



PRESS RELEASE

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House and Senate Democrats Prioritize Education Funding, Advance \$9.3 Billion School Funding Plan

State School Fund will stabilize neighborhood school budgets as communities emerge from COVID pandemic

As communities across Oregon make plans for reemerging from the COVID-19 crisis, Democrats in the State Legislature will advance a \$9.3 billion funding plan for K-12 schools tomorrow.

Passing this \$9.3 billion State School Fund budget will help Oregon's nearly 200 school districts move forward with plans to support students, families, and teachers after a year in which COVID-19 and historic wildfires exacerbated disparities in education.

"We know that the past year has been hard for many, many students across Oregon," said [Sen. Lew Frederick](#), co-chair of the Education Subcommittee of Ways and Means. "While some students have thrived under remote learning environments, others have had a tougher time. No matter what the public health situation looks like in the fall, it's obvious that we need to adequately fund our schools so that they can meet the diverse needs of their entire student body and make a targeted effort at supporting their BIPOC students and families."

This plan hinges on the utilization of \$200 million in funding from the Education Stability Fund, a rainy day fund for schools in times of crisis. The Legislature's attorneys have confirmed that the trigger for accessing these funds has been met. Oregon will still have over a billion dollars in reserves after this transfer of funds, keeping the state in a strong financial position.

The Legislature's \$9.3 billion school funding proposal is in addition to the \$250 million for summer learning and enrichment programs allocated to school districts and community organizations earlier this year. That funding will allow many students to catch up and prepare for the next school year. Additionally, schools will continue receiving funding from the landmark

Student Success Act, which directs corporate tax revenue to classrooms and school programs with an emphasis on meeting the needs of Oregon’s BIPOC students.

“This moment demands investments to meet the most vital needs of Oregonians: stable housing, affordable health care, economic recovery, workforce development, and removing systemic and institutional barriers that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities face in Oregon,” said [Rep. Susan McLain](#), co-chair of the Education Subcommittee on Ways and Means. “I’m proud of this education budget plan because it allows us to support our schools while recognizing the need to invest in other urgently needed services as well.”

Much more work is needed to support students who have been historically underserved and face achievement disparities. Governor Kate Brown is leading an effort to make foundational reforms through the establishment and ongoing work of the Racial Justice Council. Legislative leadership looks forward to ongoing work on policy and budget priorities that will meet equity goals across early learning, K-12 and higher education.

Note to editors: The Joint Subcommittee on Education will meet on Wednesday, May 12 at 1pm. SB 226 contains the transfer from the Education Stability Fund. SB 5514 contains the State School Fund budget.

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