

April 2014

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OSBA Events

OSBA Webinar on Smarter Balanced Assessments

April 23, 2013

PACE Day: Safe and Secure Schools

April 25, 2014

OSBA Legislative Policy Committee meeting

April 25-26, 2014

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 5-9, 2014

Summer Board Conference

July 18-20, 2014

OSBA embarks on public education support campaign

OSBA Board members, staff and opinion leaders met March 19 to discuss strategies for one of the organization's key initiatives for this year and beyond: the Public Education Support Campaign.

An outgrowth of the highly successful "Strong Schools, Strong State" coalition movement, the new OSBA campaign aims to build public support for K-12 schools and harness that energy into action in 2015.

OSBA was one of the primary participants in "Strong Schools, Strong State," which reinforced the connection between a thriving school system and Oregon's economic vitality. After an outpouring of support from local school board members, other key education community partners and the public, the state Legislature responded with its first significant funding boost for education in a decade – roughly \$1 billion more for K-12 schools.

The new OSBA campaign hopes to sustain that momentum beyond the Capitol, with the public. OSBA's

Board initiated the campaign, and heard a report on its progress a few days after the March 19 strategy session.

Tricia Yates, OSBA's director of communications, thanked Board members for their commitment to the project. She also summarized the March 19 brainstorming session.

"We're trying to change the discussion around public education," OSBA Vice President **Bobbie Regan** said. "This campaign will ... be very student-focused. It will lift kids up."

At the March 19 meeting at OSBA offices in Salem, Yates told those assembled that OSBA staff and contractor Blue Chalk Media plan for a soft rollout of the campaign in September, followed by a full unveiling at OSBA's annual convention in Portland in November.

Yates said OSBA's work will be independent of but complementary to the National School Boards Association's "Stand Up 4 Public Schools" efforts (see accompanying article, page 2). The two share a similar goal of demonstrating the value of public school investment.

The goal of the March 19 strategy session was to help frame the important issues and expected outcomes, as well as suggest possible slogans for the campaign. It will employ videos, social media, a website, traditional media and word of mouth to spread campaign messages.

Present from the OSBA Board were Regan (Portland Public Schools), **Kris Howatt** (Gresham-Barlow) and **Maureen Wolf** (Tigard-Tualatin). OSBA's Legislative Policy Committee members **Jill Zurschmeide** (Tigard-Tualatin) and **Nancy MacMorris-Adix** (Salem-Keizer) also participated.

OSBA staff there besides Yates were Betsy Miller-Jones, executive director; Jim Green, deputy executive director; and several others.

Rob Finch and Pam Huling represented Blue Chalk. Joining the group via video feed were Greg Moyer, founder and CEO of Blue Chalk, and two of his staff.

The group broke into smaller segments for discussion, then reported back with possible campaign themes. OSBA will settle on a campaign name in coming weeks.

Joe Krumm, executive director of community and government relations for the North Clackamas School District, asked who the audience would be besides the general public.

"We want to build a buzz of support leading to the 2015 legislative session," Miller-Jones said, "so it really is a broad campaign."

Howatt, in one of the smaller groups, discussed the importance of a wide appeal that would reinforce the value of local schools rather than encourage parents to search for an alternative across town or beyond.

"We need to show that public education is creating the astronaut, the doctor and the accountant," she said.

Similarly, Regan talked about a campaign that shows today's learners are tomorrow's leaders. She suggested it might begin based on values and accelerate to a call for greater investment.

Moyer emphasized the need for members of the public to buy into the effort by allowing them to share their stories and photos online.

Toward the session's conclusion, Finch tried to summarize some of the recurring messages he had heard from the small groups.

"The word I heard most was potential, and the idea that the future is dependent on what we do," he said.

NSBA launches national campaign to support public education

In partnership with state associations including OSBA, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) has launched www.standup4publicschools.org, a new national campaign to highlight the importance of public education.

The campaign features celebrity advocates and public school graduates. It operates on a simple premise: "Who I am today began with public education." It is also paired with the rejoinder, "Today's public schools are better than ever."

Sal Khan, founder of the not-for-profit Khan Academy, is the campaign's first celebrity advocate. Two other household names will also be featured: basketball legend and business mogul Earvin "Magic" Johnson and talk show host Montel Williams.

