

OSBA Legislative Policy Committee Update for March 2023

I participated in a survey for board chairs, as one of 25 districts selected for “[a study of the impacts of State School Fund spending](#)”, to determine if this spending pattern results in disparities between students who are black, indigenous or people of color (BIPOC) and those who are not.” ODE contracted with ECONorthwest to lead the study. Supt. Lopes-Serrao, CFO Sharie Lewis, and I were each individually interviewed to provide our feedback about the study itself and our funding in general.

I continue to attend the weekly Friday zoom call with our OSBA Legislative staff. The OSBA team continues to work on bills for [abbreviated days](#) and [special education processes](#), infrastructure grants, and [early literacy initiatives](#). The volume of bills receiving public hearings is high across all committees. Meeting times are reduced, which means that testimony is often allotted only two minutes. This is not enough time to dig into the bill and has caught testifiers off guard, as our Superintendent found when testifying in support of [HB 3014](#).

Student Voting: I wanted to make sure that our Student Representatives saw that I provided written testimony in support of [HB 3206](#), which would allow 16 and 17-year-olds to vote in school board elections. This bill was introduced by Rep. Ben Bowman, who shared: <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2023R1/Downloads/PublicTestimonyDocument/52953>

Budget: The co-chairs will introduce their budget framework in next two weeks, in response to the [Governor’s Recommended Budget \(GRB\)](#). The GRB had an SSF allocation of \$9.9B. In the past, the legislature has always projected a higher SSF allocation than the GRB. (The 2021 session was the first time that the legislature initially projected lower than the GRB.) OSBA is preparing a one-pager about the budget to share with legislators.

[HB 5015](#), the formal budget bill for the State School Fund allocation, has been posted for hearings in the Education subcommittee of Ways & Means. It is not expected to move anytime soon, but is a sign that normal budget presentations are beginning.

OSBA has presented two priority bills which will hopefully have public hearings in the coming weeks. We are asking for board member feedback and testimony, remotely or in person.

- [HB 3552](#) would protect school board member home and work address information and would create the crime of harassment of a school board member.
- [SB 1031](#) is a bill to change school board elections so that the majority of a board is never up for election in a single year (as Parkrose will be in 2025). This bill is an opportunity for board members to talk to legislators about the pressures of elections.

Finally, [HB 2793](#) (Class Size as a Mandatory Subject of Bargaining), went up for a public hearing last Monday. OSBA testified in opposition, as they have every year since 2017.

– Elizabeth Durant, Position 17, OSBA Legislative Policy Committee