



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Chair Henry and members of the State Board of Education,

Thank you for your leadership on the important issue of student instructional time. As you heard at your last Board meeting, my family had the unfortunate experience of having to fight for classes for my son in the Eugene School District.

I understand that you and your staff have been engaged in a discussion about increasing instruction time for students. While I am supportive of the policy goals you are considering, I do share the concerns that have been raised by many about the resources needed for implementation and collective bargaining implications.

The current proposal has unintended consequences; it is primarily aimed at fully scheduling high school students, shifting the culture of the Oregon education system. Most 5A and 6A schools were not built to allow all students to be on campus and in class at one time. The Bethel school district would be forced to hire 12 FTEs and build 11 temporary classrooms to comply with the current rule changes.

I am writing today to urge you to give due consideration to the ability of our school districts, boards, teachers and staff to make any proposed changes to the school calendar in a timely, organized fashion. I also want to make sure that these proposed changes consider the resources necessary to implement them without further disrupting the education of our children.

I ask the State Board of Education to spend more time refining parts of the proposal, specifically:

- Increasing minimum instructional hours in K-3 to 900 in 2015-16 will only give school districts who would fall below this new benchmark about 6 months to make schedule and staffing adjustments. Districts need more lead time to add instructional hours and adjust student, staff and transportation schedules.
- While there is a strong commitment to fund full-day kindergarten at the Legislature, we need to have a discussion about the funding and resources needed to add time for students at the other grade levels. The Board should spend more time trying to understand the resources our districts will need to successfully make the types of changes you are considering.

I encourage you to spend the additional time necessary to work with a broad spectrum of education partners and constituencies, parents and students to create a long-term, comprehensive plan to increase quality instructional time for our students. I share your goal of adding more time to our school calendar, particularly for our most vulnerable students who would reap the most benefit. Working together, we can make this another Oregon success story.

Sincerely,



Representative Val Hoyle
House Majority Leader

