

Testimony before the Education Subcommittee, Joint Ways and Means Committee

Re: Achievement Compacts, April 16, 2013, Betty Reynolds, Ph.D.

Good morning Mr. Chair and members of the Committee. I'm Betty Reynolds, and serve on the West Linn-Wilsonville School Board. I also serve on the Oregon School Boards Association's Legislative Policy Committee and was OSBA's representative on two of the Oregon Education Investment Board's Advisory Committees when the original compacts were developed.

Oregon's School Boards have long been dedicated to student achievement, and have embraced the concepts 40-40-20 and closing the achievement gap. The input the OSBA provided to the OEIB regarding achievement compacts was, please design a system and measures so that reporting is simple and stable, and that recognizes the uniqueness of the state's 197 School Districts and Oregon's tradition of local governance. That is, School Boards are investing significant time in planning and reporting; for the compacts to be useful, Boards don't want to see the goal posts moved and the metrics changed.

OSBA was pleased that the OEIB listened: the OEIB kept the original form to two pages, there were minimal changes to the metrics this year, and those changes were improvements. OSBA believes that legislation to change the reporting date from July to October will overcome a remaining problem of required test data being available in time.

The West Linn-Wilsonville School District has over 8700 students. Its long commitment to student achievement and closing the achievement gap has paid off: the State's last Report Card rated 10 of 12 District schools as "outstanding," and our 4 year graduation rate is among the highest in the state, at nearly 89%.

We have been proactive in the achievement compact process. The number one goal adopted by the Board is to improve student achievement and close the achievement gap; we submitted our first compact timely in 2012 and it was accepted by the OEIB. A broadly representative Achievement Compact Advisory Committee was approved by the Board in October and has met several times in a highly collaborative process. Their draft compact was presented to the Board in February, and their targets will inform the Budget Committee and Board in budget development, which is underway.

Deputy Superintendent Jane Stickney and Assistant Superintendent Kathy Ludwig will provide more details about West Linn-Wilsonville School District's Achievement Compact process, use, challenges, and proposed changes. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.