Sen. Rosenbaum, Rep. Bailey and OEIB,

I urge you to support quality public schools. As a citizen and public school teacher, I'm outraged at what has happened to our schools. We have underfunded our schools with cuts after cuts, our workloads have increased drastically hindering our ability to teach, help and connect with huge numbers of students. We are seeing more and more time and money be wasted on standardized testing that is harmful to students and a waste of valuable time and resources. Teacher morale is at a nadir because of the attacks on teachers and our unions.

Meanwhile, my students are set up to become indentured servants with rising tuition and fees at colleges and universities and decreasing grants. While the Fed gives near zero percent interest rate loans to banks that have profited and made obscene salaries, we charge relatively high rates of interest for students to get a higher education.

Educators and schools are not the cause of society's or our economy's problems. Poverty, underfunding and a neoliberal momentum in education are the problems for education and the wealthy and corporations who crashed our economy and pay the lowest taxes in history are the cause of our economic problems. The greatest schools in the US and the world all have unionized teachers. We need to stop the hijacking of education by for-profit education corporations and billionaire "philanthropists."

While the state talks about OEIB and Achievement Compacts, and the Common Core which will all require waste of valuable time and resources on testing and for profit education corporations, they are silent about increasing funding, raising progressive taxes on the wealthy and corporations, etc. Oregon's income taxes are nearly flat and too many corporations get hundreds of millions in tax abatements. We are not a broke society. Austerity is not the answer.http://www.ocpp.org/2011/12/14/fs20111214-if-economic-growth-assured-well-being/
http://www.ocpp.org/2011/12/14/fs20111214-economic-gains-flow-top-oregon/
http://www.taxfairnessoregon.org/issues/tax-gap-and-better-tax-enforcement-practices/

I hope that you will work in the legislature to support public education and also collaborate with legislators and Congress across the country to demand federal funding. It is criminal that the federal government spends more than 10 times its commitment to education on the military and fraudulent contractors. http://nationalpriorities.org/en/budget-basics/federal-budget-101/spending/
http://www.sanders.senate.gov/newsroom/news/?id=02d36680-a643-4142-954d-f8aa80cd389f

We need you to be bold and courageous and stand up for quality public education and social justice. Moving away from increasing incarceration and our dependence on inefficient, private health insurance system will also help. Coming up with creative ways for Oregon to keep our own capital in PERS and public money in a state bank instead of paying fees to Wall Street banks will also help.

I look forward to your specific commitments to change the direction of our state and nation.
Thank you,
Hyung Nam