

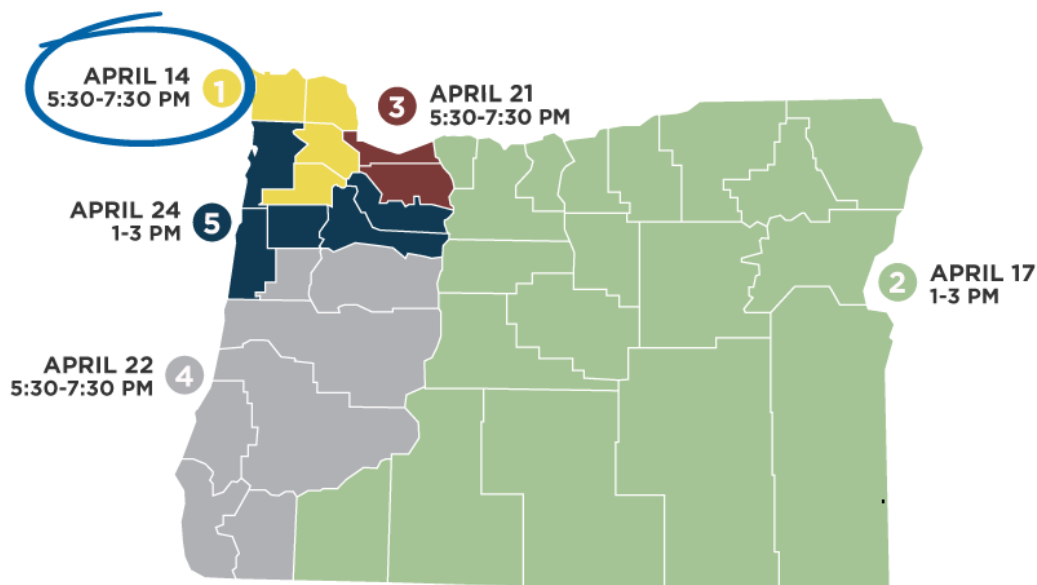
OSBA offices temporarily close, but staff and advice still available

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# State budget 'road show' is chance to take advantage of legislators' attention

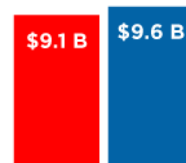
Monday, April 12, 2021

## STATE BUDGET HEARINGS



**THE JOINT WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE** is taking online testimony on the state budget from each of Oregon's five congressional districts. Education advocates can watch and submit testimony through the Oregon Legislature's website.

[bit.ly/2021BudgetHearings](https://bit.ly/2021BudgetHearings)



**LEGISLATIVE LEADERS** have proposed \$9.1 billion for the State School Fund. School officials calculate schools need \$9.6 billion to maintain current services. OSBA is encouraging education leaders to tell legislators the real effects in their schools of a \$500 million shortfall.

Rapid action by the Legislature to support summer learning shows legislators are tuned into the pandemic-related challenges schools face. Upcoming hearings for the state budget are an opportunity to give legislators the full picture.

The co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means announced April 1 the schedule for public meetings on their [2021-2023 state budget framework](#).

That proposal would allocate \$9.1 billion for the State School Fund. School business officials, working in conjunction with OSBA and the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators, calculate schools need **at least \$9.6 billion to maintain current services**. This proposed \$500 million shortfall represents devastating cuts to district operational budgets that would lead to loss of staff and learning time. For school board members and education advocates, these budget meetings are an opportunity to tell legislators directly how important it is to fully fund schools.

These meetings, a biennial tradition, are usually referred to as “road shows” for the committee because the members travel statewide to hold hearings in cities and towns across Oregon. This year will be different. Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the hearings will be virtual, and those wishing to testify are encouraged to organize by congressional district. The announced schedule is:

- District 1 (Rep. Suzanne Bonamici): [5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 14](#)
- District 2 (Rep. Cliff Bentz): [1-3 p.m. Saturday, April 17](#)
- District 3 (Rep. Earl Blumenauer): [5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 21](#)
- District 4 (Rep. Peter DeFazio): [5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 22](#)
- District 5 (Rep. Kurt Schrader): [1-3 p.m. Saturday, April 24](#)

To submit written testimony or sign up to testify during the hearings, visit the [Ways and Means legislative webpage](#).

Written testimony for the hearings is organized under Senate Bill 5555. You can use the meeting date linked above for your congressional district to sign up to testify remotely.

These meetings are scheduled to occur after an unprecedented \$250 million allocation for summer learning has made its way through the Legislature. The funding, included in [House Bill 5042](#), has been approved by the House and Senate and is on its way to the desk of Gov. Kate Brown. The bill is the vehicle for the Summer Learning and Child Care Package announced by legislative leaders and Brown early last month.

Senate President Peter Courtney voiced his support for the bill in a press release, saying the money “is a real win for our kids.”

The money is intended to combat COVID-19-related learning loss and emotional harm. The bill allocates \$195.6 million for grants to school districts and Education Service Districts for summer learning programs, enrichment programs and wrap-around child care, [according to the Legislative Fiscal Office](#). The bill allocates a further \$40 million for summer enrichment programs provided by community-based organizations.

[In a contentious and slow session](#), this bill moved through the legislative process unusually quickly. The pace has been so rapid that the Oregon Department of Education is still trying to catch up.

ODE has created a [dedicated website with information on the full grant allocation](#) and, in an email to superintendents and school business managers, indicated [completed grant agreements will be executed in mid- to late May](#). District-level projections of [potential grant amounts were also included](#).

- Richard Donovan  
Legislative Services specialist

## Related content