



April 22, 2011

OSBA board members testify at Ways and Means hearing in Portland

The budget-writing Ways and Means Committee of the Oregon Legislature kicked off a series of public hearings on the state budget Tuesday night at Portland Community College's Sylvania Campus. About 200 people attended the hearing and more than 60 people testified during the two-and-a-half hours of public testimony.

OSBA board members **Patti McLeod** (Hillsboro SD) and **Linda Brown** (Lake Oswego SD) testified on behalf of their districts and school board members across Oregon. After expressing their appreciation to the Committee and Legislature for increasing the K-12 budget allocation from Governor Kitzhaber's original proposal, they reminded legislators that school districts across Oregon will still be closing schools, cutting days from the calendar, laying off teachers and staff and eliminating academic programs and extracurricular activities.

Noting that, under the \$5.7 billion K-12 budget, Lake Oswego is considering closing one-third of their elementary schools, Linda Brown told the committee, "Learning takes teachers, time and texts. We've cut the teachers. We cut the time with furloughs. We cut the texts ... now we amputate the school buildings." Commenting on how the K-12 budget would impact Hillsboro, Patti McLeod said that the district is proposing "reducing four instructional days and cutting over 60 teaching positions."

Under the K-12 budget signed by the governor, approximately \$192 million dollars are left in the Education Stability Fund

during the 2011-13 biennium. Both OSBA board members urged the Committee to access another \$100 million from the fund, saying that these funds are the equivalent of funding for one week of school statewide and would result in fewer lost school days, fewer program cuts, and fewer staff layoffs in districts across the state.

There are three more opportunities to attend Ways and Means hearings and make your voice heard. Let legislators know the budget's impact on your school districts.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22 from 5-7 p.m.

Medford: The Medford Armory, 1701 S. Pacific Hwy.

FRIDAY, APRIL 29 from 4-6 p.m.

Bend: The OSU-Cascades Campus Cascades Hall, 2600 NW College Way
Pendleton: (via video link) Blue Mountain Community College, Room E114, 2411 NW Carden Avenue

La Grande: (via video link) Eastern Oregon University, Inlow #013, 1 University Blvd.

FRIDAY, MAY 6 from 4-6 p.m.

Newport: The Hatfield Marine Science Center, Hennings Auditorium, 2030 SE Marine Science Drive

Coos Bay: (via video link) Southwestern Oregon Community College Eden Hall, 1988 Newmark Avenue

If you are interested in attending one of the upcoming hearings and would like additional information, please contact Tricia Yates, OSBA associate executive director, at tyates@osba.org.

Student transportation funding gets a hearing

Another bill to change how student transportation is funded received a first public hearing Tuesday in the House Revenue Committee. **House Bill 3622**, sponsored by Rep. Betty Komp (D-Woodburn), would replace Oregon's current approved cost method of providing school districts 70, 80 or 90 percent of the cost of transporting students with a "block grant."

As drafted, the bill includes the following key provisions:

- *Eliminates the current transportation grant through the State School Fund and replaces it with a block grant that is the average of the transportation grant the school district received for the 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. This would serve as the "base" for the block grant. If districts reduce their transportation costs, leftover block grant monies could be spent like general fund dollars.*

Adjustments to the block grant would be made by the Superintendent of Public Instruction at intervals designated by the State Board of Education based on guidelines the Board adopts by rule.

Any changes to the block grant "must take into account changes in approved ridership and various inflationary costs, as determined by the School Revenue Forecast Committee." These adjustments may also be made based on the "characteristics of the school district."

- *Eliminates the mandate to provide transportation at the one-mile interval for elementary students and 1.5-mile interval for secondary students. Local school boards would be allowed to set their own transportation boundaries for schools in their districts.*
- *Repeals the Bus and Garage Depreciation Fund (ORS 327.033).*

OSBA testified in opposition to the bill. We are concerned the block grants are unfair to districts that maximize transportation efficiencies and the mechanism to increase grants is too vague and does not guarantee that the increased costs of transporting students will be covered. Contact OSBA Legislative and Public Affairs Specialist Morgan Allen at mallen@osba.org if you have any questions or would like to provide feedback on this proposal.

