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'Promise' campaign builds momentum amid budget votes

The frenzied legislative work around the State School Fund budget crested the week of April 6 as the state Senate passed a \$7.255 billion K-12 budget bill for 2015-17. Gov. Kate Brown is expected to sign it into law.

On March 31, the state House passed the schools budget, contained in House Bill 5017, despite an outpouring of opposition from OSBA members and education partners such as the Oregon PTA, the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators and the Oregon Education Association.

School business officials from around the state have determined that with increased costs, including labor agreements and the implementation of all-day kindergarten, the minimum school funding figure to avoid cutbacks should be \$7.5 billion.

As lobbying progressed in the Legislature, "The Promise of Oregon" campaign (<http://promiseoregon.org>) helped amplify the voices of education advocates and continued to celebrate the accomplishments of the state's students.



Jamie Francis of Blue Chalk Media films Jordan Valley High student Nick Eiguren for a student video released April 7.



Videographers from Blue Chalk Media film motivational speaker Greg Bell at his Portland home for a video on how public schools helped today's adults reach success. The video will debut in early May.

More than 6,400 individuals signed a petition on the "Promise" website urging increased funding levels for K-12 education. The petition (<http://promiseoregon.org/petition>) was delivered to every legislator and was read into the Senate record during debate April 6.

OSBA also sent out two Action Alerts in recent days asking members and friends to contact legislators in opposition to HB 5017.

"The basic premise of 'The Promise of Oregon' campaign is that our primary investment should be in educating our children," says Betsy Miller-Jones, OSBA's executive director. "They represent our future."

As continued evidence of that, the "Promise" campaign includes a series of videos celebrating student successes. The latest in that series, focusing on Nick Eiguren, a senior at Jordan Valley High School, debuted April 7 on the website.

Nick is an outstanding student whose college plans to study sports medicine embrace his love of rodeo competition.

Another new video, showing how Oregon schools helped the students of yesteryear become the successful adults of today, will debut on the website in early May.

Watch the video of Nick Eiguren, Jordan Valley High School student, on “The Promise of Oregon” website: <http://promiseoregon.org/third-promise-video-features-nick-eiguren-of-jordan-valley-high-school-jordan-valley-sd>

In the Loop

Keep moving the conversation on ‘legislators’ budget’

Budgets demonstrate where real priorities lie, plain and simple. Lofty goals of 40-40-20 are admirable, but without full funding of K-12 education we are challenged to reach



Betsy Miller-Jones
Executive Director

them, or even make progress toward reaching them. Oregon school districts have done amazingly well while cutting over the last decade. But now we have reached a point where the disinvestment is revealed in our low graduation rates, high class sizes and shortened school year. In fact, we have cut so many school days that at the end of 12 years an Oregon student has

gone to school almost a year less than the average student in the United States.

The legislators’ \$7.255 billion K-12 budget for 2015-17 does not fund school districts at a level that moves us forward. In fact, most will face more cuts of days, teachers or programs. Our job in advocating with legislators this year has been to calmly and factually explain the real impact of this budget on our school districts and students. Now that the legislators’ K-12 funding budget has passed, you will be building a budget based on those numbers. But it’s important that you continue to communicate with your community and your legislators what the real impact is. We cannot allow others to continue to state unchallenged that somehow everything is going to be OK for public education at \$7.255 billion. It is not advantageous for districts to receive an early budget if that budget is inadequate.

It’s been gratifying to see the amazing response from so many of you over the last few days. As our legislative team at OSBA continued to advocate on your behalf, we asked you through Action Alerts to contact legislators directly, and you did. Through “The Promise of Oregon” campaign, more than 6,400 of you signed a petition supporting higher levels of education funding, and we are making sure legislators hear your voices loud and clear.

Your advocacy work, and the work of your superintendents, district staff and community members, has made a difference. We have changed the conversation from “This is all we can do for education this

biennium,” to “We must do better for K-12 education.” Please continue to communicate to the Legislature the very real impact of the budget decisions they make. We can appreciate the challenges of their budget decisions and the numerous needs for funding. After all, you as local board members have had to do that and make cuts for many years. But we also must insist on honesty in describing the real impact of this budget at \$7.255 billion.

Education Department updates handout on Smarter Balanced

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) has updated its handouts for parents on the new Smarter Balanced Assessments being given to students this spring.

The new one-page fact sheet focuses on how Smarter Balanced differs from its predecessors, and how creating higher standards will better prepare young people for their future. It acknowledges that because the Common Core State Standards the assessments are based upon are more rigorous, test scores are likely to drop this year.

“This is a short-term setback,” the handout says. “Higher standards will help our students in the long run.”

More information about the assessment, including sample tests, can be found at www.smarterbalanced.org.

View the fact sheet here:

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/wma/teachlearn/testing/smarter-balanced-parent-factsheet-eng.pdf>

'Summer Camp' for board members is coming up

Registration has opened for “Summer Camp for School Boards” – a chance to meet with school board members from across the state July 17-19 at OSBA’s annual Summer Board Conference.

