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OVERVIEW OF OREGON LEGISLATURE

- Oregon has a bicameral legislature that is made up of the **House of Representatives**, which has **60 members** elected for **two-year terms**, and the **Senate**, whose **30 members** are elected to serve for **four-year terms**.
- Oregonians choose their legislators by voting every even-numbered year. The primary election is held on the third Tuesday in May. The general election is held on the first Tuesday (after the first Monday) in November.
- Oregon uses a system of single-member districts to elect its legislators. Each of the legislators represent a designated senatorial or representative district, meaning every Oregonian is represented by a single Senator and a single Representative. These district lines are redrawn every ten years, and were most recently redrawn in 2021 (using 2020 Census data).
- The Legislative Assembly is responsible for the state's biennial budget. In deciding where and how much money the state will spend on its agencies and programs, the legislature establishes priorities and sets public policy. The legislative body also reviews administrative rules drafted by state agencies. The Oregon Senate also has power to confirm certain executive appointments made by the Governor.
- The Speaker of the House and President of the Senate are the two most significant leadership positions in the legislature. They are elected by the majority of their respective chambers to preside over daily sessions and perform other duties.
- The Speaker and President assign members and appoint chairpersons and vice-chairpersons to standing committees and refer measures to committees.
- For more information on Oregon's Legislature including how bills become laws or background on the legislative process, visit the [Oregon Legislature website](#).



LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT

IDENTIFY KEY PLAYERS

There are many ways you can advocate for a bill or particular issue. In this first section, we will focus on engagement with the legislative process. In other sections, we will provide tools for external processes of engagement.

- Which policymakers are best positioned to advance your issues? Policy decisions rarely rest with one person so it will be important to identify which policymakers and legislators in leadership who are best to connect with to get the bill passed.
- One place to start is to connect with the legislators that represent the district you live in. You can find your District or Legislator at the bottom of the Oregon Legislature Website [here](#).
- For the education issues we will be advocating for, we will often need to communicate with members of the [House Education Committee](#), [Senate Education Committee](#), [Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education](#), and the [Joint Ways and Means Committee](#).



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS DELEGATION (2023-25)

Name	District	Contact Information	PPS Schools in District
Representative Willy Chotzen (D)	46	900 Court St NE, H-274, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.WillyChotzen @oregonlegislature.gov	Arleta School Atkinson Elementary School Bridger K-5 Creative Science School Clark Elementary School Franklin High School Grant High School Kellogg Middle School Kelly Elementary School Lane Middle School Lent K-5 School Marysville Elementary School Pioneer 5-8 @ Youngson Pioneer K-6 @ Holladay Center Whitman Elementary School Woodmere Elementary School
Representative Darcey Edwards (R)	31	900 Court St NE, H-380, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.DarceyEdwards @oregonlegislature.gov	Skyline K-8
Representative Shannon Jones Isadore (D)	33	900 Court St NE, H-276, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.ShannonIsadore @oregonlegislature.gov	Chapman Elementary School Forest Park Elementary School Lincoln High School Metropolitan Learning Center K-12 Odyssey Program
Representative Mark Gamba (D)	41	900 Court St NE, H-274, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.MarkGamba @oregonlegislature.gov	Duniway Elementary School Lewis Elementary School Llewellyn Elementary School Sellwood Middle School Woodstock Elementary School
Representative Dacia Grayber (D)	28	900 Court St NE, H-492, Salem, OR 97301	Ainsworth Elementary School Bridlemile Elementary School



Advocacy Toolkit

Name	District	Contact Information	PPS Schools in District
		Rep.DaciaGrayber @oregonlegislature.gov	Hayhurst Elementary School Maplewood Elementary School Rieke Elementary School Robert Gray Middle School West Sylvan Middle School Ida B. Wells High School
Representative Travis Nelson (D)	44	900 Court St NE, H-275, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.TravisNelson @oregonlegislature.gov	Astor School Beach School Cesar Chavez School Chief Joseph Elementary School George Middle School James John Elementary School Ockley Green Middle School Peninsula School Rigler Elementary School Roosevelt High School Rosa Parks Elementary School Sitton Elementary School
Representative Daniel Nguyen (D)	38	900 Court St NE, H-283, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.DanielNguyen @oregonlegislature.gov	ACCESS K-8 Capitol Hill E.S. Jackson Middle School Markham Elementary School Stephenson Elementary School
Representative Rob Nosse (D)	42	900 Court St NE, H-277, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.RobNosse @oregonlegislature.gov	Abernethy Elementary School Benson Polytechnic High School Buckman Elementary School Cleveland High School Creston School DaVinci Arts Middle School Glencoe Elementary School Grout Elementary School Hosford Middle School Laurelhurst School Mt. Tabor Middle School



