

Testimony in support of SB 123

My name is Don Domes and I am a Licensed Tax and Small Business Consultant from Hillsboro, Oregon. I am also a retired CTE Technology Teacher and a Grandparent.

I want to encourage your support of Senate Bill 123. Students in Oregon are only in school 14-18% of the time! They are not growing up in the Oregon that existed 60 years ago where kids were picking strawberries, beans, cherry's, etc. most of the summer. Very few live on farms or for that matter even have a garage with tools and someone to help them learn how to use them. Too many of our students are in a holding pattern until they get old enough to work. The loss of half of our CTE programs between 1995 and 2010 has reduced the opportunity to take hands on classes in schools. I want to commend our legislators for the efforts to restore some of those opportunities and thank you for your support of those efforts. Our persistently low on time graduation rate prompted Measure 98, which is targeted at 9-12 grade. What about the almost 400,000 students in K-8? In many school districts school is out for these students between 2:00 and 3:00 in the afternoon! That leaves parents with a need for quality supervision until later in the afternoon and that is also a huge opportunity to enrich the school day.

There are many programs in the after school and summer camp space. I have been significantly involved in some of those programs including 4-H as a child, programs like Girls Get IT summer camps, and after school technology and robotics programs as a coach and a technology instructor. I have experienced firsthand the growth that occurs for students in these programs. The after school time and summer time are low hanging fruit opportunities to engage kids. But we have to have leadership and organized programs for students to be able to enrich their growth during those times.

In the November election we experienced a clear mandate from the voters for CTE programs and Outdoor school. While there are pay for participation opportunities, our voters want these opportunities for all students. We need more OST (Outside School Time) programs in the STEM and STEAM areas. Those are often more expensive than the typical sports programs available and they are in very short supply. In my school district an after school LEGO robotics offering is often desired by four times the amount of students that can be served!

I provided the following analysis to STEM Investment Council in March of 2015:

“Per a 2015 report from <http://www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/reports/r0073Select.asp> we have 215,384 students in 4th to 8th grade.

To have just 25% of those students in a 50 hour OST experience we would have 53,846 students participate.

If we provided teacher stipends to run the OST programs and the teacher could manage 25 students in a group it would take $(53,846/25) = 2,154$ OST programs to meet the need.

If each program cost \$5,000 then the cost would be $(2,154 \times 5,000) = \$10,770,000$

The cost per student would be $(10,770,000/53,846 \text{ students}) = \200 per student”

This is not free, but it is highly cost effective and has a tremendous ROI for the dollars spent. Using OST providers in cooperation with local school districts is the wise thing to do and we need SB 123 to provide a consistent funding stream.

We need SB 123 for our kids.

Thank You.

Respectfully submitted by Don Domes June 14, 2017