NEWS RELEASE

<Date>

For more information, contact:

Name, title, cell, email

**<Your District Name> to Discuss Local Impact of Proposed State Budget**

***What a $600 million state education funding shortfall means for <Your Community’s> students***

<Your Town> – The Oregon Legislature is poised to consider a K-12 education budget that is $600 million below what it would cost to maintain the current level of programs, staff and instructional time in most Oregon school districts. Superintendent <Name> and the <District Name> School Board will be discussing the local impacts of the budget at the upcoming <School Board/Budget Committee/Other Meeting>. Community members and parents are invited to join the meeting on <Day> <Date> at <time> in the <location>.

Despite continued pressure to increase the K-12 education allocation to at least the current cost of service, which would be $8.4 billion in the 2017-19 biennium, the Legislature is seriously considering a budget of $7.8 billion. At the meeting, Superintendent <Name> will discuss the district’s strategies to manage the difficult cuts, and how the community can provide feedback to local legislative representatives.

“If this state budget passes, our students are going to really feel it. We still haven’t been able to restore the <furlough days, staff or programming> that we lost during the Great Recession. And, like the state’s other school districts, we continue to operate with higher class sizes, a shorter school year, and programming that misses the elements of a well-rounded education – something that Oregonians continue to call for. Another round of cuts will be disastrous,” says <Supt. Name>.

At the $7.8 billion funding level, <school district> is forced to consider the following cuts:

* Teachers/staff – <include how many layoffs or positons that will go unfilled because of attrition>
* Cuts to days/shortening the school year – <how many days or weeks must be cut to balance the budget>
* Loss of programs/eliminating programs – <what course offerings or program cuts are on the chopping block>
* Unsustainable spending/use of all reserves – This will only delay the pain for one or two years and in the end will leave the district in a precarious financial position.
* Other cuts – <for example: no new textbooks, continuing to use outdated computers etc.>

“The state’s economy has finally improved. We expected to be able to restore programs and staff – not be forced to continue cuts,” says <Superintendent/Board Chair/Teacher Leader name>. “It’s counter-intuitive – if the economy is so good, why are we experiencing some of the biggest cuts we’ve seen for a number of years?”

Budget meetings like this are taking place in districts around the state. In many of them, communities are referring to last year’s Oregon Rising outreach effort, through which nearly 11,000 Oregonians defined what they wanted for Oregon students. The most often cited hopes were for smaller class sizes and broader, more complete programming. “What we’re poised to get is exactly the opposite of what Oregonians said they wanted,” says <Superintendent/Board Chair/Teacher Leader name>. “This budget is going to move us far from our goals, and we want to be sure that everyone realizes that.”

For more information about the results of the outreach, go to <http://oregon-rising.org/What-Oregon-Said>.

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