



Office of Senator Michael Dembrow

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 14, 2023

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A Valentine for Oregon’s Educators: Senate Bills Addressing Workforce Shortage to Be Heard on Tuesday

SALEM, Ore - On Tuesday, February 14th, the Senate Committee on Education will hold the first public hearing for Senate Bills 283 and 279, two bills that take direct aim at the root causes of the education workforce shortage in Oregon.

“Oregon has struggled to find and retain the educators we need to meet our kids’ needs, and the pandemic only made it worse. Based on feedback we’re receiving from our bipartisan, statewide educator workgroup tackling this issue, we believe these bills will build a thriving, competitive education workforce and deliver better outcomes for students and teachers alike,” **said Chair of the Education Committee Senator Michael Dembrow (D-Portland).**

[SB 283](#) and [SB 279](#) address staff and substitute shortages, burnout, and barriers to entering public education professions. Designed for the medium-term, these bills build on last session’s HB 4030 which attempted to address critical workforce issues in the short-term.

- SB 279 makes it **easier for teachers from other states to move to Oregon**. It authorizes Oregon to join the Interstate Compact on Teacher Mobility, which will remove barriers to licensure for teachers who are already licensed in other states.
- SB 283 will:
 - **Create a robust statewide educator workforce data system** and regular workforce surveys to improve collection, quality, and availability of data related to Oregon’s education workforce.

- Create a carve-out in the Statewide Education Initiatives Account for **apprenticeship and mentorship grants** to continue diversifying our education workforce.
- Ensure collective bargaining agreements include a **20% pay differential for teachers and classified staff who work in special education.**
- Include **pay for planning time and lunch periods** in collective bargaining agreements when educators are assigned other responsibilities during those times.
- Address the issue of districts under-employing workers serving students with the highest needs by **requiring a minimum of 25 hrs/week and just cause protections for classified jobs.**
- **Make substitutes district employees with paid training.**
- Allow **retired teachers to convert to substitute licenses** at no charge.
- Allow **retired teachers to work full-time until 2029.**
- Direct the Oregon Department of Education to **study and plan for statewide minimum salaries for our education workforce.**
- Fund a **public relations campaign** promoting education as a profession.

Addressing the education workforce shortage is a key component of Senate Democrats' 2023 Oregon Works Agenda. [The full agenda is available here.](#)

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