

PAVING THE WAY TO RACIAL JUSTICE THROUGH EDUCATION

A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN ROADMAP FOR OREGON

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, a coalition of over 20 community-based organizations and advocates called on Oregon state leaders to **“act with children as our north star”** and recognize how systemic racism and inequities in our public education system exacerbate barriers to distance learning.

With Black, Indigenous, and children of color disproportionately bearing the brunt of the pandemic and school closures, **we cannot sacrifice Oregon’s commitment to educational equity.** During the second special session of 2020, we need the Oregon Legislature to **pass a state budget that reflects our values** by pursuing racial justice through a more equitable and accountable public education system.

We can help every child learn and grow through these unprecedented times if our schools and communities work together to meet the moment. **Together, these policies and investments will help ensure all children—especially those who have been historically underserved by our system—get the culturally sustaining care and connection they need and deserve.**

✦ Ensure Emergency Funds Reach Our Most Impacted Children

- Draw on Oregon's **Education Stability Fund** to minimize cuts to programs that disproportionately impact historically underserved children.
- Target **federal CARES Act** funds toward children most impacted by this crisis in partnership with community based and culturally specific organizations, including closing gaps in digital access.

✦ Provide Every Child With Access to Early Learning

- Ensure **equitable access to early learning** by investing in critical infrastructure and support for providers, including culturally sustaining professional development and Early Learning Hubs as an inclusive space for regional collaboration.
- Prioritize **investments designed to meet the unique needs of children and families**, including the Early Childhood Equity Fund, Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE), child care subsidies, culturally sustaining preschool initiatives, and home visit programs.

✦ Center Equity, Accountability, and Community in Education Funding

- Commit to making systemic changes at the core of Oregon's public education system by convening a diverse work group with representation from impacted communities to **embed equity and accountability at the heart of all education funding streams**.

✦ Let Every Child Know They Matter

- Invest in **Summer Learning Grants for Title I schools** to mitigate learning loss for low-income students in collaboration with culturally specific community partners.
- Preserve **House Bill 4002** to help school districts and community-based organizations dismantle systemic barriers that prevent children from regularly attending school, whether in-person or via distance learning.
- Uphold **Senate Bill 13** to implement statewide K-12 Native American curriculum and support culturally sustaining professional development for educators.
- Protect **House Bill 3499** to concentrate resources and technical assistance to improve outcomes for emerging bilingual students.

✦ Support Our Educators to Support Our Kids

- Equip educators and administrators with **restorative justice practices** that meaningfully support children experiencing interpersonal and systemic racism in our schools.
- Reinforce the **Educator Advancement Council** as a key strategy to recruit, retain, and support BIPOC educators, and help educators adapt to distance learning, especially in rural Oregon.
- Preserve “**Section 48**” funds dedicated to grow and diversify Oregon’s educator workforce to better serve Oregon’s diversifying student population.
- Collaborate with school districts and labor unions to ensure any reductions in the education workforce during the economic recession **do not disproportionately impact BIPOC educators.**

✦ Prepare Every High School Student for Their Future

- Keep students on track to graduate and help them plan for their future by prioritizing and directing **Measure 98** funds to historically underserved students.
- Maintain **Career and Technical Education (CTE)** and **STEM** programs to provide students of all ages with hands-on learning and pathways to high-wage jobs.
- Continue providing students with a seamless path to post-secondary opportunities through **Regional Promise and Accelerated Learning** grants and college credit programs.

✦ Trust the People: Keep the Promise of the Student Success Act

- Prioritize the **Student Investment Account** as our only avenue for holding school districts accountable to spending state funds equitably and in partnership with historically underserved communities.
- Prioritize community self-determination through investment in **Oregon's statewide equity plans**: the African American/Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Latinx, and LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Success Plans.
- Prioritize additional funding for Oregon's **school breakfast and lunch program**.

*THE POWER OF AN EQUITABLE STATE BUDGET IS CLEAR:
THE STRONGER OUR CHILDREN EMERGE FROM THIS CRISIS,
THE STRONGER OREGON'S LONG-TERM RECOVERY WILL BE.*



Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