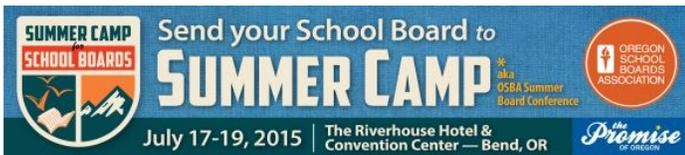
This is your chance to learn more about the critical issues facing Oregon’s schools and their leaders in an idyllic setting, the scenic Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center in Bend.

The keynote address on “Breaking the Unwritten Rules” will come from motivational speaker Mike Weber of Southwestern Consulting. Weber has spoken to groups across the country about honing leadership skills and adapting to rapidly changing environments. Workshop offerings range from Common Core/Smarter Balanced to school finance to superintendent evaluation.

Attend the pre-conference July 17 and you can learn more about school trust lands from Margaret Bird of the Children's Land Alliance Supporting Schools. You'll also hear how to run great meetings using parliamentary procedure from Ann Macfarlane of Jurassic Parliament.

Board secretaries' workshops will also be held on July 17. Once again we will offer a no-host networking reception for conference attendees and a guest, at 4 p.m. July 17.

For a complete agenda and to register, visit www.osba.org/Calendar/Events/Summer_board_conference-2015.aspx



April 20-24 is Playground Safety Week

Each year, roughly 200,000 kids are injured on playgrounds. National Playground Safety Week is a time to focus on making children's outdoor play environments safer and thanking all the adults who work tirelessly on maintaining playgrounds. When choosing and maintaining your playground keep safety in mind.

What you can do:

- **Conduct monthly inspections using a checklist** with your specific district equipment information. Download a sample checklist to get started: pace.osba.org/~media/PACEFiles/Resources/Safety/playground_inspection.docx
- **Provide adequate shock-absorbing materials** – Both unitary (poured in place and other stationary solids) and loose-fill materials can provide adequate shock absorbency. Recommended loose-fill materials include wood chips, double shredded bark mulch, engineered wood fibers, fine sand, coarse sand, fine gravel, medium gravel and shredded tires. Depending on the height of play equipment, surfaces should have a consistent 9 to 12 inches of shock-absorbing material.
- **Establish fall zones** – Each piece of stationary equipment should have a radius of 6 feet around it free of ground hazards and covered with shock-absorbing materials. When fall zones overlap,

there should be a minimum of 9 feet between structures over 30 inches tall. Swing set fall zones should extend two times the height of the swing fulcrum in front and behind the swing's center.

- **Maintain safe hardware** – Equipment should be checked for extensive wear and tear, protruding bolts, and pinch points. Chains should not have open "S" hooks and should be replaced when there is 50 percent wear of the chain's gauge. Nuts, bolts and support bars should be as flush to the play surface as possible.
- **Eliminate entanglement and entrapment hazards** – Any protruding item that may be able to catch children's clothing and strings can be a hazard. Openings or snags should be filled in or made flush with their surrounding surface. Any opening between 3½ and 9 inches could entrap a child's head, arm or leg and should be eliminated. If there are any hazards in a public or backyard playground, report them immediately and do not allow children to use the equipment until it is safe.
- **Register for the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) class** – The purpose of the CPSI certification is for those certified to be able to: identify hazards on public playground equipment and the playground; rank the hazards according to injury potential; and apply the knowledge to remove the hazards and establish a system of inspections and maintenance. Hosted by the Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA), Oregon's only CPSI class of 2015 will be held June 3-5 in Hillsboro. Register by April 17 for best registration rates, and find all the details about the upcoming CPSI class and exam by visiting ORPA's website at www.orpa.org.

If you have questions about playground safety, contact PACE Risk Management at: pace.osba.org/AboutPACE/LeftNav/ContactPACE.aspx



2015 PACE Day is just around the corner

Time is running out to register for "PACE Day: Safe and Secure Schools," planned for April 24 at the Hilton Eugene.

It's the third year that Property and Casualty Coverage for Education (PACE) has offered this annual conference on school safety, and once again registration is free for the first attendee from each PACE member district.

PACE Day is a day of education and networking, where members will learn how to recover from crisis situations, implement "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" (CPTED), ensure their schools have adequate cyber security and create a school culture and climate to eliminate bullying.

Registration ends Friday, April 17. Be sure to register before the deadline; go to:

pace.osba.org/MyPACE/LeftNav/EventSignUp.aspx

All of the program details, including information on the welcoming reception on Thursday, April 23, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., can be found on the PACE website. Learn more about this year's speakers, and review the list of sponsors who will be exhibiting. PACE is proud to recognize the contribution sponsors make at PACE Day: Safe and Secure Schools, and invites members to learn how sponsors can help safeguard students, staff and facilities. For more information about PACE Day, visit the PACE website: pace.osba.org/Calendar/Events/PACE_Day-2015.aspx

