



CONFEDERATION OF OREGON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
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TO: House Education Committee

FR: Morgan Allen, Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA)

RE: Ballot Measure 98

Chair Doherty and members of the House Education Committee:

On behalf of COSA's 2400+ statewide members, I would like to offer comments on the implementation of Ballot Measure 98. Specifically, COSA would be supportive of changes to Measure 98 that allow for maximum flexibility during implementation. Our members believe these should include:

- *Changing the requirement that Measure 98 funds must be spent in all three areas*

As written, Measure 98 requires the creation of a plan and expenditure of funds in three areas: Career Technical Education (CTE), College Level Opportunities/Courses and Programs to Prevent Dropouts and Improve Graduation Rates. While these are all worthy areas of investment, there should be more flexibility in the measure to address the specific needs of school districts and charter schools.

For example, COSA does not see the utility in requiring school districts with high graduation rates or schools that have heavily invested in CTE programs in their high schools already to expend Measure 98 funds in these areas. They should be able to focus Measure 98 funds on programs to address areas that they have not been able to invest in or need to make improvements. Conversely, some school districts and charter schools would be eligible for less than \$100,000 a year in Measure 98 funds, even if the measure is fully funded. It will be difficult and impractical for them to address all three areas with such limited funds.

- *Allowing some Measure 98 funds to be expended at the middle school level*

ODE has said that there are limited instances when Measure 98 funds may be spent in the summer between 8th grade and the freshman year of high school. Our members would like to be able to expend Measure 98 funds in to two specific areas during middle school: CTE and programs to ensure students are on track to make the transition to high school.

We know that something happens to many students as they transition to high school from middle school, which is why there is such a focus on making sure students are on track to graduate by the end of 9th grade. What some of our members tell us is that they would like to create, implement or expand these types of outreach efforts into their middle schools to give students a solid foundation before they set foot in a high school.

Similarly, some school districts have robust CTE programs in their high schools and would like to be able to expand those programs to their middle schools and expose students to these programs before they enroll in high school.

- *Allowing flexibility for Measure 98 funds expended on CTE*

COSA has high praise for the work ODE has done to implement Measure 98, including significant stakeholder outreach and opportunity to provide feedback and comments on draft rules. Generally, we believe the draft rules promulgated by ODE provide as much flexibility for school districts and charter schools in regards to implementation as the measure's language allows. However, there is one specific area of concern in regards to the CTE component in the ODE draft rules and COSA respectfully, but strongly, disagrees with the initial direction from ODE.

Our understanding of the draft Measure 98 rules is that funds for CTE must be spent on a CTE Program that has, or will have, a Perkins-level "program of study." This is a high standard that essentially requires the CTE course and program structure to be designed for progressive student growth across multiple classes. In other words, we believe the Measure 98 rules as drafted would not allow school districts or charter schools to expend Measure 98 funds on individual courses that do not meet this standard. We believe this has the potential to be a barrier for small school districts and may stifle CTE innovation.

This level of rigor is not specified in Ballot Measure 98.

- *Funding, Flexibility and Paperwork*

COSA members are concerned about the ability of the Legislature to provide sustained, ongoing funding for Measure 98 given the current budget environment. They are also concerned that there is no "safety valve" in the measure that would give school districts and charter schools the ability to manage their budgets in a time of recession or budget cuts; Measure 98 programs would be protected from budget cuts due to the maintenance of effort/supplanting language in the measure. School district superintendents would have a difficult time explaining to their community why they are cutting days or staff in K-8 programs while they are creating or expanding new programs in their high schools.

It is also our hope that the paperwork and tracking related to the measure does not become burdensome, particularly for small schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on Measure 98. We look forward to working collaboratively with all interested parties on implementation. I would be happy to answer questions from the Committee.