

I wanted to reach out after information on the budget cuts was released for our district this week. These cuts are heartbreaking, both for us as educators and for our students and families. We are already overstretched and turning ourselves inside out for our students and our work, and a blow this size is devastating.

The impact of these cuts on our students and our ability to serve them will be significant and severe. I've been told that we will be cutting classroom teachers and I will have 33+ second grade students in my class next year, with less Special Education support for the 8+ students who have specialized education plans, and less part-time support for teachers to pull out students who are struggling below grade level in math and reading. My school serves a large number of English language learners, who will have less teachers in the building to work with them, my school also serves a large number of students in poverty with emotional trauma and behavioral problems who will need support from counselors and other building staff. These students need more than just me to have their educational needs met. It is an impossible job. Our students and teachers need more resources, not less. As professionals, to be asked to do our jobs with larger classes and caseloads, fewer colleagues and programs, and fewer resources next year is overwhelming. We are facing losing valued colleagues, teammates, and collaborators who we have come to rely upon and who our students love so much.

Schools in Oregon have been underfunded for decades. Clearly, the only long-term solution is for state lawmakers to turn around this disinvestment and increase school funding. The time to act is NOW.

Thank you.