

From: [Melissa Seifer Briggs](#)
To: [JCSS Exhibits](#)
Subject: Support The Student Success Act
Date: Tuesday, April 16, 2019 4:24:51 PM

Hello. My name is Melissa Briggs. I am a mom of 5 children ages 10 to 17 months. We live in Silverton, and my two oldest attend school in the Silver Falls School District (the others will soon). I have also served on the Silver Falls School District Budget Committee for the past six years. In that time, I have seen first hand the hard choices that our administration has had to make with not enough funding to provide the levels of services that our children need and deserve. I'd like to share two examples with you.

First, music was cut in my kids' school a few years ago. At the time, my daughter had just had the opportunity to perform a duet in her kindergarten music program. She was so happy and proud. Next year, my kindergartner will not have a music program. That is so unfortunate because I have seen first hand what music can do for kids. The last year we had music at my kids' school, I noticed a particular boy in my son's 1st grade music program. His name was Larry. I knew him from my son's baseball team. He was a handful. Inevitably on the baseball field he was acting out or goofing off. He was never happy about anything. But during the music program, he was completely different. He was in his element. He was focused and having fun! As I sat there watching Larry shine like a star during that last music performance, I couldn't help but think how sad it was that music was being cut from our school and Larry wouldn't have the opportunity to shine again.

Finally, my daughter was identified as Talented and Gifted this year. I just went to our district's TAG night, and, honestly, I'm very disappointed. Not in our district, but in the state education funding. Because there is no funding for TAG in our district. I had noticed this as a member of the Budget Committee and it bothered me, but now I am seeing it first hand. Because my daughter is in third grade, and without TAG funding, there is no special class or program or even pull out for her. Instead, she is doing things like a special art project based on a book on her own. That isn't engaging in the material on a deeper level. That isn't appropriate TAG education. We should be providing educational opportunities that meet our TAG students where they are and challenge them to learn and explore and grow. But, unfortunately, with the inadequate education funding in our state, our school/district focuses on the lower-level learners to help them meet grade-level expectations. So there isn't anything left for the TAG students.

So here is what I'd like to say to you today:

- We've been underfunding our schools and shortchanging our students for decades. The time to act is now, and this is a landmark opportunity to do so.
- This legislation would give our students the resources they need and the high-quality education they deserve.
- The Student Success Act would create fairness in our tax system for the benefit of Oregon students. It prioritizes protecting small businesses, while also providing needed revenue for our schools and students.
- With measures to ensure funds are being spent wisely, this legislation is an accountable way to finally provide critical revenue for Oregon schools.
- This transformational investment in our schools will mean lower class sizes, increased graduation rates, expanded CTE programs and safer schools through more social-emotional learning.

Please vote Yes for The Student Success Act.

Melissa Briggs
Silverton, OR

Sent from [Outlook](#)