



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

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House Republicans Call For Transformational Changes In State Education *Oregon's Education System Needs Dramatic Reform And Fresh Ideas*

Salem, OR – House Republicans today called for transformational changes in state education, beginning with the appointment of a reform-minded leader to succeed Nancy Golden as Chief Education Officer. In calling for bold, new leadership, House Republicans expressed disappointment with the selection of Lindsey Capps, a former teachers' union leader and longtime lobbyist and bureaucrat, to serve as acting Chief Education Officer.

"Oregon's education system is in trouble. For too long, the same entrenched interests and individuals have embraced the status quo and failed to help Oregon students reach their potential," said House Republican Leader Mike McLane (R-Powell Butte). "It's time for our state leaders to think 'outside the box' and put forward policies and programs to transform our schools and make our education system one of the best in the nation, not one of the worst."

Oregon currently ranks lower than a vast majority of other states in many key education metrics. At 68.7%, Oregon has the [lowest high school graduation rate](#) in the nation and is the only state with a rate lower than 70%. According to the [Education Week Quality Counts report](#), Oregon also ranks poorly in several education benchmark categories, including: 41st in Overall Education, 46th in Early Childhood Education, 40th in K-12 Achievement, 36th in Opportunities for Success, and 36th in School Funding. An [in-depth analysis](#) on chronic absenteeism by *The Oregonian* also shows that Oregon has the 4th worst absenteeism rate in the nation.

"We can no longer afford to reuse and recycle the same tired politics and policies that are failing our students, families and local school districts," said Representative Mark Johnson (R-Hood River), who is serving his third term on the Hood River County School Board. "I'm hopeful Governor Brown will work with and seek advice from legislators and educators from across Oregon who are serious about raising outcomes for students as she makes future appointments and oversees the makeup of our public education system."

Despite large majorities and control of state government, Oregon Democrats did little this past session to address the systemic failures in the state's public education system. Legislative Democrats passed an inadequate K-12 budget that underfunded schools and shortchanged students; House Republicans advocated for a larger and stronger budget to reduce class sizes and allow for a longer school year. House Republicans brought forward school choice proposals to give students and parents more flexibility and opportunity in choosing an education that fits their needs; House Democrats refused to consider them.

“Adequately funding our schools is a no-brainer, but it is not the only answer,” said Rep. McLane. “We need to shake things up in Salem and stop the revolving door of politicians and lobbyists who continue to put special interests before kids. Unless we break this cycle and bring in bold and fresh ideas and faces, we will never get our education system back on track.”

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