



# LEGISLATIVE POLICIES AND PRIORITIES

PROPOSED OSBA LEGISLATIVE POLICIES AND PRIORITIES FOR  
2019-20

Approved by the Legislative Policy Committee on April 28, 2018

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.

To accomplish these goals, OSBA will introduce and support legislation that:

- **Supports Student Success**

OSBA will actively promote legislation that leads to increased academic success for all students from early learning through post-secondary.

OSBA will advocate to ensure local school boards and communities control the implementation of programs and curriculum and the allocation of resources so that all students are college and/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 dropouts, close opportunity and academic achievement gaps, and provide additional supports for students from traditionally underserved populations.

- **Provides Stable and Adequate Funding**

OSBA will actively promote legislation to increase state and federal funding to ensure adequate and stable funding for Oregon's school districts, education service districts (ESD), community colleges and early learning programs as a means to providing a quality public education for all students.

OSBA will actively promote legislation that strives for this balance by advocating for the restructuring of Oregon's revenue system, promoting job creation and increasing economic development opportunities across Oregon.

- **Promotes Local Determination and Shared Accountability**

OSBA will actively support legislation that gives locally elected boards and school district superintendents the ability and flexibility to make decisions about their students' educational needs and to provide services and programs that will maximize student success.

OSBA will highlight the need for shared accountability between school districts and their stakeholders as a best practice in improving student success.

- **Opposes Mandates**

OSBA will actively oppose any federal or state-imposed mandate that is not evidence-based with results indicating increased achievement for all students and that is not accompanied with the necessary additional funding to implement 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.

## Section 1: Finance

### **PROPOSED 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 resources necessary to fully support operational, instructional and student achievement goals.

OSBA supports fully funding Oregon’s Quality Education Model (QEM).

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.

### **PROPOSED 1.2 Reforming Tax Policy**

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

OSBA supports the creation and maintenance of an education stability fund to be 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.

### **PROPOSED 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 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.

### **PROPOSED 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 timely quality technical and programmatic assistance to school districts and ESDs and are focused on improving student achievement.

OSBA supports providing resources to school districts and ESDs to 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 takeover of any local school, school district or ESD.

OSBA advocates for the inclusion of school and ESD board members on all educationally focused state level workgroups or committees to allow for input from locally elected education policymakers.

**PROPOSED 1.5 Financial and Program Accountability**

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

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

OSBA supports the 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 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 school districts' infrastructure needs, including consideration of the financial impacts of urban renewal, systems-development charges and enrollment growth due to housing construction.

**PROPOSED 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 current and future generations of schoolchildren in Oregon.

**Section 2: Programs****PROPOSED 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 local needs and priorities.

**PROPOSED 2.2 Special Education**

OSBA supports increased state and federal funding for all special education programs and services, including programs for children birth through age 5.

OSBA supports full funding for the costs associated with serving students with the most severe low incidence, high cost disabilities, including those served in out-of-district or out-of-state placements.

**PROPOSED 2.3 Education Service Districts**

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

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

OSBA supports curriculum-related decisions made at the district level that provide a well-rounded and rigorous curriculum for all students, including opportunities for music, art, physical education, world languages, STEAM, career and technical education, and co-curricular activities.

OSBA supports local control of curriculum and materials related to the Oregon state standards.

OSBA opposes state or federal instructional mandates.

OSBA supports state financial and professional development resources so districts can implement the Oregon state standards and student assessments and provide appropriate information to the public.

OSBA supports the use of English Language Learner and dual-language immersion programs as viable instructional strategies needed to support emerging bilingual speakers and increase student achievement.

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

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

OSBA supports locally developed alternative and/or innovative education programs as tools to address students' educational needs.

### **PROPOSED 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/or 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.

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

### **PROPOSED 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 CTE instruction.

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

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

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

OSBA supports alignment between school districts and colleges/universities regarding the transferability of dual credits earned while students are enrolled in public high school.

**PROPOSED 2.8 Student Assessment**

OSBA supports the use of assessments as tools to inform students, parents, educators and the community about where students 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 providing timely feedback, maximizing instructional time, deriving the necessary information to improve student learning and minimizing classroom disruption for students and educators.

**PROPOSED 2.9 Student Wellness**

OSBA believes that a student's mental and physical health are significant factors in student success and supports collaboration between governmental and community-based programs to provide wrap around services that promote social, emotional, behavioral health and other wellness programs that benefit students.

**Section 3: Personnel****PROPOSED 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 to establish shorter bargaining timelines.

OSBA supports the right of districts to look for ways to contain costs by contracting with outside providers for services.

**PROPOSED 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.

**PROPOSED 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 account for the challenges districts face attracting and retaining qualified personnel.

OSBA supports working collaboratively with the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) and teacher preparation programs within higher education to prepare educators to address the needs of all Oregon students and increase student achievement.

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 and other hard to fill courses.

### **PROPOSED 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 that include consideration of student achievement and growth.

OSBA supports efforts to attract and retain a more diverse workforce that reflects the demographics, languages and needs of Oregon's students.

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

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

OSBA supports a state board of education as the appropriate state-level policymaking body for elementary and secondary schools.

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

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.

### **PROPOSED 4.2 Local Governance**

OSBA believes 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 and ESDs.

OSBA opposes measures that would place additional restrictions on local voters' ability to govern their school districts and ESDs.

### **PROPOSED 4.3 School Safety**

OSBA supports school district and ESD boards determining measures necessary to promote safe and secure school environments for students, staff, parents and the community.



## Section 5: Federal Education Issues

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

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 ESSA requirements.

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 subgroups.

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

OSBA believes the federal share of funding for, including but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Title I, emerging English or bilingual speakers, Carl Perkins CTE grant funds, and child nutrition programs should be increased and 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 and 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.

OSBA opposes any mechanism that diverts federal funds, including tax credits and vouchers, to private, religious or for-profit schools or erodes financial support of the public school system.

### PROPOSED 5.3 County Timber Payments

OSBA supports Oregon congressional delegation efforts 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.