The campaign's website includes a selection of resources for local board members and the public and a six-step outline for success, from "getting informed" all the way to "getting results."

"This presents a wonderful opportunity for local Oregon school board members to stand together with their peers from across the country," said Betsy Miller-Jones, OSBA's executive director.

The campaign website can be found at:

<http://standup4publicschools.org>

 Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/standup4publicschools>

 Twitter: <https://twitter.com/4PublicSchools>

Related resources

- Press release announcing NSBA national campaign to promote public education: <http://www.nsba.org/Newsroom/Press-Releases/School-Boards-Launch-National-Campaign-to-Promote-Public-Education.html>
- Celebrities Sal Khan, Magic Johnson and Montel Williams headline national campaign: <http://schoolboardnews.nsba.org/2014/02/celebrities-showcase-public-education-in-nsbas-national-campaign/>
- Eight characteristics of effective school boards: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Public-education/Eight-characteristics-of-effective-school-boards>

President's Post

Native American issues remain a challenge for Oregon schools

A recent report on "The Condition of Education for Members of Oregon's Indian Tribes" hit close to home for me.

As some of you may know, my mother is a member of the Klamath tribes. I work for the Klamath tribes as a social work case manager, and I see these children and their families every day and the challenges they face.

Seven of Oregon's nine recognized tribes and federations took part in the study, which was paid for by the Spirit Mountain Community Fund. It was overseen by the Chalkboard Project, and conducted by ECONorthwest.



Lori Theros
OSBA President

In total, tribes have about 3,200 pupils in Oregon's public schools. That might not sound like a lot, but taken together these children could fill a couple of metropolitan-area high schools, and they will touch thousands of other lives with their achievements.

Sadly, while most students of color have narrowed the achievement gap nationally over the last decade, Native Americans are a glaring exception.

The study outlines many of the obstacles facing these students in Oregon, including extreme poverty, chronic absenteeism, high mobility and rural isolation.

Now that this ground-breaking report has identified some Oregon-specific data, it is up to us – all of us – to find the solutions to help turn around some of these disturbing trends.

I encourage you to read the full report, which can be found at <http://bit.ly/Pyix5c>.

On another note, it was encouraging to see a teacher strike settle close to home recently (in Medford) and another averted further north (in Portland). As OSBA members we are all familiar with issues of class size and prep time, but we also know too well the difficulties we face in spending limited budgets wisely.

As always, our focal point should be ensuring that the result is one that most benefits children. That's what makes our volunteer service worthwhile.

In the Loop

Data motivates us to act



*Betsy Miller-Jones
Executive Director*

Every once in a while compelling data comes to our attention, data so compelling that we are motivated to act.

Did you know that in 2013 over 50 percent of all babies born in Oregon were Hispanic? Currently 38 percent of Oregon youths under age 18 are non-white or English language learners. Over the next 18 years Oregon's public education system will adapt to those changing birth demographics. What does this mean for our schools?

Unless we are successful closing the achievement gap for students of color and English language learners, our statewide graduation rates are going to decline, and quickly. Our targets of 40-40-20 and 100 percent high school graduation by 2025 are not achievable without strong emphasis on closing that gap.

The Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB) is focusing on early literacy – every student reading at grade

level by grade three – to close the gap. Third-grade literacy is a strong predictor of high school graduation. On March 21 at the OSBA Board of Directors meeting, OEIB Chief Education Officer Dr. Nancy Golden and Oregon Department of Education Early Learning Systems Director Jada Rupley discussed with our board the steps that Oregon will need to take to close this gap and reach the 40-40-20 goal.

To achieve key elements of change, the Legislature has directed the formation of community-based coordinators of early learning services or hubs.

The overarching goals of the early learning services and proposed hubs are: 1) children are ready for kindergarten when they arrive; 2) children are raised in stable and attached families; and 3) services are integrated and aligned into one early learning system designed to achieve goals 1 and 2.

Along with these efforts, both for early learning before entering kindergarten and after, will be a discussion of distribution of resources for equitable outcomes. Do you know how your district addresses these issues? What best practices are you putting in place to meet the coming changes?