Advocacy Toolkit

Name	District	Contact Information	PPS Schools in District
			Multiple Pathways to Graduation Richmond Elementary School Sunnyside Environmental School Winterhaven School
Representative Tawna Sanchez (D)	43	900 Court St NE, H-273, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.TawnaSanchez @oregonlegislature.gov	Alameda Elementary School Boise-Eliot/Humboldt PK-8 Faubion PK-8 Irvington K-8 Jefferson High School Martin Luther King, Jr. PK-8 Sabin K-8 Tubman Middle School Vernon K-8 Woodlawn PK-8
Representative Thuy Tran (D)	45	900 Court St NE, H-285, Salem, OR 97301 Rep.ThuyTran @oregonlegislature.gov	Beaumont Middle School Beverly Cleary School Grant High School Jason Lee Elementary McDaniel High School Rose City Park Elementary School Roseway Heights K-8 Scott Elementary School Vestal Elementary School
Senator Lew Frederick (D)	22	900 Court St NE, S-419, Salem, OR 97301 Sen.LewFrederick @oregonlegislature.gov	Alameda Elementary School Astor School Beach School Boise-Eliot/Humboldt PK-8 Cesar Chavez School Chief Joseph Elementary School Faubion PK-8 George Middle School James John Elementary School Ockley Green Middle School Peninsula School



Advocacy Toolkit

Name	District	Contact Information	PPS Schools in District
			Rigler Elementary School Roosevelt High School Rosa Parks Elementary School Sabin K-8 Sitton Elementary School Tubman Middle School Vernon K-8 Woodlawn PK-8
Senator Kate Lieber (D)	14	900 Court St NE, S-205, Salem, OR, 97301 Sen.KateLieber @oregonlegislature.gov	Ainsworth Elementary School Bridlemile Elementary School Hayhurst Elementary School Maplewood Elementary School Odyssey Program K-8 Rieke Elementary School Robert Gray Middle School West Sylvan Middle School Ida B. Wells High School
Senator Khanh Pham (D)	23	900 Court St NE, S-407, Salem, OR 97301 Sen.KhanhPham @oregonlegislature.gov	Arleta School Atkinson Elementary School Beaumont Middle School Beverly Cleary School Bridger K-5 Creative Science School Franklin High School Grant High School Irvington K-8 Jason Lee Elementary Jefferson High School Kellogg Middle School Kelly Elementary School Lane Middle School Lent K-5 School Martin Luther King, Jr. PK-8 Marysville Elementary School McDaniel High School Pioneer 5-8 @ Youngson Pioneer K-6 @ Holladay Center

Advocacy Toolkit



Name	District	Contact Information	PPS Schools in District
			Rose City Park Elementary School Roseway Heights K-8 Scott Elementary School Vestal Elementary School Whitman Elementary School Woodmere Elementary School
Senator Lisa Reynolds (D)	17	900 Court St NE, S-409, Salem, OR, 97301 Sen.LisaReynolds @oregonlegislature.gov	Chapman Elementary School Forest Park Elementary School Lincoln High School Metropolitan Learning Center K-12
Senator Kathleen Taylor (D)	21	900 Court St NE, S-209, Salem, OR 97301 Sen.KathleenTaylor @oregonlegislature.gov	Abernethy Elementary School Benson Polytechnic High School Buckman Elementary School Cleveland High School Creston School DaVinci Arts Middle School Duniway Elementary School Glencoe Elementary School Grout Elementary School Hosford Middle School Laurelhurst School Lewis Elementary School Llewellyn Elementary School Mt. Tabor Middle School Richmond Elementary School Sellwood Middle School Sunnyside Environmental School Winterhaven School Woodstock Elementary School
Senator Rob Wagner (D)	19	900 Court St NE, S-201, Salem, OR, 97301 Sen.RobWagner @oregonlegislature.gov	ACCESS K-8 Capitol Hill E.S. Jackson Middle School Markham Elementary School Stephenson Elementary School



Advocacy Toolkit

Name	District	Contact Information	PPS Schools in District
Senator Suzanne Weber (R)	16	900 Court St NE, S-405, Salem, OR, 97301 Sen.SuzanneWeber @oregonlegislature.gov	Skyline K-8



MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS

Phone calls and emails are important, but nothing beats a face-to-face meeting with key legislative players. To set up effective meetings with legislators, it is key to prepare for the meeting and follow up afterwards. Legislators are more likely to take meetings with people who live in their district. Be sure and let them know if you are their constituent.

