students. We are actively engaged in supporting the 40/40/20 goal with a variety of experiences that lead to higher graduation rates. We need stable funding to continue working on the goals we believe in that have been mandated by the state. We believe in jump-starting student success with a quality education kindergarten program that requires more than just funding for new teachers but for material, classroom resources, and other resources. We believe in students taking part in relevant classes that lead to college credit but high quality CTE programs require funding. We believe in music and physical education classes that have the resources needed to help students succeed.

It's time to end the roller coaster of public education funding at inadequate levels. It is time to look at additional sources of revenue as we prepare the next workforce. It is time to accept and deal with the reality that public education is a major component of equity.

And, finally, it is time to acknowledge that \$7.235 billion will be a step backwards and we need to focus on moving us forward with \$7.875 billion in order to get off this ride that would require an E ticket at Disneyland.