



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Jonathan Lockwood  
Communications Director  
971-645-2140

Jonathan.Lockwood@OregonLegislature.gov

**Senate Republicans to prevent classrooms from being held hostage during budget negotiations**  
*Oregonians united on prioritizing education funding*

SALEM, Ore.-A Senate Republican-sponsored "Education First" package received a public hearing in the Senate Education Committee today. The proposals seek to prioritize education funding in the state budget to prevent classrooms from being held hostage during budget negotiations.

"The Legislature must pass these resolutions so we can prevent classrooms from being held hostage by political budget negotiations," said Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli.

"Oregonians are united on the issue of prioritizing education, it is time the Legislature puts our students and our teachers first," added state Sen. Alan Olsen, R-Canby.

"I'm a proud advocate of Education First because prioritizing funding for our future leaders is one of our greatest duties as a Legislature," said state Sen. Jeff Kruse, R-Roseburg.

The first proposal, [Senate Joint Resolution 20](#), proposes an amendment to the Constitution that would require the Legislature to appropriate funds for Oregon's K-12 system by the 65th day of regular session held in odd-numbered year and would prohibit legislator compensation if the appropriation is not passed.

The other proposal, [Senate Joint Resolution 18](#), proposes another amendment to the Constitution that would require the Legislature to fund K-12 before passing any other appropriations for any other state agency.

[Forty-seven other states rank higher than Oregon](#) when it comes to graduation

rates and [we rank 43rd for overall performance.](#)

In 2016, [only 75 percent of Oregon high school students graduated within four years](#), seven percent enrolled for a fifth year and 18 percent dropped out. Oregon ranks 48th in graduation rates in the nation.

[Per EdWeek, in 2015 only 37 percent of fourth grade students were proficient in math, and only 33.9 percent were proficient in reading.](#) When looking at all grade levels recently, in the 2015-16 school year only [55 percent were proficient in English, and 42 percent were proficient in math.](#) This may not come as a surprise if people knew [Oregon students lose almost a year of education when class times and school years are compared to national averages.](#)

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**For media requests please contact Senate GOP Communications Director Jonathan Lockwood at 971-645-2140, or [Jonathan.Lockwood@OregonLegislature.gov](mailto:Jonathan.Lockwood@OregonLegislature.gov).**