

OSBA Legislative Highlights



the Promise
OF OREGON

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House Education Committee learns about Measure 98 challenges

By Richard Donovan, legislative specialist
rdonovan@osba.org

A hearing on Wednesday laid out for the House Education Committee some of the vexing details that come with Measure 98. Proponents of the measure, education stakeholder organizations and state agency representatives got a chance to address challenges of the measure as well as point out potential stumbling blocks for schools.

Measure 98 passed in 2016 with broad public support. The measure, formally known as the Oregon State Funding for Dropout Prevention and College Readiness Initiative, allocates \$800 per student for career and technical education (CTE) courses, college-credit classes and dropout intervention programs in high schools.

Two panels of speakers addressed the committee. The first panel was comprised of proponents and implementers of the measure, including Parasa Chanramy (Stand for Children), Education Innovation Officer Colt Gill (Chief Education Office), and Emily Nazarov (Oregon Department of Education). That panel spoke about the goals of the measure, as well as the practicalities of implementation. All panelists spoke about the requirement in the measure that schools must address all three program areas: CTE, college readiness and dropout



House Education Committee Vice-chair Diego Hernandez (D-Portland) and Rep. Sherrie Sprenger (R-Scio) raise questions about Measure 98 during testimony Wednesday. (Photo: Jake Arnold/OSBA)

prevention. Schools that are not interested in addressing all three areas should not apply for Measure 98 funds.

Chanramy pointed out the voluntary nature of the requirements.

“All districts have the option to choose to apply for Measure 98 dollars,” Chanramy said, “and we certainly encourage districts to pursue the opportunity if it makes sense for them to customize and sequence their programs.”

The second panel consisted of Morgan Allen (Confederation of Oregon Administrators), Laurie Wimmer (Oregon Education Association) and Richard Donovan (OSBA); they focused on potential portions of Measure 98 that could be changed. The presentations centered around the need to increase flexibility within the bounds of the measure, including changing the requirement that Measure 98 funds be spent in all three areas; permitting expenditure of Measure 98 funds at all grade levels, not just high school; creating a “funding floor” for very small school districts; allowing longer grant cycles to improve district planning; and permitting increased flexibility in “supplement v. supplant” regulations.

The challenge of implementing Measure 98 during a budget crisis was also discussed. The state’s estimated \$1.8 billion budget shortfall has raised concerns around the anticipated \$279 million price tag for Measure 98 and the impact that will have on the broader education budget.

“The intent of the measure is to have new programs, expand existing programs that would do new things,” Donovan said, “but we’re in a tough budget year. ... In a



Education Innovation Officer Colt Gill, Oregon Department of Education Operations Policy Analyst Emily Nazarov (rear) and Stand for Children Policy and Advocacy Manager Parasa Chanramy testify Wednesday before the House Education Committee. (Photo: Jake Arnold/OSBA)

lot of cases ... it might make sense to just preserve what's working already. And we'd like you to give school districts that option."

At this time, there are no further hearings scheduled on Measure 98. However, it seems likely that the topic will come up in committees in both chambers again this session, and your OSBA staff will be there to make sure the voices of school districts throughout the state are a prominent part of the discussion. If you would like to review the hearing, you can find digital and audio recordings of it at olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Committees/HED/2017-02-08-15-00/Agenda

Public records bill tries to ease some burden on school districts

By Lori Sattenspiel, interim director of legislative services
lsattenspiel@osba.org

The attorney general's task force looking at Oregon's public records laws was charged with examining four issues: timelines, fees, exemptions and a review process.

"I am a staunch advocate for personal privacy," said Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum at the beginning of her testimony Thursday before the House Rules Committee.

Over the past 18 months, the task force has had four public meetings across the state to take input from the public and then continued meeting monthly as they did their work. But "this is just the first step toward Oregonians accessing public records," Rosenblum said.

The resulting legislation, [Senate Bill 481](#), addresses some issues with public records requests. For school districts, this means an easing of the timeline for responding to requests.

Each school district in Oregon maintains its own public records and handles requests for access. The districts are required to have a process, available in writing, for requesting a copy of the records or an opportunity to inspect them.

School districts are required to respond to a records request in a reasonable amount of time, and they may recover costs associated with satisfying the request. Districts with small staffs generally have a more difficult time satisfying record requests. A larger number of requests or a request during a school break can also be challenging for any size district.

Certain records of school districts must be made available under an official request, but SB 481 offers a safety valve for education institutions that are closed for winter, spring and summer breaks. The timeline outlined in the bill to respond to the public record request would stop when a school closes for breaks and then resume when school district staff return.

Jeb Bladine, president and publisher of the News-Register Publishing Co., is also a member of the task

force and testified supporting the task force work on timelines and transparency.

"We accept the premise of SB 481 with the understanding this is just the first step," he said.

