



# 2024-25 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## **Establish an accurate method for calculating the true costs of schools**

Governor Kotek recommended updates to the Current Service Level calculation method that significantly improves the accuracy and will cost an estimated \$515 million increase statewide from the previous method in the upcoming biennium. If funded, Salem-Keizer's funding would increase by approximately \$36 million in the next biennium.

SKPS Policy Position: We ask elected officials to fully fund the Governor's recommended modifications to the CSL formula.

## **Exercise caution in creating new, restricted grant programs. Sustain and scale existing grant programs.**

Oregon has a history of adding new restricted grant programs for K-12 education. At this point, districts are struggling with the ever-growing administrative demands required by these grants.

SKPS Policy Position: We ask elected officials to provide adequate and stable funding for the State School Fund and other core investments. We oppose the creation of new restricted grants, and especially those that are not sustainable or require competition amongst districts.

## **Correct past and suspend future unfunded/underfunded mandates.**

New legislation sometimes increases costs for school districts without accompanying resources to pay for the mandates.

SKPS Policy Position: We ask elected officials to oppose bills that are not costed out or do not provide resources for implementation. We further ask for additional funding to cover the costs associated with the new unemployment insurance provisions.

## **Increase special education funding and support**

**Increase the special education funding cap and add the funding required to pay for it.**

Oregon currently imposes an 11% special education cap, which is well below the state and national average of 15%. If SKPS received full funding for all students receiving special education services, it would result in an approximately \$22 million increase this biennium.

SKPS Policy Position: We ask elected officials to increase the special education funding cap to match the national average and fully fund the change.

**Fund the expansion of the high-cost disability reimbursement program.**

Oregon underfunds its high-cost disability reimbursement program. If SKPS received full reimbursement for eligible expenses, it would result in an approximately \$5 million increase this biennium.

SKPS Policy Position: We ask elected officials to increase the reimbursement rate and increase the 2025-27 general fund appropriation for the High-Cost Disability grant.

**Fund early childhood screening and intervention services to give students a strong start in kindergarten.**

Oregon's youngest learners sometimes wait months for early childhood special education services because Oregon underfunds the entities responsible for providing these critical services. In SKPS, students often start kindergarten without the services they need. Oregon also underfunds services for low-incidence disabilities like vision and hearing impairments

Policy statement: We ask elected officials to establish and fund Education Services Districts at the level necessary to meet the needs of Oregon's most vulnerable young children and students with low-incidence disabilities.



# 2024-25 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

---

## The Salem-Keizer Board of Education offers its support for:

- Legislation requiring administrative burden reduction for public schools.
- Increases in state funding for high-quality early childhood education and expansion of transportation funding for students enrolled in licensed early childhood education programs like Head Start and Preschool Promise.
- Legislation and study commissions focused on increasing the ability of public schools to access Medicaid reimbursement for eligible student services. Oregon schools need access to federal funding to cover eligible services and supplement the state funding that is currently carrying the costs of health services.
- Legislation that provides funding and reduces barriers for school-based health centers. Salem-Keizer Public Schools serve an economically disadvantaged community and access to basic medical care can have a transformative impact on students and their families.
- Legislation requiring the study and eventual action to close the gap between the standards required for the Quality Education Model (QEM) and current level of education funding in Oregon. This review should include an investigation of the current funding formula, a review and update of the QEM standards, and a reconsideration of the poverty weight within the funding formula.
- Legislation that increases resources and support to families in need and reduces the barriers to accessing support.
- Increases in summer school funding and the transition from competitive grants to formula-based funding. It further supports reducing administrative barriers to accessing and administering state-funded summer school programming.

---

## Salem-Keizer's Board of Education opposes:

Any legislation or funding strategy that redistributes state funding for public education without adequate and commensurate increases in total funding. Redistribution of existing funding would create district winners and losers and in that, could harm our collective cause of providing a great education for all Oregon students.