If you would like to hear more about advancing student achievement and meeting the goal of 40-40-20 by 2025, Dr. Nancy Golden will be speaking at the OSBA Summer Board Conference "Summer Camp" on July 18-20 at the Riverhouse Hotel and Convention Center in Bend. Please join us there!

Don't miss "PACE Day: Safe and Secure Schools" in Eugene

Time is running out to register for "PACE Day: Safe and Secure Schools," planned for April 25 at the Hilton Eugene & Conference Center.

It's the second annual conference on school safety from Property and Casualty Coverage for Education (PACE), and hotel and registration are free for the first individual from each member district. Subject areas include boundary invasion, threat assessment in the aftermath of Sandy Hook, handling employment claims, concussion management and addressing school bullying.

This year's keynote speaker, Glenn Lipson, is a forensic and clinical psychologist who has trained nearly 7,000 educators in preventing sexual misconduct in schools. Lipson has consulted with schools for over two decades and has helped create an online training program to prevent sexual misconduct.

The deadline for web and phone registration is April 18. Agendas and registration information are available on the OSBA website at:

http://www.osba.org/Calendar/Events/PACE_Day-2014.aspx



OSBA delegation takes its case to Washington, D.C.

OSBA Board members and officers recently visited the nation's Capitol to meet with Oregon congressional delegation members as part of the National School Boards Association's 2014 Advocacy Institute.

In meetings held Feb. 4, OSBA Board members stressed the importance of making Oregon's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver permanent, the need for a long-term solution to ensure county timber payments continue to support public schools, and the importance of funding programs that provide support and services for our most vulnerable and disadvantaged students.



L to R: Betsy Miller-Jones, Sam Lee, Kris Howatt, Bobbie Regan, Cheri Helt, U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, Doug Montgomery, Tass Morrison, Betty Reynolds, Dave Krumbein

OSBA Executive Director Betsy Miller-Jones, who accompanied the delegation, said it is critically important for Congress to hear from school board members about the challenges facing Oregon students and schools.

"Face-to-face meetings with our representatives and senators in Washington, D.C., are essential to their understanding of what's happening back home in the schools in their communities," Miller-Jones said.

Schools across Oregon have lost millions of dollars in federal support due to the budget gridlock in Washington.

OSBA's delegation stressed that it is time for Congress to reinvest in our public schools. In particular, board members spoke to the need for adequate funding for programs that help children living in poverty (Title I) and children with special education needs (IDEA).



Sen. Jeff Merkley greets OSBA Board members Tass Morrison, Doug Montgomery and Dave Krumbein.

An underlying theme of the day on Capitol Hill was the important role that locally elected school board members play in determining how children in their communities are educated. Oregon has a strong tradition of board members leading at the district level – a contrast with the federal government's growing role in education in the form of increased mandates and additional conditions for federal funding.

OSBA's delegation made it clear our districts need federal mandate relief so scarce resources can be focused on increasing student achievement.

Our delegation also was able to arrange an impromptu meeting with representatives of the U.S. Department of Education to get more information about the steps Oregon will take to extend our waiver from NCLB. Board members shared how loss of the waiver would negatively impact schools and students across Oregon.

OSBA Board members in Washington, D.C., for NSBA's Advocacy Institute included: President-elect **Dave Krumbein** (Pendleton School District) Vice President

Bobbie Regan (Portland Public Schools), **Kris Howatt** (Gresham-Barlow School District), Secretary-Treasurer **Sam Lee** (Winston-Dillard School District), **Tass Morrison** (North Santiam School District), **Betty Reynolds** (West Linn-Wilsonville School District) and **Doug Montgomery** (Multnomah Education Service District). OSBA Legislative Policy Committee member **Cheri Helt** (Bend-La Pine School District) also joined the delegation.

OSBA staff attending besides Miller-Jones were Deputy Executive Director Jim Green and Legislative Services Specialist Morgan Allen.

Phoenix-Talent wins honorable mention from NSBA

The Phoenix-Talent School District has been recognized as an honorable mention in the Magna Awards program sponsored by the American School Board Journal. The awards recognize innovation in public education.

Winners were selected from among nearly 250 entrants in three enrollment categories. One grand prize winner, five first places and five honorable mentions were selected in each category. Phoenix-Talent competed in the under-5,000 enrollment category with its "Pirates to Raiders" program.

