

Please include these comments in the official record for HB 3427

Dear Committee Members:

I have been teaching science in this state for 24 years and am currently in the Beaverton School District. Each spring I hold my breath as I await the budget numbers for the following year. I'd compare teaching in this state to a budgetary roller-coaster ride, but even that analogy falls short: you need to have some uphill, and all I've experienced is a steady downhill ride in education.

When I began teaching, I had aides in the classroom to assist with students with special needs or English-language learning. Today, with the increased class sizes, I often have 10 students with IEPs, several ELLs, and little to no assistance. Back in 2012 (with the largest budget cut) there was unbelievable disruption in our schools. I was transferred to a middle school and asked to teach 42 eighth graders, in a windowless classroom. I also had to teach PE, for which I have no certification. The other middle school science teachers were former lawyers who had been teaching social studies at the high school, but now they found themselves in a middle school with little knowledge about science teaching. Our students deserve better. We need stable funding so that we can offer a rich, rigorous curriculum taught by highly qualified teachers.

I know we can do better. I urge you to invest in education. It is everyone's future!

Coleen Swihart
20727 SW Santa Fe Terrace
Sherwood, OR 97140