

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

March 10, 1999 Hearing Room B

1:00 p.m. Tapes 49-50

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sen. Tom Hartung, Chair

Sen. Susan Castillo, Vice-Chair

Sen. Peter Courtney

Sen. Verne Duncan

Sen. Gary George

Sen. Avel Gordly

Sen. Marylin Shannon

**MEMBER EXCUSED:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jan McComb, Administrator

Karen O'Kelley, Administrative Support

**MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD:** SB 528 Work Session

**SB 447 Public Hearing**

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

TAPE/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 49, A		
001	Chair Hartung	Opens meeting at 1:12 p.m. and opens work session on SB 528.
<u><b>SB 528 WORK SESSION</b></u>		

005	Chair Hartung	Refers to the ñ1 amendments that were submitted by the Treasureris Office. <b>(EXHIBIT A)</b> . Asks Sen. Courtney if he approves of the amendments.
008	Sen. Courtney	Responds that he does.
010	Sen. Courtney	<b>MOTION: Moves to ADOPT SB 528-1 amendments dated 02/22/99.</b>
		<b>VOTE: 4-0</b> <b>EXCUSED: 3 - Castillo, George, Shannon</b>
012	Chair Hartung	Hearing no objection, declares the motion <b>CARRIED</b> .
016	Sen. Courtney	<b>MOTION: Moves SB 528 to the floor with a DO PASS AS AMENDED recommendation and BE REFERRED to the committee on Ways and Means.</b>
		<b>VOTE: 4-0</b> <b>AYE: In a roll call vote, all members present vote Aye.</b> <b>EXCUSED: 3 - Castillo, George, Shannon</b>
019	Chair Hartung	The motion <b>CARRIES</b> .
021	Chair Hartung	Closes work session on SB 528 and opens public hearing on SB 447.
<b><u>SB 447 PUBLIC HEARING</u></b>		
023	Chair Hartung	States that SB 447 establishes the maximum number of students in each K-8 grade class.
026	Sen. Randy Miller	Senate District 13. States that Rep. Randall Edwards is a co-sponsor of the bill. States that studies indicate that reducing class size is a positive contributing factor to a better education. Explains that that SB 447 would set the following targets for class size: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 students per class in grades K-3</li> <li>• 25 students per class in grades 4-6</li> <li>• 30 students per class in grades 7-8</li> </ul> States that his preference would be for this bill to include grades 9-12.

		<p>States that if a local school board has a compelling reason why the target class size cannot be met, then they can request a waiver from the State Board of Education.</p> <p>Concludes that, "the more reduced the class size, most likely, the better the quality of education."</p>
068	Rep. Randall Edwards	House District 50. Submits <b>(EXHIBIT B)</b> . Comments that SB 447 is one of many bills this session that addresses the issue of classroom size. States that class size is a critical piece in successfully meeting the standards of the Educational Act of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century.
		States that national studies show that reducing class size provides a better educational opportunity to children.
132	Rep. Edwards	States that last summer the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) recommended that class sizes be reduced in grades K-3 to 20 students per class. Adds that the federal government has a program that provides funding to reduce class sizes in early grades.
		Concludes that reducing class size is not the only answer, but Oregon cannot continue to let class sizes grow.
173	Sen. Gordly	Asks what other elements, besides reducing class size, would increase student performance.
184	Rep. Edwards	Responds that some of the other factors include teaching training, the length of the school year, and parent involvement.
192	Sen. Gordly	States that the approach to solve the issues with education must be holistic. Comments that she is concerned about the lack of teacher training. Believes that the area of teacher training is not being addressed this session.
226	Rep. Edwards	Concurs with Sen. Gordly.
231	Sen. Shannon	<p>Gives her approval of SB 447. States that, as a former first grade teacher, she believes that this bill is a "silver bullet."</p> <p>Believes that Oregon is in a crisis situation. States that the school districts should freeze all out-of-state travel for every administrator, school board member, and teacher for the months of September through June. Tells a personal experience about a principal and a vice-principal that were concurrently away from a middle school for out-of-state training. Believes that teacher training should occur during the summer and not during the school year.</p> <p>Commends Rep. Edwards and Sen. Miller for their work with this bill. Believes that this is one of the most important bills this session.</p>
316	Sen. Miller	States that when classrooms are too large it is not possible to determine how well

		teachers can teach. Discusses concerns about the funding. Believes that this bill is affordable because it has suggested targets for class size.
358	Sen. Shannon	States concern about the education dollars being spent outside of the classroom. Gives an example of school districts paying for memberships for educators to belong to Rotary and other organizations. States that the money needs to get to the classrooms.
384	Bill Hallmark	A Chief Petitioner, Committee for a Little Class. Testifies in support of the bill. States that the Committee for a Little Class has filed a small class size initiative for the November 2000 ballot. Comments that the committee may continue with the initiative depending on what happens during the session.
<b>TAPE 50, A</b>		
002	Hallmark	States that in the Salem-Keizer School District for the 1997-1998 school year, less than 5 percent of the elementary classes had less than 20 students and 62 percent had more than 25 students. Emphasizes that class sizes have grown to a level that is unacceptable. Comments that state-wide data shows that there is considerable variation among districts.
		<p>Refers to a report from the U.S. Department of Education which listed the following conclusions about reducing class sizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class size reduction in the early grades leads to higher student achievement.</li> <li>• Students, parents, and teachers all report positive effects on the quality of education from the impact of class size reductions.</li> </ul>
051	Hallmark	States that private schools have smaller class sizes than public schools. Believes that class size is one of the deciding factors when public schools lose students to private schools.
		Cites an example of day care providers being required to meet teacher-to-students ratios. Comments that last year in Keizer two kindergarten classes had thirty or more students. Asks, "if we would not allow a day care to operate like this, why is it ok for a public school."
124	Vice-Chair Castillo	Agrees with the importance of reducing class size. States that districts have been forced to increase class sizes because the schools have not been adequately funded.
141	Joanne Flint	Testifying on behalf of State Superintendent, Stan Bunn, Department of Education (DOE). Submits <b>(EXHIBIT C)</b> .
149	Sen. Duncan	Asks if there is a provision for class size in the state standards.
155	Flint	Responds that there is. Explains that it does not set absolute limits.