The winners were honored at a luncheon April 5 during the National School Boards Association's annual conference in New Orleans.

More information and winning entries can be found at <http://www.asbj.com/magna>.

'Summer Camp' for board members coming up in Bend

Ah, summer. Long days, balmy nights – and the chance to meet with school board members from across Oregon on July 19-20 at OSBA's annual Summer Board Conference.

The theme this year is "Summer Camp for School Boards." You probably won't find s'mores or sing "Kumbaya," but you can expect good times and an opportunity to learn more about the critical issues facing Oregon's schools and their leaders.

Keynote speakers include Nancy Golden, Oregon's chief education officer, and Rob Saxton, the state's deputy superintendent of public instruction. Workshop offerings

range from board chair responsibilities to Common Core to labor relations.

We are meeting once again at the scenic Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center in Bend. And don't forget the pre-conference and board secretaries workshops on July 18. More information and registration materials are on our website:

http://www.osba.org/Calendar/Events/Summer_board_conference-2014.aspx



New pricing packages offered for job postings

Starting in July, OSBA will offer new pricing packages for job postings on our website.

The package pricing offers a significant savings over the current per-posting charges, but only applies to members conducting their own job searches. The pricing is not available to search firms or districts using a search firm.

The new packages are as follows:

- Package of five job postings - \$1,000 (\$300 savings)
- Package of 10 - \$2,000 (\$600 savings)
- Unlimited postings for 365 days - \$3,000 (variable savings)

Posting packages will run from July 1 to June 30. For more information, contact Donna Herren at dherren@osba.org or 503-485-4810.

Two new members join LPC

The OSBA Board of Directors at their March 25 meeting appointed two new members to the Legislative Policy Committee (LPC).

The Board approved the appointment of **Kevin Cassidy**, Baker School District, to Position 1, and **Chris Brantley**, Salem-Keizer School District, to Position 11. The Board also plans a special meeting later this month to appoint **Marty Dursse**, Astoria School District, to LPC Position 14.

The LPC's next meeting is scheduled for April 25-26.

PACE expects lower claims to lead to member savings

Even after a December freeze that caused more than \$3.6 million in claims, members of Property and Casualty Coverage for Education (PACE) are on track for some encouraging news on next year's rates.



Mike Doherty, PACE's chief financial officer, told the insurance pool's trustees at their March 3 meeting that a drop in claims this year should

translate to a modest single-digit increase in rates for 2014-15. Final calculations have not been made, however, and three months remain in the fiscal year.

"We don't expect to see anything (near) the 18 percent increase we did last year," Doherty said.

Doherty suggested that because of the drop in claims this might be a good time to consider doubling earthquake coverage statewide, to \$200 million from the current \$100 million. That increased coverage would cost about \$1 million annually, shared among members.

When PACE was formed in 2006, total earthquake coverage stood at \$300 million. It has been reduced since to help keep member rates down, but Doherty said current coverage stands significantly below the \$370 million that earthquake modeling suggests based on the total value of school facilities statewide and the possibility of an earthquake.

Trustees by consensus agreed to look more closely at the numbers and consider increasing earthquake coverage at their next meeting.

In other action, trustees:

- Heard a presentation about a rewritten coverage document that adds clarity on what is covered. It takes effect July 1.
- Learned more about SafeSchools and SafeColleges, the online training resources that have been used by Oregon PACE members more than 300,000 times since July 1. Brian Taylor of SafeSchools/SafeColleges also presented information on potentially piloting an online system that would allow anonymous reporting of safety concerns at individual sites.
- Heard about plans for "PACE Day: Safe and Secure Schools," coming up April 25 in Eugene, as well as a presentation on a new Boundary Invasion Toolkit that will be made available there.

"I think this toolkit is going to be a great resource for our members," said Scott Neufeld, PACE's director of risk management.

Teacher Appreciation Week is approaching

It's that time again: Teacher Appreciation Week, which is observed annually during the first full week in May.

Please join the celebration, sponsored by the National PTA, and honor your teachers May 5-9. OSBA has a sample resolution and link to resources (http://www.osba.org/Calendar/Events/Teacher_Appreciation_Week.aspx) to help school boards proclaim the week in their districts.