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Troutdale, Oregon 97060

April 14, 2015

**TESTIMONY OF THE CHAIR, OREGON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SB 957**

Good afternoon, Senator Roblan and Members of the Senate Education Committee. For the record my name is Samuel D. Henry, Ed.D. and I am here as chair of the Oregon State Board of Education. I have served on the board since 2010. Educating students to help them succeed in life has been my life's work and I am honored to serve Oregon in this capacity.

State law directs the State Board of Education to “establish state standards for public kindergartens and public elementary and secondary schools” and “adopt rules for the general governance of public kindergartens and public elementary and secondary schools.”

As you likely know, the board recently amended its rules concerning instructional time. It increased time for some elementary students and amended what counted as “instructional time.” It also clarified that schools need to ensure that at least 92% of district students are scheduled to receive the minimum hours set forth in rule. These changes are to be phased-in so districts have an opportunity to plan. It made these changes following stakeholder input and board discussion over a three-month period.

I write to you with concerns expressed by the board at its last meeting concerning the proposals found in SB 957:

- SB 957 creates a unique exemption to the board's duties as outlined in ORS 326.051.
- SB 957 nullifies the recent changes made by the board regarding instructional time.
- SB 957 fails to specify what process would be used for making instructional time decisions.
- SB 957 eliminates the state board's ability to maintain assurance of school districts' minimum criteria for maintaining instructional time, hence opening school districts and parents to uneven rules about minimum school time.
- SB 957 will likely cause confusion across the state about the need for instructional time and the budget formula impact for minimum instructional time.

The State Board of Education strives to improve education for all its students at a time when less than 70% of high school students graduate on time, when efforts and investments have recently increased the rigor to develop systems accountability for the quality of school, and when instructional time world-wide has been adopted to increase educational value and preparation for the world of work and higher education.

The department has submitted testimony examining the proposed bill on a point-by-point basis for your reference.

Thank you for considering the board's concerns on SB 957.