

Oregon Senate Committee on Education and Workforce Development
Testimony Regarding Senate Bill 297
Thursday, March 14, 2013

Chairman Hass, members of the Committee on Education and Workforce Development. My name is Jason Trombley, and I currently serve as an ex-officio member, representing the Coalition of Communities of Color, on the Achievement Compact Advisory Committee for Portland Public Schools.

As part of the academic achievement compact with the Oregon Education Investment Board, every school district is required to form an achievement compact advisory committee by September 30, 2012 to be approved by the Board of Education. In accordance with state law, Portland Public Schools completed this task and formed its committee, and began to convene on a monthly basis to set academic achievement targets for students in the PPS area. At that board meeting, on recommendation by Superintendent Carole Smith, the PPS Board agreed to include four (4) members of the community to serve as ex-officio members on the committee. These ex-officio representatives include one (1) from the following organizations/entities:

- Portland Business Alliance
- Coalition of Communities of Color
- PTA
- Current PPS student

Through months of meetings, the committee addressed several issues regarding how to set achievement targets that would align with both district goals and the 40/40/20 goals outlined by Governor Kitzhaber. Following these early meetings, representatives from the Achievement Compact Advisory Committee presented its draft recommendations to the PPS Board of Directors on January 28, 2013. While recommending additional gains in several achievement compact categories, the committee defined two longer-term goals:

1. That **100%** of this year's 8th graders would either complete high school or the equivalent in 5 years.
2. Align with the current district goal of having **100%** this year's Kindergartners (the class of 2025) reading to learn by third grade, the 2015-16 school year.

As this work has progressed, the dialogue between district staff, administrators, teachers, and community leaders has been positive and impressive. In my view, it has highlighted the benefit of having all of these stakeholders in the room: To have a collective support for how everyone ensures that all students are on a path to success. Whether to help identify the effective supports and resources teachers need to be the best educators they can be for our kids, staff and administrators have the knowledge on how to work with all students (including those "historically underserved"), and parents have a full and true understanding of what kind of environment their child will experience. This collective buy-in also must come with shared responsibility.

However, because I serve in an ex-officio capacity, I cannot play a role in determining which targets are eventually recommended or dismissed or the strategies recommended to meet those goals. Therefore, I cannot share in the responsibility for meeting these goals.

SB 297 gives school districts the legal ability to fully incorporate target community stakeholders from the beginning when setting achievement targets, and to hear from their perspective what works and what could be improved to best serve all students.

Again, thank you to Chairman Hass and members of the committee for hearing my testimony.