



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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CONTACT: Molly Woon (503) 986-1074
molly.woon@state.or.us

Key piece of Senate Democrats' education agenda passes

SB 443 creates resources for high quality professional development for teachers

SALEM – A program that will give teachers improved tools for professional development found support in the Senate this afternoon. Senate Bill 443 establishes the Oregon Educator Professional Development Commission, a key piece of the Senate Democrats' agenda for the 2009 session.

“Giving teachers the tools they need to provide a first class education is a priority for our caucus,” said Senate Majority Leader Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). “The success of our children is in many ways dependent upon the skills of our teachers.”

The Commission established in SB 443 will be responsible for developing and maintaining a public website for posting and sharing professional development opportunities and for assisting local school districts in developing professional development plans to meet school improvement objectives.

“In Oregon, our teachers don't have a centralized location to access information on workshops and seminars that directly impact their ability to meet the needs of our kids,” said Senator Margaret Carter (D-Portland), who carried the bill on the floor. “Listings can be difficult to find. This Commission will bring Oregon in line with other states that apply standards for quality professional development.”

The National Staff Development Council, a non-profit that works on professional development for teachers, has identified quality standards for professional development that are research based and have been adopted by over 30 states. Recently, the Oregon Board of Education adopted these national standards. SB 443 helps set up the framework for reaching these objectives.

The bill will now go to the House for consideration.

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For more information on the Senate Majority Caucus, please visit oregonsenatedemocrats.com