

HB 3135 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Education

Prepared By: Lisa Gezelter, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/15, 3/27

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows districts that merge to keep funding intended for remote small elementary schools, small high schools, and small school districts if one of the districts had that funding prior to the merger.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Needs of small schools
- Need for additional funding

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Current law gives extra funding to small and remote schools and districts under certain circumstances. ORS 327.077 classifies schools as remote small elementary schools if the average daily membership in grades K-8 falls below the following numbers for schools teaching:

- nine grades, below 252;
- Eight grades, below 224;
- Seven grades, below 196;
- Six grades, below 168;
- Five grades, below 140;
- Four grades, below 112;
- Three grades, below 84;
- Two grades, below 56; and
- One grade, below 28.

Elementary qualify as remote small elementary schools if they are more than eight miles by the nearest traveled road from another elementary school in the same district.

Small high schools are defined as those that have not changed location since 1995, the school qualified as a small high school on July 23, 2009, and between October 23, 1999 and July 23, 2009 the school did not divide or reorganize into two or more high schools in the same city. Current law does allow individual high schools that merge to retain the small school funding they had prior to the merger.

According to data provided by the Oregon Department of Education, there are currently 94 schools in Oregon receiving extra funding as remote small elementary schools and 100 schools receiving extra funding as small high schools.

When school districts merge, their taxing districts must also merge. ORS Chapter 330 establishes the requirements and procedures for school districts to merge. House Bill 3135 allows districts to retain this extra funding even if they merge with another district and would then not otherwise qualify.