



**OSBA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2017-2018**  
**Approved by the OSBA Membership December 2016**

The Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) believes funding a strong system of public education is the best investment Oregonians can make to strengthen our economy, create thriving communities and improve the quality of life for every Oregonian.

In order to accomplish these goals, OSBA will introduce and support legislation which:

- **Supports Student Achievement:**

OSBA will actively promote legislation that leads to increased academic achievement for all students from early learning through post-secondary. OSBA will advocate to ensure local school boards and communities control the implementation of programs, curriculum and the allocation of resources so that every student is college or career ready upon graduation or completion of their academic program. OSBA will support efforts to increase graduation and high school completion rates, lower the number of drop-outs, close opportunity and academic achievement gaps and provide additional supports for students from traditionally underserved student populations.

- **Provides Stable and Adequate Funding:**

OSBA will actively promote legislation to increase state and federal funding for the public school system to ensure adequate and stable funding for each school district and Education Service District (ESD) so that they may provide a quality public education for every student.

OSBA will actively promote legislation to restructure Oregon's school funding system to eliminate the financial volatility of Oregon's public schools.

OSBA believes a balanced approach is necessary to increase education funding and to provide stable and adequate funding of Oregon's public school system. OSBA will actively promote legislation that strives for this balance by advocating for the restructure of Oregon's revenue system, promoting job creation and increasing opportunities for economic development across Oregon.

- **Local Determination and Shared Accountability:**

OSBA will actively support legislation that gives locally elected boards the ability to make decisions in the best interests of their students and communities for programs, services, curriculum and resource allocations.



OSBA will advocate to ensure each school district is empowered and given the flexibility to determine the educational needs of their students and to provide services and programs that will maximize student achievement.

OSBA will highlight the need for shared accountability to improve student achievement between state and federal policy makers, the business community, locally elected board members, parents, students and community members across Oregon.

- **Opposes Mandates:**

OSBA will actively oppose any federal or state imposed mandate that does not lead to increased academic achievement for students and is not accompanied with the necessary additional funding to implement the mandate, including all costs associated with the mandate.

- **Promotes Capital Construction/Capital Improvements:**

OSBA will continue to actively promote legislation that provides additional state level resources to school districts to help pay for capital construction/capital improvement needs, as well as deferred maintenance costs for all school facilities.

- **Contains Educational System Cost-Drivers:**

OSBA will actively promote legislation that provides relief for school districts from cost drivers that are beyond the control of the local school district or school board. These cost drivers include, but are not limited to, the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), health insurance and any state or federally mandated program or service.



**OSBA LEGISLATIVE POLICIES FOR 2017-2018**  
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**Section 1: Finance**

**1.1 Investing in Oregon’s Public Schools to Ensure Adequate and Stable Funding**

OSBA supports increasing state resources to school districts so that Oregon’s schools are competitive nationally and globally and each school district and Education Service District (ESD) has the funds necessary to fully support operational, instructional and student achievement goals.

OSBA supports the role of locally elected school boards to set spending priorities and opposes using the State School Fund distribution formula to mandate specific expenditures. OSBA supports school funding equalization. OSBA supports continued funding of local option equalization grants; local option property tax revenue should not be included in the State School Fund.

OSBA supports increased funding for all levels of the public education enterprise to support increased achievement for every child and student. OSBA supports the Quality Education Commission's (QEC) effort to promote best practices to improve student outcomes and identify funding necessary to achieve Oregon’s 40-40-20 goal by 2025.

**1.2 Reforming Tax Policy**

OSBA supports efforts to provide the revenue necessary to attain the educational goals of Oregon’s education system, restructuring tax policy to reduce the volatility of Oregon’s current system and to provide for a diverse and fair tax system to fund public education in Oregon.

OSBA supports modification of the state's personal and corporate income tax “kicker” law to allow “kicker” funds to be deposited into a “rainy day” account for public education and used in times of economic distress.

OSBA supports the authority of local districts to seek voter approval for supplemental operating revenue from a variety of additional sources, including local option levies.

OSBA supports efforts to modify the property tax system to mitigate the impacts of property tax compression.



### **1.3 Mandate Relief, Paperwork Reduction and Public Funds for Public Schools**

OSBA advocates for mandate relief and paperwork reductions for school districts and ESDs as a means to streamline bureaucracy, remove duplicative or unnecessary reporting and get more resources into the classroom. OSBA opposes any mechanism that diverts public funds, including tax credits and vouchers, to private, religious or for-profit schools or erodes financial support of the public school system.

### **1.4 State Department of Education Supporting Districts**

OSBA supports adequate funding for Oregon Department of Education programs and state level initiatives that are sustainable and provide quality technical and programmatic assistance and supports to school districts and ESDs targeted at improving student achievement.

