

JULIE PARRISH
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 37



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

April 11th, 2016

Dear Mayor Ogden,

It's with great pleasure that I share with you my support for the City of Tualatin's participation in the America's Best Communities (ABC) Competition. It's not surprising to see Tualatin advance to the Semi-Finalist Round of this prestigious competition, and it's been wonderful to watch the community come together to work on an important project like improving access to STEAM education.

As a legislator, I see communities around our state struggle to balance the needs of their young people with the emerging workforce opportunities. And I see Oregon's employers more desperate for a more skilled and career-ready workforce, particularly in industries of light industrial, mechanical, and integrated technologies. With rising housing and transportation costs, the focus of communities has to be connecting its citizens to family-wage jobs nearby so they can live, work, shop, and play within proximity to their homes.

Tualatin has been a leader throughout Oregon in its vision for connecting its employers to our students. With the City's leadership, and the driving force of citizen engagement, Tualatin is actively creating relationships between our schools, families, and industries. New opportunities are opening every day because of the foundation the ABC committee has built during this competition. Your work has inspired the Oregon Legislature to recently commit \$95,000 towards one of the STEAM partnerships developed between Tigard-Tualatin School District, World of Speed, and several other area school districts. Next year, upwards of 120 students from across multiple communities will not only be learning an automotive skilled trade at World of Speed, they'll also be earning elective credit towards high school graduation, and 12 college credits – for free.

It's this kind of energy happening in Tualatin right now that will change the lives of our students and the face of our workforce. And this engagement will not only be a catalyst for bringing new businesses to Tualatin's industrial area, it will serve as a model for how we lift up other communities across Oregon, particularly in our rural communities where we've lost traditional industries and incurred higher-than-the-national-average unemployment for decades.

Mayor Ogden, I hope the judges at the ABC Competition understand the investment they make in Tualatin will not just serve citizens in Tualatin, but it will create a ripple effect in our neighboring communities. You've developed a replicable, scalable approach other communities can implement as they seek to address their own workforce and education needs. Congratulations!

Sincerely,

Julie Parrish