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CONTACT: Amanda Kraus, 503-986-1074

Amanda.Kraus@oregonlegislature.gov

Senate Passes K-12 Education Budget That Advances Equity and Invests in Students

SALEM – The Oregon Senate passed House Bill 5514 today to allocate \$9.3 billion dollars to the State School Fund.

“What a year it has been for all of us, especially for Oregon’s students,” said Senator Lew Frederick (D-N/NE Portland), who chairs the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education. “Students and parents of historically underserved communities saw disproportionate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which widened achievement gaps. This budget will ensure we can address those gaps and invest in equity and our kids’ futures.”

The \$9.3 billion allocation is the largest investment the Oregon Legislature has ever made to the State School Fund and is approximately 3% above the current service level. This budget provides meaningful resources for programs that foster healthy learning, such as providing meals to students in need.

“This has been a year of tremendous hardship. We all want our kids in classrooms, and I remain hopeful about the status of our public health this fall,” said Senator Deb Patterson (D-Salem). “When we invest in classrooms and offer an enriched school experience, we have healthier kids and better outcomes for students. This budget will provide the funds necessary so each of our nearly-200 school districts will be equipped to support our students’ success.”

The Legislature and Governor Kate Brown partnered to invest \$250 million in summer learning and enrichment programs earlier this year. The State School Fund allocation will allow schools and students to build from those essential programs and begin the 2021-2022 school year ready to learn and succeed.

“I am heartened to see this budget pass,” said Senator Michael Dembrow (D-Portland), who chairs the Senate Committee on Education. “It is a substantial base for the investments we made when we passed the Student Success Act, as well as the various policies we are passing to promote equity in education. In combination with other education investments we’ll be making this session, this increase will make a real difference for BIPOC and historically underserved students.”

Senate Bill 5514 will now go to the House of Representatives for consideration of the Joint Ways and Means Committee’s do pass recommendation.

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