OSBA supports providing resources and supports to school districts and ESDs to support and ensure the equitable distribution of any grant or targeted investment monies.

OSBA opposes any effort to create an accountability or intervention system that would lead to the state take-over of any local school, school district or ESD.

OSBA supports the inclusion of school board members to all state-level workgroups or committees connected to educational issues to allow for input from locally-elected education policy makers.

### **1.5 Financial and Program Accountability**

OSBA supports a strong system of meaningful school district and ESD financial accountability for the expenditure of public funds and program accountability for student achievement and outcomes.

### **1.6 School District Capital and Infrastructure Needs**

OSBA supports use of additional state resources and the issuance of state general obligation bonds to assist school districts and ESDs in providing modern, well equipped schools and academically appropriate classrooms and buildings that provide safe, structurally sound and healthy learning environments to promote student achievement.

OSBA supports policies that ensure collaboration at the local level to address the infrastructure needs of school districts, including consideration of the financial impacts of urban renewal, systems development charges and enrollment growth due to new construction.



## **1.7 Oregon's Common School Fund**

OSBA supports maximizing the assets and the investment returns of the Common School Fund as an additional state resource for school funding in Oregon

OSBA will vigorously advocate before the State Land Board to ensure that it fulfills its fiduciary obligation to manage the resources in the Common School Fund for the greatest benefit of the current and future generations of schoolchildren in Oregon.

## **Section 2: Programs**

### **2.1 School Improvement**

OSBA supports state-level school improvement efforts provided they are implemented in ways that grant local school officials maximum flexibility to incorporate community needs and priorities.

### **2.2 Special Education**

OSBA supports increased categorical funding and enhanced levels of state and federal aid for the costs associated with special education programs throughout the education system, including programs for children birth through age 5. OSBA supports full funding for students with the most severe low-incidence, high-cost disabilities, including those served in out-of-district or out-of-state placements.

### **2.3 Education Service Districts**

OSBA supports the role of ESDs to assist school districts in achieving Oregon's educational goals by providing equitable, high-quality, cost-effective, locally-responsive educational services on a regional basis.

### **2.4 Curriculum, Technology and Online Education**

OSBA supports providing a well-rounded and rigorous curriculum for all students, including opportunities for music, art, PE, world languages, STEM, career and technical education and co-curricular activities.

OSBA supports curriculum related decisions made at the district level and opposes state or federal instructional mandates.

OSBA supports the use of English Language Learner and dual language immersion programs as a viable way to provide needed supports for emerging bilingual speakers.



OSBA supports increasing access to technology to enhance and support curriculum delivery and promote greater student achievement.

OSBA supports locally developed alternative education programs as a tool to address the varied educational needs of students.

OSBA supports state level funding to support and improve the technology infrastructure available to school districts and ESDs.

OSBA supports removing online education programs from the charter school statute and creating a separate section within the law for online educational programs.

OSBA supports state financial and professional development resources so districts can implement the Oregon state standards and student assessments and provide appropriate information and updates to the public. OSBA supports local control of curriculum and materials related to the Oregon state standards.

## **2.5 Public Charter Schools**

OSBA supports public, district sponsored charter schools as an additional tool to provide innovative educational options to students.

OSBA opposes changes to the charter school law that would channel public funds to private and religious schools, allow entities other than school district boards to authorize charter schools within their boundaries, mandate direct access to the State School Fund by charter schools or decrease school district funding and oversight of charter schools.

OSBA supports updating the charter school law to require charter school applicants to demonstrate how the charter school will meet the legislatively adopted goals of the charter school law, including how the charter school will provide unique opportunities for children in the school district.

## **2.6 Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

OSBA supports new and continued partnerships with community colleges, higher education, apprenticeship programs, the business community and other entities to increase educational and career opportunities for students.

OSBA supports changes to teacher licensing laws to allow greater flexibility for individuals who do not hold a traditional teaching license to provide instruction in CTE courses.

OSBA supports funding to ensure the long-term sustainability of new and existing CTE programs.



## **2.7 Post-Secondary Opportunities for High School Students**

OSBA supports increased access and opportunities for students to participate in post-secondary programs and classes while enrolled in high school at minimal or no cost to the student.

OSBA supports the creation of a dedicated source of funds to invest in “post graduate scholar” programs that does not dilute the State School Fund.

## **2.8 Student Assessment**

OSBA supports the use of summative, formative and interim student assessments as a tool to inform students, parents, educators and the community about where students and schools are in their learning progression and determining needed supports for students and schools.

