

Legislative Priorities and Principles

Preamble

OSBA's mission is to improve student success and education equity through advocacy, leadership, and service to Oregon public school boards. Education equity ensures:

- All students are accepted as their authentic selves, are heard and valued, feel they belong, and achieve high academic and personal standards that empower them to thrive.
- Student success will not be predicted nor predetermined by race, ethnicity, family economics, location, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, religion, culture, or any other identity.

Public school boards have unique insights on how to address education equity and systems change in their districts. OSBA is committed to supporting boards in their just and fair distribution of resources based upon each student's needs.

Equity is the driving force behind the Student Success Act, and OSBA is dedicated to advancing legislation designed to raise academic achievement for all students and reduce academic disparities for historically underserved students.

In support of OSBA's Call for Equity, and on behalf of Oregon students, we are committed to promoting equity, combatting injustices, and disrupting bias and systemic racism in education policies through our advocacy at the state level.

OSBA believes a strong and equitable public education system is the best investment Oregonians can make to assure student success, strengthen our economy, create thriving communities, and improve the quality of life for every Oregonian.

Approved by the Legislative Policy Committee: April 23, 2022

Approved by the OSBA Board:

Approved by the OSBA Membership:



Priorities

Promote Adequate, Predictable, and Stable Funding

The State School Fund rises and falls every two years because Oregon's revenue-raising and funding systems have substantial variance. Stable and adequate funding is crucial to providing a quality education to all students across the education continuum. To ensure stable and adequate funding, OSBA will actively promote legislation that accurately calculates current service level funding for school districts.

Protect the 2019 Student Success Act

The Student Success Act provides local school districts and education service districts unprecedented opportunities to target new funding toward educational programs. OSBA will actively promote legislation to protect the funding allocated for the Student Success Act in order to deliver equitable outcomes for all K-12 students.

Close the Opportunity Gap

In every community a disparity in academic achievement exists between student groups. OSBA will support legislation aimed at closing achievement and opportunity gaps that exist across Oregon's public schools.

Contain Cost Drivers

The costs associated with health care and retirement benefits are eating into funding available for instructional opportunities for students. OSBA will promote legislation that provides relief for districts related to benefit costs controlled by the State.

Support Local Governance and Oppose Mandates

Locally elected officials, local education professionals, and the local community are in the best position to respond to the needs of all students. New mandates must have necessary funding and be researched-based with results indicating increased achievement for all students.

Support Capital Improvements

Students need schools that are safe, comfortable, and appropriate for a modern and/or digital learning environment. OSBA will actively promote the allocation of state-level resources to help pay for construction and capital improvement. OSBA will promote legislation aimed at diversifying the funding methods available to school districts.

Ensure Access to Post-Secondary Credits

All students should have access to post-secondary credit opportunities. OSBA will advocate for a seamless transfer of credits throughout Oregon's higher education system.

Address Education Workforce Shortages

OSBA will promote efforts both state and at the local level to preserve and improve initiatives that combat the workforce shortage. OSBA will advocate for programs that will help districts recruit and retain a diverse and well-prepared workforce.

Principles

Finance

OSBA supports the allocation of state resources to ensure school districts and education service districts have the necessary resources to equitably and fully support all students' instructional, behavioral, and programmatic needs. OSBA supports appropriate financial tax policy to make Oregon schools competitive, nationally, and globally, including the preservation of other funding options for local district consideration.

Student Programs

OSBA supports high-quality programs that equitably serve all students in obtaining a comprehensive and well-rounded education. OSBA supports new and continued partnerships with education stakeholders to increase educational and career opportunities for students.

Student Safety and Wellness

OSBA supports safe and secure school environments, the physical health and overall well-being of all students, and services that promote social, emotional, and behavioral health.

Personnel

OSBA supports attracting and retaining effective employees to create a healthy, diverse, culturally responsible, safe, and sustainable workforce. OSBA supports local management, local contract negotiations, and continued conversations regarding professional development, licensure, and career advancement for personnel.

Governance and Operations

OSBA believes locally elected school district, ESD, and community college boards are best equipped to make decisions in the best interest of students and communities. OSBA supports cross-system collaboration, alignment, and accountability among education stakeholders and partners.

Federal Education Issues

OSBA will advocate for the federal government to prioritize, streamline, and fully fund programs that support students.