

March 12, 2013

Chair Gelser and members of the House Education Committee,
I am a parent whose son attends Riverdale High School as a transfer student and I **support HB 2748** (which prohibits a district school board from charging tuition for nonresident students), but **recommend amending the effective date to be July 1, 2014** to give the district sufficient time to respond to this drastic funding change.

We have ridden the NCLB/waiver storm relatively unscathed over the past four years because Beaverton state school dollars follow our son to Riverdale. My friends' kids who attend the Beaverton School District are impacted by cuts and reforms that have swollen high school class sizes. With class sizes less than 25, Riverdale teachers are very accessible and supportive; and without the district spending a dime on AP or IB classes, teachers are innovative in their instruction and the curriculum is rich. Parents have ten-minute conferences with each teacher every trimester. This is how we really know our son is progressing. Not OAKS tests. Not PSAT scores. Not ACT scores.

Fundamentally, this district's excellence is market-based. Riverdale is considered a "private public"[1] school and 24/7 Wall Street ranks it the third richest school district in the United States[2]. Those who can afford to live in the district[3] or pay tuition benefit from what is arguably a district-wide public voucher for a private school. It would be unfair if the district opened enrollment to only tuition-paying students. While my son is graduating this spring, I would support this legislation even if he were younger. There are multiple reasons to do so:

1. **Gross inequities ensue from privatized public education.**
2. **Riverdale School District is politically disengaged in fair taxation.**
3. **No school district can insulate itself from top-down reforms.**

Gross Inequities from privatized education

Until last year, when local option levy tax compression and revenue loss began to mount in the Riverdale School District, I was unaware of how much tuition[4] supplemented the budget. Foundation support, tuition and a local option levy nearly double the state school funding formula[5] for the Riverdale School District. ~1 of 6 dollars comes from tuition alone! (See table below.) A "tuition parent" expressed disapproval when I admitted that I would not contribute the \$6000 difference to the foundation. (The district exceeds funding for the Quality Education Model, though QEM analysis does not account for higher administrative overhead in a small district.)

Political Disengagement in fair taxation

The public school funding ship is sinking and the Foundation has worked overtime to raise money. Three years ago, Measures 66 & 67 needed support. I suggested that the Foundation support these measures to raise revenue for all schools. The Riverdale School District did not support them—as it was, no doubt, a conflict of interests.

No Escaping Corporate Education Reforms

Riverdale depends on marketing successful schools. Last fall, the community was in an uproar over the k-8 school getting a tier 3 rating.[6] It's much more difficult to market the school district

with this rating. One reason the school dropped a full tier was that a few parents had opted their Special Education identified children out of testing. Nonetheless, a scapegoat was found. Soon after, the new Superintendent was on her way out, *unable to appease parents who rightfully demand local control of their schools*. That position has been in upheaval for years. After all, how can a public school be a private school at the same time?

As such, the Riverdale Community cannot overcome privatization by corporations, the ultimate hoarder of public wealth. Like all other school districts, this community will see more and more time and money diverted to testing. And more and more data will be uploaded to the likes of Murdoch[7], Pearson[8], Microsoft[9] and Google[10] – vulture capitalists all fighting over public education dollars with every virtual reform imagined.

RIVERDALE PARENTS SHOULD UNITE WITH ALL PARENTS TO OPT OUT OF BOTH HIGH-STAKES TESTING & BIG DATA[11].

Kris Alman

http://drmacnamarasnewsletter.blogspot.com/2011_04_01_archive.html

General Fund Resource Forecast	2010-11	2011-12	Difference
Federal Stimulus Funds	\$ 3,000	\$0	(\$ 3,000)
Other State Formula Revenues	3,589,800	3,375,100	(214,700)
Local Option Taxes	515,500	556,000	40,500
Riverdale Foundation	750,000	620,000	(130,000)
Tuition	1,300,000	1,150,000	(150,000)
Other local revenues	211,200	230,000	18,800
Beginning Fund Balance	<u>957,900</u>	<u>709,000</u>	<u>(248,900)</u>
Total Resources	\$7,327,400	\$6,640,100	(\$687,300)

[1]http://www.oregonlive.com/education/index.ssf/2010/02/national_study_dubs_12_portlan.html the (Fordham) institute argues that "by exclusively serving well-off children, they are arguably more private — certainly more exclusive — than many elite private schools, which... generally offer at least some scholarships to low-income students."

[2]http://www.oregonlive.com/education/index.ssf/2012/06/riverdale_school_district_amon.html

[3] http://blog.oregonlive.com/homes-rentals/2012/02/buying_into_the_riverdale_scho.html

[4] <http://www.riverdaleschool.com/page.cfm?p=2561> currently \$12,600 for grades 9-12

[5] See achievement compact: http://www.oregon.gov/gov/oeib/docs/schoolso_rn.pdf

[6] <http://schools.oregonlive.com/school/Riverdale/Riverdale-Grade-School/>

[7] <http://www.wirelessgeneration.com/assessment/mclass-dibels/overview;>

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/news/smarter-balanced-awards-reporting-system-contract-to-wireless-generation/>; <http://www.hackeducation.com/2012/07/24/amplify-news-corp-phone-hacking/>; <http://stemconnector.org/wireless-generation>

[8] <http://jaxkidsmatter.blogspot.com/2012/04/testing-giant-pearson-reports-9-billion.html>

[9] http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/ed_data_commitments_1-19-12.pdf

[10] <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324539404578340681695885730.html>

[11] SUPPORT HB 2863 AND SB 567

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/13reg/measpdf/hb2800.dir/hb2863.intro.pdf>

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/13reg/measpdf/sb0500.dir/sb0567.intro.pdf>