



BEFORE THE: Senate Education Committee
REGARDING: House Bill 4127 - Support
BY: Morgan Allen, Legislative Specialist
DATE: 2-20-14

Chair Hass and members of the Senate Education Committee, for the record, my name is Morgan Allen and I am here on behalf of the Oregon School Boards Association. I am here today to ask for your support of House Bill 4127 with the -A3 amendments, which would ensure that locally elected school board members have a seat at the table *and* a vote on the deliberations of the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB).

During the 2013 Legislative Session, the House endorsed this idea on a 48-8 vote and OSBA is supportive of the continued efforts to ensure that educators, parents and other K-12 stakeholders are adequately represented on the OEIB.

Background

With the creation of the OEIB, Oregon has taken major steps towards an integrated system of education from birth through college. Our members are now cautiously optimistic that Oregon's education system is on the right track at the state level. They see a Governor and Legislature that understand the financial crisis in our schools and how this has decimated our ability to provide the best education for our students. Our members have been impressed with Dr. Nancy Golden's willingness to engage our organization and meet with our members. Rob Saxton has reinvigorated the work of the Department of Education. There is reason for optimism.

OEIB Structure

Currently, the OEIB is made up of 12 members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The current board includes members who are teachers, superintendents, union leaders, business leaders, professors, academics and representatives of social service non-profits. It is a diverse and well qualified body.

The OEIB has included school board members on advisory committees and have sought out our input at key decision points on achievement compacts and other issues of critical importance. In short, OSBA and school board members enjoy a positive and productive working relationship with the OEIB, Dr. Golden and her staff.

But being able to come to the table and share your thoughts, opinions and concerns is *not* the same as having a seat at the table and a vote. Right now there is a glaring omission from the board. The voice and vote of an integral education stakeholder group is not at the table. The OEIB does not include a member who serves on a locally elected school board.

Ensuring School Board Members Are Represented

Our -A3 amendment proposes adding one additional board position to the OEIB and ensuring that space is filled by a member of a school board.

Oregon's K-12 public education system is the single largest item in the state budget and

the largest entity under the authority of the OEIB. Currently, achievement compacts are the most important area of work under the direction and control of OEIB. These compacts are between the state of Oregon and the locally elected school board; it is the school board that is responsible to set and approve the final goals in the achievement compact.

It is the school board that is ultimately responsible for student achievement in a given district. It is the school board that is ultimately responsible to the state and federal government for improving student outcomes. And it is the school board that is ultimately responsible to their local voters and constituents to make sure Oregon's public school students are prepared to be productive citizens.

That is why school board members across Oregon are asking you to make sure that they are represented at the table as a full voting member and partner on the Oregon Education Investment Board. Their insights and perspectives about how education policy plays out on the ground in local school districts are essential in the debate about how to reach our shared 40-40-20 goal by 2025.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.