The task force will next look at how to handle exceptions to the rules under which documents must be shared. Those exceptions cause tensions between transparency and rights of privacy. Determining what to disclose when an exception applies is not simple. Beginning in 1973, there were 50 exceptions. Today public bodies, including school districts, must manage 500 exceptions when handling public records requests.

Bladine also expressed support for the public advocate that is part of [Senate Bill 106](#).

SB 106 is Gov. Kate Brown's piece in the public records transparency push. SB 106 would add a public records advocate, charged to help assist the public with records requests and assist a public body with any questions related to the record requested, including mediating any dispute that arises from the request.

Senate Bill 106 was heard earlier this week in the Senate Committee on General Government and Accountability and awaits further action. Senate Bill 481 has not been scheduled for a public hearing. OSBA will follow both of these bills closely.

Bill Briefs

Educator Advancement Council

[Senate Bill 182](#)

What it does: Formally sets up the Educator Advancement Council, which is charged with implementing educator professional learning and educator supports, including access to mentoring, specialized professional learning, and opportunities for leadership development.

What's new: The bill was heard Feb. 9 in the Senate Committee on Education.

What's next: OSBA will monitor the progress of the bill.

Early Indicator and Intervention System

[Senate Bill 183](#)

What it does: Sets up the Early Indicator and Intervention System that is designed to help students graduate. The Chief Education Office will help administer the new Graduation Equity Program that is a collaborative approach among educators, parents and communities. The approach helps identify students who need immediate interventions, monitoring for success and modifying interventions that aren't working. This strategy is intended to help keep students on the pathway to graduation.

What's new: The bill was heard Feb. 9 in the Senate Committee on Education.

What's next: OSBA will follow the progress of this bill.

Last chance (well, not really) to introduce bills

Until Feb. 28 legislators can introduce an unlimited number of bills. After the 28th legislators are limited to five “priority” bills. However, under the House and Senate rules for the 79th Legislative Assembly, the Senate president and the chair of the House Rules Committee have an unlimited number of bill requests throughout the remainder of the session.



Now is the time to urge your legislators to invest in public education

Learn how to advocate for reinvestment in public education that will support student achievement. Receive training at the OSBA and COSA Legislative Day in Salem on March 13, then meet with your legislators to discuss education priorities and share stories from your organization’s perspective.

Registration information is on the OSBA website: www.osba.org/Calendar/Events/Legislative_Day-2017.aspx

Sign up to talk to your legislator

Be sure you are scheduling your appointments with your legislators. Try to schedule appointments after 11 a.m. so you don’t miss OSBA’s program.

If you need to look up phone numbers or email addresses, your legislators’ information is on the Oregon Legislature’s website:

- House – www.oregonlegislature.gov/house%20
- Senate – www.oregonlegislature.gov/senate

The Week Ahead

By Jake Arnold, communications and news specialist
jarnold@osba.org

Feb. 11, noon Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee attend budget-focused town hall at Portland Community College, Sylvania campus.

Feb. 13, 3 p.m. Senate Workforce Committee holds a public hearing on changes to the Public Employees Retirement System ([SB 559](#), [SB 560](#)).

Feb. 13, 3 p.m. House Education Committee holds public hearings and work sessions on requiring charter schools to comply with food programs ([HB 2554](#)), reimbursing schools for meals ([HB 2652](#)), recognizing National Speech and Debate Education Day ([HCR 18](#)), and expanding entities that can get money for providing educational activities ([HB 2258](#)).

Feb. 14 8:30 a.m. Senate Finance and Revenue Committee holds hearing on changing how property taxes are assessed ([SJR 3](#), [SB 151](#) and [SB 181](#)).

Feb. 14, 10 a.m. State Land Board hears an update on the status of selling Elliott State Forest.

Feb. 14, 3 p.m. House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee holds an informational meeting on the Workforce System.

Feb. 14, 3 p.m. Senate Education Committee holds a public hearing on reimbursing schools for vision screenings ([SB 187](#)) and creating pilot program to certify culturally responsive practices in education.

Feb. 15, 3 p.m. Senate Workforce Committee takes invited testimony on the Public Employees Retirement System and holds a public hearing on changes to PERS ([SB 200](#)).

Feb. 15, 3 p.m. House Education Committee holds an informational meeting on dyslexia screening and a public hearing on issues related to school social workers ([HB 2648](#) and [HB 2658](#)).

Feb. 16, 3 p.m. House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee holds an informational meeting on the Workforce System.

Feb. 17, 5 p.m. Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee attend budget-focused town hall at Hermiston High school.

Feb. 18, 5 p.m. Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee attend budget-focused town hall at Madras High School.

Items may be added to committee agendas during the week. The Oregon Legislature keeps an updated page of committee agendas at:

olis.leg.state.or.us/LIZ/Committees/Meeting/List