LOGISTICS

- **Scheduling the meeting:** To set up a meeting, call or email the legislator's office and ask to speak with the staff member in charge of scheduling. Make sure to reach out well in advance (2 weeks to a month) of when you would like to meet. The staff member will be able to set up a meeting virtually or in person for you to meet the legislator.
- **Preparing for the meeting:** Often legislators will only be able to meet for 15 minutes so it will be key to be ready to make the most of that time.
 - Determine who should attend the meeting by bringing a broad coalition that can help legitimize the issue you are working on.
 - Bring written materials or email materials that are succinct in summarizing the issue.
 - Ensure you know where to go so you can arrive promptly.
 - Consider the framing of your message. Research points you can make to persuade them.
 - Have a pre-meeting with the group that will be joining to ensure alignment and establish shared talking points and a clear "ask".
- **During the meeting:** Provide brief introductions and establish your connection to the legislative member and their district. Allow time for the issues you want to discuss and follow your planned agenda. Make sure to save time to make your "ask" by requesting specific commitments from the legislator (eg. sponsoring a bill, supporting a bill, opposing a bill, speaking to leadership about an issue). Allow time for questions and tell the legislator you'll follow up with their staff after the meeting if you don't know the answer.
- **After the meeting:** Write the legislator a thank you note after the meeting. Briefly summarize the issues and provide any additional information that was asked for during the meeting.

STORYTELLING

It's important for elected officials to hear from their constituents so that they are reminded how their decisions impact real people in real places. Legislators pay attention to which programs work in their communities and which ones don't. Sharing stories will help the elected officials you are engaging with understand how the issue you raise is changing, affecting, or improving lives.



STORYTELLING TIPS:

1. **Choose one story to tell.** Meetings with legislators are often short and you may only have a few minutes to tell your story. Pick one story that is clear and concise.
2. **Focus on the personal aspects of your story by sharing one or two details to make it unique and memorable.** Elected officials and their staff hear countless stories during a day and details will help you and the issue you bring up stand out.
3. **Connect your individual story to your larger request/ask by sharing a piece of data about the bigger issue it represents.** But, this is the icing on the cake. The real purpose of your story is to make your audience care about your issue as much as you do.

EMAILING AND WRITING LETTERS TO LEGISLATORS

One key way to engage with legislators is to mail physical letters to their offices or to write them an email. You can find the legislators' contact information on the Oregon State Legislature [webpage](#) under the "House" or "Senate" tab.

When you write your letter or email, you will want to include the following:

- The date
- Who you are writing to
- What you are writing about
- Who you are (a constituent, a parent, etc.)
- Why this is important to you
- A personal connection to the issue
- Restating your ask
- Conclusion
- Your contact information, including your address or intersection if you are emailing your own legislator (so they know you are their voter)



CALLING LEGISLATORS

Another way to engage with legislators is to call their offices directly. You will most likely be connected with a legislator's staff member or be asked to leave a voicemail. Either way, this is a good opportunity for you to share your thoughts. The legislative staff members will report back to the members with the information you shared.

In your phone call, it will be important to include:

- Who you are reaching out to
- What you are concerned/excited about
- Who you are (a constituent, a parent, etc.)
- Why this is important to you
- A personal connection to the issue
- Restating your ask
- Your contact information (email or phone number)

ENGAGING IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS: PROVIDING WRITTEN OR VERBAL TESTIMONY

- To track a bill, you can use the [Oregon Legislative Information System](#) (OLIS). There is a "Bills" tab and a "Committees" tab on the right hand side where you can pull up information by bill number, bill text, or policy committee.
- While the bills you are advocating for move through their committees, it will be important for you to prepare to provide verbal testimony during the committee meeting or written testimony.
 - You can find information on how to submit written testimony on the Oregon State Legislature webpage [How to Submit Written Testimony on a Bill](#).
 - You can find information on how to provide verbal testimony on the Oregon State Legislature webpage [How to Testify in Committee Hearings](#).



EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

In addition to working with elected officials, there are other ways you work with the media to raise awareness for the issues or bills you are advocating for.

WRITING AN OP-ED

Op-eds are opinion pieces that are usually published opposite the editorial page in a newspaper. They are written by columnists, leaders of organizations, public officials, and community members. At most papers, anyone can submit an op-ed to convey a clear point of view about a topic of public interest.

TIPS FOR WRITING AN OP-ED

- Check the editorial page or the paper's website for instructions on submitting an op-ed. The preferred length is usually in the range of 500–800 words.
- Scan your paper's opinion pages to get a sense of what people are and are not writing about. Opinion editors often look for pieces that cover issues they are not yet covering.
- Anybody can write; the difference between a published and unpublished piece is in the number of rewrites you are willing to do and your openness to seek and receive help if you need it. A good rule of thumb is to have an opening paragraph (engage), three paragraphs of content (highlight the problem and share relevant data), and your closing paragraph with a strong call to action.
- Get in touch with how you personally feel about the issue and feel free to use personal examples, relating your message to your own experiences. Activate the heart before you activate the head.
- Because an op-ed is longer than a letter to the editor, resist the temptation to cover more issues or ideas and focus on going deeper on the issue you want to cover. Tell an illustrative story, give a detailed example, include a bit more data, or highlight other people's points of view. Keep it simple.
- Make sure there is a call to action for the elected officials and/or your readers. An op-ed is a prominent piece that will be read by many people; use this opportunity to be bold in what you are advocating for.



