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District Board Talking Points March 2019

The Oregon legislature continues to focus efforts on increased K-12 education funding. In December, Governor Brown started the conversation by setting a high bar in her annual budget message. The Governor's budget allocated \$8.97 billion, plus \$100 million to assist with PERS increases and \$303 million for Measure 98. Currently, Oregon schools received an allocation of \$8.2 billion, plus an additional \$200 million for Measure 98.

In addition, the Governor and legislature are contemplating a new School Improvement Fund (SIF). The goal of the SIF is to move districts closer to the Quality Education Model recommendations. COSA assisted in prioritizing possible categories for investment:

- *More Learning Time* Increased learning time for students, i.e. 180-day school year.
- *Student Health and Safety* Improved learning environment for students, i.e. mental health therapists, counselors, nurses, security upgrades.
- *Well-Rounded Education* Expansion of elective programs, i.e. art, PE, CTE, music.
- *Class Sizes and More Staff* Lowering of class sizes in Grades K-3, i.e. teachers, paraprofessionals, facilities.

School districts are developing narratives describing which categories and programs are of highest value in their communities. COSA will use these narratives to create visuals to assist in advocating for full funding of the SIF.

It is important to realize these increased investments depend upon a significant revenue package being approved by the legislature and voters. We are a long way to the finish line, but the conversations are encouraging.