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Contact: Dru Draper
dru.draper@oregonlegislature.gov

Republicans Vote to Empower Parents

SALEM, Ore. – Senate Republicans today voted to advance a measure that would modernize Oregon's curriculum transparency laws. SB 1575 would increase access for parents looking to get involved with their student's education.

"It's time to bring Oregon's value of transparency into the 21st century," said Senator Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer), author of the bill. "Current law already gives parents the right to see what materials are being used to teach their kids. For decades, we have recognized parents' right to know. This bill would create a streamlined process for parents to exercise that right."

ORS 336.465 outlines the rights of parents to examine "instructional materials to be used in any class, course, assembly or school-sponsored activity." Despite this promise of transparency, parents often have no practical way of exercising this right. Outdated procedures often require parents to travel to district facilities or school buildings during limited hours (typically during working hours). This is a barrier for many parents.

SB 1575 would allow parents to access curriculum materials via an online website.

"The internet gives parents and students access to near unlimited information at their fingertips," Thatcher continued. "Students use computers to complete assignments and even to participate in the classroom. Our transparency laws need to be updated."

According to a recent national survey, 85% of voters agree that parents should be allowed to see all curriculum, books, and other materials in classes their children are taking. Seventy-one percent believe parents should have a 'significant' role in their childrens' curriculum development process.

The motion to debate SB 1575 failed along party lines, 9-16, with all Democrats voting no. The bill will remain dead in the Senate Education committee.

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