



LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR 2016 – 2017

The Beaverton School District’s top priority for the 2017 Legislative Session is an adequate investment in public education on Oregon to facilitate the advancement of each and every student in the state. Under Oregon’s current total tax revenue system, the State bears the primary responsibility for funding education and while a decade of decline has mostly been reversed in recent legislative sessions we are far from where we need or want to be in Oregon.

Education funding must be prioritized. Funding for K-12 in the 2003-05 biennium was 44.8% of the state general fund, since that high water mark funding for education has declined to as low as 38.8% and now hovers near 40%. This difference translates to hundreds of millions for schools in Oregon and it translates into one of the shortest school years in the nation and some of the largest class sizes in the nation.

- 1 in 5 kids in Oregon live in poverty.
(Annie E. Casey Foundation, Oregon Kids Count Profile, 2015)
- Oregon students ranked #38 in the nation for performance, which is not at all surprising given our investment in schools ranks #39.
(OregonLive US School Performance Rankings, June 2015)
- Funding is about 25% below what an expert, non-partisan committee on quality education in Oregon says it would take to help 90% of students graduate.
(Oregon Quality Education Commission 2014)
- 1 in 4 Oregon students – that’s 10,000 kids – fails to graduate from high school on time.
(Oregon Department of Education, 2014-15 four-year cohort rates for students entering HS in 2011-12)

The Beaverton School District will work vigorously with all allies that seek to bring about greater total investment in education. The Quality Education Model (QEM) will remain our benchmark in measuring progress toward achieving the goal of adequate funding for Oregon. Beaverton’s students, along with all the students in Oregon are the “Promise of Oregon” and deserve our investment.

Beyond our top priority of funding for education, Beaverton will evaluate all proposals before the legislature against the district’s four pillars: Excellence, Innovation, Equity, & Collaboration.

District Goal: WE empower all students to achieve post-high school success.

The Beaverton School District recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups. It is the policy of the Beaverton School District that there will be no discrimination or harassment of individuals or groups based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, age, veterans' status, genetic information or disability in any educational programs, activities or employment.

Legislative Priorities

School Funding

- The Beaverton School District supports a ***broad investment in public education*** through an increase in the appropriation to the State School Fund. If we are to meet the goals outlined in statute a significantly increased State School Fund is required. The state's Quality Education Model provides the benchmark for determining what level of investment is needed and any appropriation below this benchmark must include a clear path for how to reach it. We also call on the legislature to make additional funding for specific state mandates such as PE minutes and instructional time.
- The Beaverton School District supports measure that would ***increase total revenues*** available to the state legislature that would lead to increased investments in education. We also support measures that would enhance existing, or create new, local alternatives to state funding. By giving districts additional local tools for investing in education (alternative local option authority, other local taxing authority, etc.) districts would be able to have a dialogue with local voters and taxpayers about the type of schools a community wants and needs.
- The Beaverton School District only supports modifications to the school funding distribution formula that are research based and intended to address the cost drivers facing school districts as a result of any particular student demographic or weighting. Further, any formula adjustment should be accompanied by an additional appropriation to the State School Fund to "pay for" the additional weights added.
- The Beaverton School District opposes unfunded mandates and cost shifting from other areas of government to schools; additionally, the District strongly supports utilizing alternative and appropriate funding sources to pay for non-educational services to students such as Human Service funding for student mental health and other social services being provided in schools.

Local/Specific

- The Beaverton School District supports increased access to and opportunities for participation in transition options such as accelerated learning, access to higher education while in High School and high quality Career & Technical Education (CTE) options, including traditional CTE, STEM and STEAM programs. We specifically support additional legislative investments outside of the State School Fund in such programs (i.e. Increased CTE revitalization grants) and encourage new revenue options to allow for such investments. Further, we support incentivizing the creation of robust local programs or regional centers as a way of enhancing offerings, so long as these programs are not mandated or pulled from existing school funding.
- The Beaverton School District continues to face challenges posed by a growing population and strongly supports legislative remedies to allow the district greater flexibility in planning for growth, including land acquisition, school siting, development set-asides and other modifications to land use statutes to provide options for growing school districts.
- The Beaverton School District supports legislative efforts to incentivize and enhance programs to create greater minority teacher preparation, recruitment, and hiring. We recognize that as our student population becomes ever more diverse, both as a district and as a state, we must do more to ensure that our workforce begins to mirror our student population.

Statewide

- As the Legislature and state agencies begin to implement the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the District supports maximizing the flexibility provided in statute by Congress, including greater flexibility around standardized assessment, especially at the secondary level. The District also supports enhancing the flexibility around the use of federal funds to allow the school districts to leverage dollars in the most effective manner possible.
- The District supports direct state investment in school district capital needs as a way of tackling the facilities problems facing a rapidly growing school district. The district supports utilizing the multiple constitutional bonding authorities to directly invest in local facilities and/or to provide targeted investments in seismic safety upgrades.
- In addition to greater investments, the Beaverton School District supports legislative efforts to bring greater control to mandated expenditures and unsustainable cost drivers thus allowing more efficient leveraging of the current base investment; however, this should not be used as an excuse to forego an aggregate increase in funding for education.
- BSD supports the efforts of our statewide partners in advancing the cause of public education in Oregon and will work in coalition specifically where the interests of such organizations and the interests of BSD align. We support the priorities of the Oregon School Boards Association and the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators and will work together to advance common goals and priorities.
- BSD supports the efforts of our local government partners and community allies where their interests align with the interests of the district in advancing public education. Further we support the efforts of the City of Beaverton, Washington County and Metro as well as neighboring school districts, cities and counties in making Washington County and the tri-county area a vibrant livable community for all.

(16-670) BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board support the above Legislative Agenda for the 2016 – 2017 school year.