



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 8, 2021

To: Timothy Sekerak, Chief Clerk of the House

RE: SB 580 Vote Explanation

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I am aware of the challenges that exist in our classrooms. As a former eight-year Hillsboro School District School Board Member, a 20+ year active volunteer in the classroom and currently a mom of two teachers, I am very aware. This concept garnered a lot of conversation throughout this session and the amendment brought OSBA and COSA in support of the bill and is a solid compromise. I still have some reservations on what this could look like in school districts, but support the amended version that focuses on equity and Title 1 schools, as the focus will be on schools that need to deliver extra supports to students.

My support does not come without my reservations though. SB 580 does not come with funding for more teachers, it does not address potential impacts to facility needs and it does not guarantee that, even if bargained, it reduces class size at all. As a former school board member my responsibility along with six other board members was to adopt an operating budget for the 4th largest school district in Oregon. There were very tough decisions to make when the budget cuts ran deep. Our choices were usually in days on the school calendar or personnel, both equally devastating options. Approximately 86% of the Hillsboro School Board budget is personnel. One example of what Portland Public Schools did about class size, they provided a stipend to teachers that had larger classrooms. Parents did not see smaller classrooms in those situations with that agreement and I can only guess that it did not solve their concern for more individualized learning opportunities for their children. SB 580 is not a one-size fits all solution, which actually can be a good thing. Data speaks to class size making a difference in certain situations, but maybe not all situations or types of classes, even taking into consideration of the age/grade of students.

We must have stable and consistent funding to build a sustainable and strong school system in Oregon. We need to support and retain our amazing educators across this state. Our students in our Title 1 schools need extra support for the barriers that have been placed in front of them and if this bill can work to break down those barriers and improve opportunity for those students, I am keeping an open mind.

Thank you,

State Representative-House District 30