Public records, school facilities, OEIB, 'burden of proof' and other bills of interest

As we reported last week, April 21 was the deadline for legislative committees to vote on bills in a policy committee in their chamber of origin (with the exception of Joint Committees like Ways and Means and House and Senate Rules, Revenue or Redistricting committees). A friendly reminder: a bill may be "dead," but the ideas behind them can live on until the Legislature adjourns.

Here are a few bills that OSBA is tracking that are "live" in the legislative process:

Senate Bill 41* – Attorney General Kroger has proposed sweeping changes to Oregon's public records law. Of most interest to school districts is the addition of timelines as short as 10-15 business days to acknowledge and fill requests for records.

Senate Bill 245* – The Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee amended the bill to extend the life of the School Facilities Task Force and allow the group to continue their work in hopes of

Continued

Legislative Highlights



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Bills of interest – Continued

finding a funding source. Due to the budget crisis, the provision to fund the work was removed.

Senate Bill 909* – The Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee voted unanimously to send the bill creating the Governor’s Oregon Education Investment Board to the full Ways and Means Committee.

House Bill 2296 – The bill would shift the “burden of proof” in IDEA due process claims not involving private or out-of-district placements to the school district. A vote was anticipated in the House, but the bill was instead sent to the House Revenue Committee. Further action on the bill is unknown at this time.

House Bill 3641 – Introduced last week, the bill would invest another \$100 million from the \$192 million remaining in the Education Stability Fund, distributing it to school districts through the State School Fund.

House Bill 3555 – The House approved the bill this week on a 38-22 vote. It allows a qualified person who doesn’t have an administrative license to be a superintendent or assistant superintendent; the individual would have to complete a superintendent training program within one year.

If you have questions about any of these bills, contact OSBA Legislative and Public Affairs Specialist Morgan Allen at mallen@osba.org.

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* *At the time of publication, the latest versions of SB 41, SB 245 and SB 909 are not yet updated and available online. They should be updated and available by Monday, April 25. You can access the latest version of these bills [here](#).*



Legislative Webinar

Wednesday, May 18, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Join OSBA’s Legislative and Public Affairs team for a live legislative update. To participate, [sign up now](#) at the OSBA website, www.osba.org – look under events. The webinar is FREE but you must register to participate.

Online education bills receive hearings

This week two bills related to online education moved from their respective education committees to other committees for additional work and consideration.

House Bill 2301 is the product of two separate workgroups which began upon adjournment of the 2009 Legislative session. The workgroups continued to tackle the complex issues around online education including governance and funding.

The bill allows a school district or group of school districts or education service districts to provide part-time or full-time online instruction. The bill establishes requirements and process by which online instruction may be approved by the State Board of Education. The bill also allows for certification and establishment of three virtual public schools that local districts could access in order to provide online education to their students.

HB 2301 had an initial hearing in early February. This week, the bill was moved out of the House Education Committee and into the House Rules Committee for further consideration.

Senate Bill 927, heard this week in the Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee, establishes the Oregon Option Consortium for the purpose of pro-

viding online courses to students in kindergarten through grade 12. The bill sets up the Oregon Option Advisory Committee and directs this advisory committee to establish standards and requirements for the Oregon Option Consortium. The bill also defines requirements for public charter schools related to providing online courses to school districts. The Oregon Option Consortium would be made up of the online course providers and housed in and staffed by the Oregon Department of Education. The advisory committee membership is outlined in the bill and is appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. SB 927 moved out of the Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee and on to the Ways and Means Committee.

If you have questions, contact Lori Sattenspiel, lsattenspiel@osba.org.

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