OSBA supports reviewing Oregon’s current student assessment system with the goal of improving assessment literacy, providing timely feedback, maximizing instructional time, deriving the necessary information to improve student learning and minimizing classroom disruption for students and educators.

## **Section 3: Personnel**

### **3.1 Collective Bargaining and Management Rights**

OSBA supports local control of collective bargaining and opposes statewide bargaining and the creation of a statewide salary schedule. OSBA supports changing the collective bargaining structure to eliminate “status quo” bargaining and establish shorter bargaining time lines. OSBA supports the right of districts to look for ways to contain costs by contracting with outside providers for services.

### **3.2 Employee Rights and Benefits**

OSBA supports determination and definition of school employee rights and benefits through the collective bargaining process at the local level. OSBA supports an actuarially-sound statewide retirement program for school employees that balances benefit adequacy for employees against costs for employers. OSBA supports local school boards working with employee groups to provide the most cost effective health insurance plans, including Oregon Educators Benefit Board (OEBB) opt out.



### **3.3 Teacher and Administrator Licensing**

OSBA supports licensing requirements that assure a level of preparation necessary to teach to rigorous academic standards, recognize licenses from other states and understand the challenges districts face attracting and retaining qualified personnel. OSBA supports working collaboratively with the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) and the teacher preparation programs within higher education to prepare educators to increase student achievement and address the needs of all students in Oregon.

OSBA supports additional flexibility to allow more teachers to provide college-level instruction in public high schools.

OSBA supports changes to teacher licensing laws to allow greater flexibility for individuals who do not hold a traditional teaching license to provide instruction in CTE courses.

### **3.4 Teacher and Administrator Quality**

OSBA recognizes that teacher and administrator quality is one of the most important factors in improving student achievement. OSBA supports local and state programs to provide professional development, mentoring and training for teachers and administrators that is rigorous and leads to a system of continuous improvement and growth in student achievement.

OSBA supports rigorous, quality, ongoing evaluations of teachers and administrators, which include consideration of student achievement and growth. OSBA supports efforts to attract a more diverse workforce, including multi-lingual school employees, which reflects the demographics and needs of Oregon's students.

## **Section 4: Governance and Operations**

### **4.1 State Level Education Policy and the State Board of Education**

OSBA supports a state Board of Education as the appropriate state-level policy-making body for elementary and secondary schools.

OSBA strongly supports collaboration between state level policy makers, educators and stakeholders, including school board members, parents and students, when considering policy changes to Oregon's system of public education.

OSBA believes that any discussion about improving student outcomes must include recognition of and a plan for the needed state investments to implement the goals.



## **4.2 Local Governance**

OSBA members believe that locally elected school district and ESD boards are best equipped to make decisions in the best interests of their students and communities and will strongly advocate for Oregon's tradition of democratically elected, local governance of school districts. OSBA opposes measures that would place additional restrictions on local voters' ability to govern their school districts.

## **4.3 School Safety and Student Wellness**

OSBA supports local measures that promote school and student safety, improved social, emotional and behavioral health and other health, nutrition and wellness initiatives in the school environment that benefit students, staff, parents, patrons and the community as a whole.

## **Section 5: Federal Education Issues**

### **5.1 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Federal Role in Education**

OSBA supports the replacement of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). OSBA believes that ESSA rightly places responsibility for student success, school improvement and overall K-12 accountability at the state and local level.

OSBA supports collaboration between the Oregon Department of Education and local education stakeholders, including parents and students, when creating and implementing federally mandated state, district and school accountability systems and student assessments. OSBA believes Oregon stakeholders should be empowered to design, create and implement the programs and systems necessary to fulfill the requirements of ESSA.

OSBA believes ESSA collaboration must focus on supports for struggling schools, closing achievement and opportunity gaps for traditionally underserved students and increasing graduation rates for all student sub-groups.

### **5.2 K-12 Funding in the Federal Education Budget**

OSBA believes that prioritizing and increasing the federal share of funding for special education programs like the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Title I programs that serve students who are experiencing poverty, programs that support emerging English or bi-lingual speakers, Carl Perkins CTE grant funds, and child nutrition programs should be a top priority for the U.S. Department of Education, Congress and the President.



OSBA believes federal education funding should be distributed based on student needs not through competitive grants that pit states against each other for limited funds.

OSBA opposes federal education policy or unfunded mandates that do not include financial resources to implement.

### **5.3 County Timber Payments**

OSBA supports the efforts of Oregon’s Congressional delegation to ensure that funding for the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (also known as County Timber Payments) continues or that there is a successor program.

OSBA members know that cuts to timber payments do not just impact the school districts in timber country; the loss of timber money is a net loss to the entire funding system and every school and student in Oregon is impacted.