



*From the Offices of Representatives Rieke Smith, Hudson and Dobson*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 26, 2026

**Press Contact:**

Rep. Rieke Smith, [Rep.SueRiekeSmith@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.SueRiekeSmith@oregonlegislature.gov)

Rep. Hudson, [Rep.ZachHudson@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.ZachHudson@oregonlegislature.gov)

Rep. Dobson, [Rep.AprilDobson@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.AprilDobson@oregonlegislature.gov)

## **Legislature Approves Protections to Ensure Oregon Students Are Free from Immigration-Based Discrimination**

**SALEM, Ore.** – Legislation reinforcing that Oregon public schools may not discriminate against students based on immigration status or citizenship has now passed both chambers of the Legislature and is headed to the Governor’s desk.

[SB 1538](#) strengthens state education law by explicitly adding immigration and citizenship status to the list of protected categories in Oregon’s nondiscrimination statutes. The update provides clarity to schools and reassurance to families that every child in Oregon has the right to access a public education, regardless of background.

“Let’s remember who is most affected by what we do here today,” said **Rep. Rieke Smith** (D - Wilsonville, Sherwood, King City, Tigard). “It’s the second grader who has already bonded with their tether, the high school senior one semester away from graduation, the kindergarten family walking into a school building for the first time. They are not responsible for our immigration system, but they will live with the consequences if fear keeps them out of school.”

Beyond strengthening nondiscrimination protections, the bill also expands guidance for how schools should respond if immigration enforcement activity occurs on or near campus. The measure directs the Attorney General to develop updated model policies in consultation with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) and school leaders across the state, ensuring that policies reflect both legal standards and the practical realities facing educators.

**Rep. Zach Hudson** (D - East Multnomah County), chair of the House Committee on Education, noted: “It’s important that students and families know they are welcome in our schools. This bill

coordinates district and state policy to make sure no student faces discrimination when enrolling."

The bill is intended to reduce confusion, support school leaders, and maintain learning environments where students feel safe and able to focus on their education.

"SB 1538 makes it clear where Oregon stands. Every child in Oregon deserves to attend a school where they feel welcome and safe," added **Rep. April Dobson** (D – Happy Valley & N Clackamas County).

The bill now moves to the Governor for consideration.

###