Education funding committee hears governor’s education policy bills

The Joint Ways and Means Education Subcommittee held its first hearing Wednesday on Gov. Kate Brown’s two main education policy initiatives remaining this legislative session: Senate Bills 182 and 183. The education subcommittee is primarily responsible for allocating all education budget funds.

The two bills represent distinct yet complementary approaches to improving Oregon’s graduation rate. Senate Bill 182 would change the existing Network for Quality Teaching and Learning to a new Council on Educator Advancement. Currently, the NQTL receives approximately $37 million per biennium. Those funds support teacher professional development, with an emphasis on new teacher training and mentoring. The council would do much of the same work.

SB 183 would appropriate $20 million from the State School Fund to create a graduation early indicator and intervention system statewide. That would be a new “carve out” from the State School Fund.

Chief Education Officer Lindsey Capps described the goal of the two measures as supporting “students and their families.” He specifically mentioned the critical importance of “working alongside school districts and educators” to establish systems “to keep students on track in their learning.” Capps did not shy away from the cost of the measures.

“Yes, both of these proposals draw modest allocations from the State School Fund,” Capps testified. “These proposals recognize and are focused squarely on targeting resources and leveraging resources … to achieve graduation outcomes for our students most in need of support, our students of color and our students in poverty.”

The presentations to the subcommittee focused mostly on the content of SB 183. Presenters included Education Innovation Officer Colt Gill and Northwest Regional ESD Superintendent Rob Saxton. They stressed the value of the early indicator and intervention system, specifically to small school districts, which Gill defined as the approximately 150 school districts statewide that would not be able to create this kind of system alone.

Some legislators were skeptical of the costs. Rep. Barbara Smith Warner (D-Portland), co-chair of the subcommittee, expressed concern with staffing levels.

“In reading through this proposal … there are nine new staff positions, eight of which are permanent,” she said. “That is something we’re going to dig into.”

Smith Warner said her concern was that “resources, as limited as they are, get out as broadly as possible.”

The meeting ran long, and the subcommittee did not have time to undertake a full discussion on SB 182. The meeting ended with the subcommittee promising to schedule time soon to continue the presentation. OSBA will monitor the bills.

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Chamber deadline sharpens focus of Legislature’s work

Although the session is trudging along slowly, the second chamber deadline is fast approaching.

Bills had to be scheduled for a work session by May 19. Those work sessions must occur by June 2 or the bill is considered “dead.” The deadline does not apply to bills in the revenue, rules and Ways and Means committees.

With this deadline looming, committees sometimes move a bill to a committee that doesn’t have a deadline so work can continue on the bill.

After the June 2 deadline, most committees will shut down, although some committees will still choose to hold informational hearings. An informational hearing lets a group continue working on issues that might have died in a bill earlier in the session. Informational hearings can also be used for agency updates.

The session is constitutionally required to end by July 10, but there is still much to be done, including the K-12 education budget.

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Delay of physical education requirements moves to House floor without opposition

A bill to modify and delay physical education instruction requirements that are scheduled to go into effect in July cleared the House Education Committee on Monday.

Without opposition, the committee sent Senate Bill 4 to the House floor with a “do pass” recommendation. There is no known opposition to the bill, and it is expected to pass. Delaying the physical education requirements has been a major legislative priority for OSBA this session.

The Legislature set standards for physical education time in 2007 of 150 minutes a week for grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week for grades 6-8 and gave schools until the 2017-18 school year to comply. As of 2016, grades K-5 were providing about half the required minutes and grades 6-8 were short by more than an hour a week on average.

SB 4 would allow an initial two-year delay, followed by a gradual implementation. Grades K-5 would need to comply by the 2020-21 school year, and grades 6-8 would need to comply by the 2022-23 school year. The amended bill includes some technical fixes that make it easier for schools to comply.

