

**Testimony Before the Senate Education Committee on SB 297**  
**Toya Fick – Director of Government Affairs, Stand for Children**  
**March 14, 2013**

Good afternoon.

Chair Hass, Vice-Chair Knopp, and members of the committee.

For the record, my name is Toya Fick and I am the government affairs director with Stand for Children. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 297. Stand is a proud member of the Oregon Alliance for Education Equity, or the OAEE, and we worked with them on this bill.

As you know, achievement compact advisory committees are responsible for helping to develop the goals of the achievement compacts, coming up with plans for achieving those goals, and measuring progress towards them. These committees play a very important role and help create a path towards 40/40/20. We firmly believe parents and community members should allow to serve on them.

We know, and research has proven, that the link between parent involvement and improved student achievement prevails across differences in income and racial/ethnic background, and is particularly important for low-income students and students of color. At its core, parental involvement is a collaboration between families and educators to drive student learning. Further, community-based organizations that work with students of color can help bridge cultural and racial differences that often exist between educators and students. These two stakeholders are vital partners in our path towards 40/40/20.

Unfortunately, these important stakeholders cannot be included as full voting members of the achievement compact advisory committees per state statute. These valuable stakeholders can advocate on behalf of historically underserved and underrepresented students, help shape policies that target student achievement, and engage in Oregon's collective effort to improve public schools for all students.

We believe that not including them in process of developing goals for their children in this very concrete, direct way has the unintended consequence of disenfranchising very groups should be at the table and discounts the role they can play in this comprehensive effort towards 40/40/20.

SB 297 simply asks parents, teachers, district employees, and community members to work together as partners – each with an equal and valuable contribution to bring to improve student achievement.

We agree with the OEIB in that parent engagement is an important component in the advancement of Achievement Compacts. Including parents and community representation on Achievement Compact Advisory Committees will go a long way toward ensuring that their perspectives are brought to bear on the problem and are considered in the development of proposed solutions.

Thank you for your time this afternoon.

I will now turn to my colleague Jason Trombley of APANO to give us an example of what SB 297 could look like in action.