163	Sen. Duncan	Asks if the DOE is making "standardization visits" to schools districts.
168	Flint	Responds that the DOE is currently in the process of re-designing the state standardization school improvement visit process based on the amendments that were made during the 1997 Session.
		<p>States that the DOE supports reducing class size in Oregon's schools. Shares the following research about class size:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller class size increases student achievement.</li> <li>• Smaller classes provide a strong foundation in basic skills for young children.</li> <li>• Smaller class sizes have the greatest impact on disadvantaged and minority students.</li> <li>• Smaller classes reduce discipline problems and increase instruction time for teachers.</li> </ul>
215	Flint	<p>States that the DOE and Bunn are concerned with escalating class size in many Oregon public schools. Requests that the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on Kindergarten through grade 3.</li> <li>• Leverage additional dollars for class size reduction.</li> </ul>
264	Chair Hartung	Requests that Rep. Edwards and Sen. Miller work with the DOE on possible amendments to the bill.
276	Vice-Chair Castillo	Asks how much would be available in "matching funds" from the federal government for class size reduction.
278	Flint	Responds that the DOE expects to have between \$11 and \$12 million dollars in "class size reduction funds" from the federal government.
295	Chair Hartung	Explains that there will be a joint meeting between the Senate and House Education Committees on March 17 <sup>th</sup> .
311	Cary Armstrong	A Chief Petitioner, Committee for a Little Class. States that he is tired of spending money on more prisons. Comments that children should be given the attention they need in the classroom. States that his daughter's 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade class has 28 students. States that mandating lower class sizes would help kids learn more because there would be more individualized attention. States that there needs to be adequate funding for K-12.
367	Sen. Shannon	Asks if he has seen the paperwork for "Build Your Budget." Asks for his help in building the budget.
371	Armstrong	Responds that he has not.

373	Sen. Shannon	States that she will get a copy for him.  Refers to Armstrong's comment about prisons. States that poor, un-educated kids can still have moral values and will not necessarily become criminals.
402	Sen. Duncan	States that although he is supportive of reducing class size, he is not sure to what extent it should be in statute.
<b>TAPE 49, B</b>		
002	Laurie Wimmer	Government Relations Consultant, Oregon Education Association (OEA). States that while the OEA recognizes that class size is a key element to producing high student achievement, there are other factors to consider as well. Believes that the waiver would allow some flexibility in school districts.
		States that class size should not be looked at as the "silver bullet" for raising student achievement standards. Reiterates that class size is only one element and it is very expensive.
063	Wimmer	States that the OEA would be pleased to see the Quality Education Model (QEM) approach used "in concert with" the goal of class size reduction.
078	Sen. Shannon	States that an "average" classroom with 40 students would receive \$184,000. States that most of that total is not getting to the classrooms.
089	Sen. Duncan	Comments that there are a lot of factors that need to be considered in the total cost, such as utilities, maintenance, and buildings.
102	Vice-Chair Castillo	Refers to a school in Salem where kids are "being taught in a closet."
111	Sen. Shannon	States the Salem taxpayers passed a bond to address that issue.
119	Ozzie Rose	COSA. States that COSA is opposed to the bill itself, but they are not opposed to smaller class sizes. States that the funding needs to be addressed differently. States that, "we need smaller class sizes, we need longer school days, we need longer schools years, we need the resources to do those things and this bill does not address any of those issues."
184	Rose	States that it is difficult to pass a law that would benefit all school districts. Comments that Salem and Beaverton would not be able to meet the requirements of the bill because they do not have enough buildings.
206	Chair Hartung	Asks Rose what type of information the database will provide.
218	Rose	Responds that, for example, the database will report on the performance of

		classrooms based on many factors. States that the database will take more into consideration than just class size.
247	Sen. Duncan	States that staff support, such as teacher assistants or specialists, are very important to classrooms.
260	Chair Hartung	States that Governor Kitzhaber has been invited to attend the Joint Senate and House Education Committee Meeting on March 17 <sup>th</sup> to present his budget for K-12 education.
288	Gary Conkling	Parent, Beaverton School District. States that Beaverton does not have the land or the money to build more schools. States that there are no more sites available for schools in Beaverton.  States that the QEM does not account for capital costs.
348	Sen. Duncan	States that class size reduction should be given serious consideration, however, he is not sure how to reach that goal. States that he is glad that parents are coming to testify.
365	John Marshall	Oregon School Boards Association. Reiterates that class size is not the issue; the issue is adequate resources. States that school districts, school officials, and professional educators need to be given adequate resources so that they can make decisions about how to enhance student achievement.
435	Chair Hartung	Adjourns meeting at 2:37 p.m.

Submitted By, Reviewed By,

Karen O'Kelley Jan McComb

Administrative Support Administrator

### **EXHIBIT SUMMARY**

**A ñ SB 528, -1 amendments, staff, 1 p**

**B ñ SB 447, written testimony, newspaper article, and report, Rep. Randall Edwards, 23 pp**

**C ñ SB 447, written testimony, Joanne Flint, 3 pp**