During the work session, Rep. Sherrie Sprenger (R-Scio) took the opportunity to support physical education but also to encourage members to avoid enacting bills that would have to be undone or modified later.

“We have to exercise restraint in doing good things,” she said.

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**Bill Briefs**

**“Lunch shaming”**  
**House Bill 3454**

**What it does:** The bill would place requirements around what schools and school districts can do when a student does not pay for a school meal, including a prohibition against publicly identifying, stigmatizing or marking a student who has not paid for a meal. Schools also are prohibited from requiring a student to work or perform service in lieu of payment for meals. The bill was introduced by Rep. Mike McLane (R-Powell Butte) and Rep. Brian Clem (D-Salem) after a series of stories in April about the New Mexico Legislature’s efforts to deal with “lunch shaming.”

**What’s new:** Because of procedural deadlines, the bill was moved to the House Rules Committee, rather than the House Education Committee. The bill had a hearing Thursday.

**What’s next:** A work session is scheduled for Tuesday. OSBA will monitor the bill.

**Child abuse investigation**  
**Senate Bill 1018**

**What it does:** This bill would clarify that a school administrator or staff member cannot notify anyone of a pending investigation of child abuse or an interview in progress on school grounds. The initial hearing on this bill was in the Senate Judiciary Committee in April.

**What’s new:** The bill had its first hearing in the House in the Human Services and Housing Committee. Members had questions related to the process for a child abuse investigation in schools when Child Protective Services is involved. This specific type of investigation occurs when the alleged abuser has a familial relationship with the child. School districts are responsible for their students when they are on school grounds, and to protect the student and the school district, schools ask law enforcement and CPS investigators to sign a form that confirms investigators are who they say they are and that the student can be pulled from class for the interview with the CPS worker. In some situations, schools have refused to pull the student from class because the worker refused to sign the form.

**What’s next:** The bill is expected to move out of committee next week. OSBA and CPS are working together to come up with a form agreeable to schools and CPS.

**The Week Ahead**

**May 30**

8:30 a.m. - Joint Tax Reform Committee holds informational meeting on:
- Business tax reform.

3 p.m. - The Senate Education Committee holds possible work session on:
- Assisting students in poverty (HB 3216).
- Reporting competency-based education in post-secondary schools (HB 3289-A).
- Allowing interscholastic activities for charter school students (HB 3293).

3 p.m. - The Senate Education Committee holds work session on:
- Requiring annual report from the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (HB 3351).
- Establishing functional behavioral analysis procedures (HB 3318-A).
- Exempting National Guard members from community college deadline (HB 3423-A).
- Convening ELL program advisory group (HB 3358-A).
• Setting dental screening rules (HB 3353-A and HB 3181-A).
• Exempting some students on visas from school attendance (HB 3409-A).
• Allowing one-year delay of school enrollment (HB 3029-A).
• Waiving some diploma requirements for foster, homeless and runaway children (HB 3267-A).
• Requiring post-secondary cultural competencies (HB 2864-A).
• Providing high schools with apprenticeship materials (HB 3340-A).

3 p.m. - House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee holds work session on:

• Requiring credits for advanced placement exams (SB 207-A).

3 p.m. - House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee holds informational meeting on:

• General Educational Development testing.
• National Student Success Center Network.

May 31

8:30 a.m. - Joint Ways and Means Education Subcommittee holds informational meeting on:

• Medicaid billing.

8:30 a.m. - Joint Ways and Means Education Subcommittee holds work session on:

• Establishing statewide social studies standards (HB 2845).

June 1

8:30 a.m. - Joint Tax Reform Committee holds informational meeting on:

• Business tax reform.

June 2

• The last day for policy committees to move measures that originated in the opposite chamber. The deadline does not apply to Ways and Means, revenue, rules and joint committees.

Items may be added to legislative committee agendas during the week. The Oregon Legislature keeps an updated page of committee agendas at: odis.leg.state.or.us/LIZ/Committees/Meeting/List

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