

## LETTER IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2748

April 2, 2013

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chair: Representative Sara Gelser

Vice-Chairs: Representatives Jeff Reardon, Sherrie Sprenger

Members: Representatives David Gomberg, John Huffman,  
Gene Whisnant, Julie Parrish, Chris Gorsek, Shemia Fagan

Dear Chair Gelser, Vice-Chairs Reardon & Sprenger, and House Committee on Education Members:

I urge you to support HB 2748 which will help make public education in Oregon more equitable.

Public school districts should not be allowed to charge tuition from non-resident students. If a school district wishes to raise additional funds, then they have the option to admit students under the new open-enrollment rubric, pass local levies and/or other fundraising, e.g. foundations.

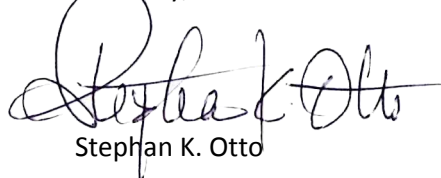
Arguably one of the districts that will be most affected by HB 2748 is Riverdale School District who has an inordinate amount of students that must pay tuition to attend. While you have heard from many from Riverdale in opposition to this legislation, please ask yourselves if it is fair for the [third richest public school district in the entire country](#)<sup>1</sup> to be able to raise even more funds by charging non-resident students tuition, while at the same time, receive public funding and other benefits from the taxpayers of our state?

My family lives just three blocks outside of the Riverdale district, and their high school is in the middle of my neighborhood (formerly Collins View Elementary – a PPS school now leased to Riverdale), yet my children are not permitted to attend this local public school unless we were to pay \$12,000 a year per child in tuition.<sup>2</sup>

This is not an equitable arrangement for an Oregon public school system. Should residents of the Riverdale district and other similarly-situated districts want schools where tuition can be charged, they have the option to establish private schools. They should not be able to have their cake (public school funding) and eat it too (charging tuition).

Please do what's fair and help level the public education playing field. Vote in support of HB 2748.

Sincerely,



Stephan K. Otto

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.oregonlive.com/education/index.ssf/2012/06/riverdale\\_school\\_district\\_amon.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/education/index.ssf/2012/06/riverdale_school_district_amon.html)

<sup>2</sup> Riverdale does not currently accept students through the open-enrollment policy other than a handful of students whose parents work at the school or who were already admitted under the inter-district transfer policy.



**OregonLive.com**  
Everything Oregon

## Riverdale School District ranks as one of the nation's richest public school systems



By [Nicole Dungca, The Oregonian](#)

on June 11, 2012 at 11:17 AM, updated June 11, 2012 at 11:19 AM

Multnomah County's high-achieving [Riverdale School District](#) is the third-richest public school system in the country, according to [an analysis by the 24/7 Wall Street blog](#).

The analysis, which used U.S. Census Bureau data from 2006 through 2010 from more than 10,000 school systems across the country, ranked districts using the median incomes of its residents.

The median household for the Riverdale School District is nearly \$200,000, and almost 60 percent of the district's households earn more than \$200,000, according to the analysis.

Riverdale, which enrolls just over 550 students and consistently outscores other high-performing districts, stands out as the only school system in the top ten that falls outside wealthy suburban enclaves in New York or Connecticut. The district, which is just south of Portland and includes the community of Dunthorpe, was surpassed only by Connecticut's Weston School District and New York's Scarsdale Union Free School District.

Riverdale's spending per student, \$16,807, is lower than the most of the East Coast districts on the list, but the amount still dwarfs the per-pupil expenditures of many of its Oregon counterparts.

In Oregon, the state doles out approximately \$6,000 per student to districts, but school systems often increase those numbers with federal funding, property taxes or fundraising.

A number of school districts in wealthy areas use both property tax hikes and foundations to help pad their budgets. Riverdale last passed a [five-year local option levy in 2010](#) that was expected to generate roughly \$2.8 million over five years, and also has a [foundation that suggests families contribute \\$3,000](#).

-- [Nicole Dungca](#)

[Follow @ndungca](#)

© OregonLive.com. All rights reserved.