



VOICES UNITED.
OPPORTUNITY REIMAGINED.

March 31, 2021

Joint Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony on SB 5513 and Oregon's K-12 Education Budget for 2021-23

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, and Members of the Committee,

Our Children Oregon's (OCO) mission is to be a voice and force for the common good for all Oregon children, ensuring all children have the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. OCO is the result of the merger between two historic Oregon non-profits: The Children's Trust Fund of Oregon and Children First for Oregon. We elevate data and lived experience to prioritize children and center communities. We continue to connect a community of 115 advocates, coalitions, and organizations through The Children's Agenda, a legislative agenda championing equitable state legislative policies and shared investments to improving the lives of Oregon's children and their families.

Please see our earlier testimony on the Early Learning sections of SB 5513 [here](#).

Through our testimony today on the K-12 portion of SB 5513 we want to elevate the voices of **the Oregon Partners for Education Justice and join them in urging this Legislature to build on the promise of the Student Success Act. We must invest in a public education system that works for all—especially Black children, Indigenous children, children of color, low-income children, children in rural communities, children experiencing disability, and immigrant and refugee children.**

We ask you, the Oregon Legislature, to take steps to ensure that state resources are being spent equitably to meet the needs of children who have been historically underserved by Oregon's education system and are now disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Oregon's education budget for the 2021-23 biennium must prioritize investments in culturally responsive programs, services, curriculum, and supports that respond to the diverse strengths and needs of Oregon students. We recognize that many funding decisions are made at the local level, and it

The Children's Agenda

is a broad slate of equitable investments and policy solutions to meet the holistic needs of Oregon children, youth, and their families.



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is critical that school district meaningfully engage and listen to historically underserved children, students, and families when deciding how state resources are being spent to meet diverse needs at the local level.

The Student Success Act offers a guide for how state leaders can support school districts to work in true partnership with local communities to make equitable spending decisions through transparent, accessible, and inclusive processes. For a more equitable recovery, we urge this Legislature to embed the Student Success Act's values and expectations throughout the state budget to ensure all education funds—including the State School Fund—are closing opportunity gaps, improving student outcomes, and sparking systemic change.

In addition to maintaining full and dedicated funding for the Student Success Act and elevating the [investments outlined by the Oregon Partners for Education Justice](#), the [2021 Children's Agenda](#) includes several specific new investments in K-12 education programming:

- **Support Educator Diversification** through an increased investment in the **Educator Advancement Council**, including new investments to **recruit, retain, and support a diverse educator workforce**; **\$14 million** to develop an **anti-racism initiative for educators** and create an **Indigenous and Tribal Educator Institute**.
- **Addressing Racism in Public Schools** including small initial steps with:
 - **\$334,033** to convene an advisory group to develop **Social and Emotional Learning Content Standards for K-12 schools**. [HB 2166 -1]
 - **\$646,331** to review **Discipline Data on Suspension/Expulsion in K-12**. [SB 328]

We urge you to center community-driven priorities as an essential step toward advancing a more inclusive, equitable, and racially just education system for Oregon's children.

On behalf of the Our Children Oregon team,

Chis Coughlin, Policy, Advocacy, and Engagement Director

View the 2021 Children's Agenda at www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2021-childrens-agenda