



# NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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## **House Fulfills Democratic Commitment to Provide More Money to K-12 Public Schools**

*\$38.5 million in additional classroom funding passes along with several other good reforms*

SALEM – The Oregon House today made good on a long standing commitment on the part of House Democrats to provide more money for K-12 public schools. HB 5055 contains an additional \$25 million for schools, at a time when districts across Oregon are announcing school days cut, teacher layoffs and school closures.

“The level of funding allocated to public schools is insufficient, make no mistake. But we were able to improve funding beyond the \$5.56 billion recommended by the Governor,” said House Democratic Leader Dave Hunt (D-Clackamas County). “As the revenue forecasts continue to improve along with the economy, we can and must make further investments in our kids to ensure they get a quality education and that Oregon can compete in the global economy.”

In addition to the \$5.7 billion passed by the House in April, this bill contains an additional \$38.5 million for all K-12 schools, HB 5055 also allocates additional dollars to rural schools, Head Start and other areas of the education system for ages 0-20. The bill will ensure Oregon meets federal maintenance of effort requirements for higher education and special education.

Several other bills chief sponsored by House Democrats passed the House today, including:

**Career and Technical Education (CTE):** HB 3362 will reinvigorate career and technical education in Oregon public schools. The bill paves the way for increased collaboration between school districts on CTE skill centers and charter schools, and establishes a \$2 million grant program to fund CTE-centered programs across Oregon.

"We're making an important investment in Oregon's economy here," said Representative Michael Dembrow (D-Portland), one of the bill's chief sponsors. "But we're also investing in our kids. CTE programs have a proven track record of success, graduating well over 90% of their students. We're making clear that we want students all over the state to have the skills they need to access a good, living-wage job."

**Teacher Preparation Improvement:** HB 3474 improves preparation of teachers and administrators, including creating a new fund modifying an existing fund to encourage approved teacher education programs and school district partnerships. The bill directs the Department of Education and the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to collaborate on a leadership development system and propose uniform guidelines for model core teaching standards that align with updated national standards.

“I have been a teacher and I have been a principal. In both roles, I have seen the absolute need for a comprehensive development and preparation program for both our teachers and our administrators,” said Representative Betty Komp (D-Woodburn), the bill’s chief sponsor. “It’s what staff deserves and it’s what our students deserve.”

**Charter School Financing:** HB 3417 requires charter school financial management systems to be compatible with those of the sponsoring school district and to comply with the uniform budget and accounting system adopted by the Board of Education to facilitate audit and reporting requirements. Additionally, the measure requires the separate calculation of enrollment for charter schools to address the potential shortfall that would occur should school district enrollment decline while charter membership increases.

“Up until now, school districts and the charter schools they sponsor speak different financial languages, and the funding formula sometimes jeopardizes their state funding,” said Representative Dave Hunt (D-Clackamas County). “This bill contains responsible fixes that will help school districts and charter schools.”

The House has already passed several significant education bills this session. Those bills include:

- Expanded Options (HB 3106)
- Credit for Proficiency (HB 2220)
- Mandate Relief (SB 800, SB 560)
- Protection of Student Records (HB 2029)
- Seclusion and Restraint (HB 2939)
- Tuition for Foster Kids (HB 3471)

“Despite challenging circumstances, we've passed strong legislation to improve educational opportunities for Oregon kids. Our agenda improved student safety, expanded access to career and technical education, strengthened teacher preparation, eased access to higher education for at risk students and improved access to flexible learning options for all students,” said Representative Sara Gelser (D-Corvallis), Co-Chair of the House Education Committee.

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