- Make your piece current and relevant. Have it relate to something that is going on now.
- Once you have drafted your piece, send it to others for feedback. This is a crucial step. Feedback from others helps ensure that you have a piece of publishable quality.

TIPS ON PITCHING YOUR OP-ED TO THE PAPER

- Find out who makes decisions about op-eds for your paper. Sometimes this is different from the editorial page editor.
- Submit your piece and then call the right reporter or editor to confirm that it was received within 24 hours of submission.
- Once you've confirmed it was received, call the editor or writer back again within 48 hours to see if they are willing to print your piece. Feel free to tell them who you are and a bit about why you are submitting the piece at this time.
- If you learn the editor does not plan to run it, find out why and determine if a revision would improve its chances of being published. In some cases, the paper may give you the opportunity to shorten it and have it printed as a letter to the editor. If this isn't an option, you can call another paper and ask if they would be interested in your op-ed.
- When your op-ed is published, follow up with a thank you to the editorial page editor.

SHARE YOUR OP-ED!

- Share your Op-Ed with legislators you have been engaging with.
- Promote your Op-Ed on your social media channels.
- Send copies of your piece to other influential members of the community with ties to your issue.



WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are a collection of reader opinions, representing a wide range of perspectives on current events. These can be another tool for you to use to bring attention to or elevate specific issues. Sending letters to the editor are important advocacy goals because they:

- Reach a large audience
- Are often monitored by elected officials
- Can bring up information not addressed in a news article
- Create an impression of widespread support for or opposition to an issue

TIPS ON WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

- **Keep it short and address only one subject.** Many newspapers have strict limits on the length of letters and have limited space to publish them. Keeping your letter brief will ensure that your important points are not cut out by the newspaper.
- **Send letters to weekly community newspapers also.** The smaller the newspaper's circulation, the easier it is to get your letter printed.
- **Be sure to include your contact information.** Many newspapers will only print a letter to the editor after calling the author to verify his or her identity and address. Newspapers will not give out that information, and will usually only print your name and city should your letter be published.
- **Make references to previous articles in the newspaper.** While some papers print general commentary, many will only print letters that refer to a specific article. Here are some examples of easy ways to refer to articles in your opening sentence:
 - I was disappointed to see that The Post's May 18 editorial "Schools Already Have Enough Money" omitted some of the key facts. ("Title of Article," date)
 - I am deeply saddened to read that Congressman X is working to shorten the school year. ("Title of Article," date)



USING SOCIAL MEDIA AS ADVOCACY

Social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and blogs are powerful vehicles in promoting legislative advocacy to a large audience.

QUICK TIPS

- **Be concise:** Keep your posts brief, with a clear call to action, and include a link to background information if necessary.
- **Tags:** Tagging your elected officials or community partners can be an easy way to draw their attention to your campaign.
- **Hashtags:** If you create a hashtag for a specific event or campaign, take time to find out if anyone has used the hashtag before.
- **Plan ahead:** Knowing what you want to post, what you want to say, and when it will go live can help strengthen your message. Be mindful of campaign milestones you want to amplify and other events taking place in your community that might overshadow what you are trying to say, and then plan your posts to coincide with or avoid them.
- **Be creative:** Social media platforms are creative spaces driven by highly visual content. Posts with graphics are more likely to show up in your follower's feeds - and videos can be even more powerful.
- **Balance your content:** Be careful not to overload your followers with too many posts about your campaign.



APPENDIX

MAKING YOUR PERSONAL CALL SCRIPT

My name is _____, and I am from _____ (city, state).

List the reason you are calling and then condense it to one or two sentences.

How does this legislation or issue affect you personally?

What is the call to action for your representative? Do you want a statement, cosponsorship of a bill, a vote, or something else?

EMAIL AND LETTER TEMPLATE

(Month) (Day) (Year)

Representative or Senator (First name) (Last name)

Oregon State Capitol

900 Court Street NE

(Office Number)

Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: (state the topic or include the bill number, author and subject if you are writing to support or oppose a particular legislative bill)

Dear (Representative/Senator) (Last name):

My name is (your first and last name) and I am a (family member /service provider/advocate/community member) who resides in your district. (State why you support or oppose the bill or other issue here. Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly.)

(Include a personal story. Tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your family member and your community.)

(Tell your representative how you want her or him to vote on this issue and ask for a response. Make sure to include your name and address on both your letter and envelope if mailing a letter.)

Advocacy Toolkit



Sincerely,

Your name

Street address

City, State, Zip code