

These minutes contain materials which paraphrase and/or summarize statements made during this session. Only text enclosed in quotation marks

report a speaker's exact words. For complete contents of the proceedings, please refer to the tapes.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

April 1, 1991 Hearing Room F 1:30 p.m. Tapes 49-51

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Carolyn Oakley, Chair Rep. Vera Katz, Vice-Chair Rep. Bruce Hugo Rep. Delna Jones Rep. Mike Nelson Rep. Bob Pickard Rep. Walt Schroeder

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Rep. Delna Jones Rep. Bruce Hugo

STAFF PRESENT: Lee Penny, Committee Administrator Karen Edwards, Committee Assistant

MEASURES CONSIDERED: HB 2574 - Authorizes home school students to participate in interscholastic activities - WORK SESSION

Representatives of Rural Schools - Invited Testimony

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TAPE 49, SIDE A

005 CHAIR CAROLYN OAKLEY calls the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

HB 2574 - WORK SESSION Witnesses: Gary Lineburg Alan Tressider, Oregon School Board Association

036 REP. VERA KATZ: Has no problem with home school children participating in interscholastic activities as long as they meet the same requirements of public schools.

GARY LINEBURG: Anything the public schools require will be required of those participating as home school students. Submits written testimony on HB 2574 (EXHIBIT A).

REP. KATZ: Does not understand the issue of compliance.

LINEBURG: Parents of home schoolers will be involved with the public schools by submitting the students' grades for their five classes.

REP. KATZ: What needs to be built into this concept to allow everyone to be on the same level?

104 ALAN TRESSIDER, OREGON SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION: Has no problem with the fee issue. Does not know if the language in HB 2574 takes care of the academic requirement.

REP. KATZ: Refers to section 2, line 12. What do you interpret that to be?

TRESSIDER: That means at this point, home schooling parents must notify the Educational Service District Superintendent of their intention to home school and submit their child for an examination once annually.

151 REP. OAKLEY: Rep. Katz, would you feel better if we had some amendments drafted?

REP. KATZ: The committee may want to further discuss the issue of achievement tests.

LINEBURG: Most school districts only report grades of students two times a year. There is not a wide disparity here.

LEE PENNY: On line 18, "State Board of Education" should be deleted and "School District" should be inserted.

REP. KATZ: Did you want the Board to set some standards under HB 2574?

LINEBURG: No. It was a misunderstanding.

TRESSIDER: There is no way for a local school district to determine the number of classes that a home schooling student is or is not passing. The only statutory requirement for the home schooling student is to score satisfactorily on an annual standardized test. Under the existing language, you presume the Board is going to adopt additional rules regarding specific classes.

LINEBURG: This is for participation in activities, not in home schooling.

211 TRESSIDER: We are talking about the home schooling parent notifying the school administration as to whether or not the student is passing. There is no such requirement for home schooling students under current law.

LINEBURG: We are talking about the requirements the school has for participation in athletics.

TRESSIDER: There is no way for local school districts to determine the number of courses a home schooling student is or is not passing.

LINEBURG: Home schoolers are members of the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) which requires students to pass five classes in order to participate in sports.

TRESSIDER: If the policy decision is to allow home schooling students to participate in interscholastic activities without additional requirements, then perhaps the passing of standardized tests under current law is all that is needed.

REP. WALT SCHROEDER: On standardized tests, do home schooling students have to pass the tests in all of the areas that would normally be taught in that particular grade in school?

TRESSIDER: No. There are a series of tests from which the home

schooling parent my select one. The student must achieve a score at or above the 15th percentile in that examination to be eligible.

REP. SCHROEDER: That would include english, history, mathematics, and spelling?

TRESSIDER: Assumes those categories would be included in a general education test.

252 REP. KATZ: We have performance-based assessments that are being developed for grades three, five, eight and eleven. Home schoolers do not have to take those assessments?

TRESSIDER: No, they do not. Under current Oregon law, to home school your child, you need to notify the local Superintendent of the Educational Service District and you must have your child tested annually from one of a series of about six or seven exams. Your child must score at or above the 15th percentile.

REP. KATZ: Is that in administrative rule?

TRESSIDER: Yes.

REP. KATZ: Could the Board of Education change the rule to require third, fifth, eighth and eleventh grade home schoolers to take these particular assessments?

TRESSIDER: The statute says an examination.

MOTION: REP. PICKARD moves to amend HB 2574 by changing "State Board of Education" to "School District" on line 18 of HB 2574.

DISCUSSION TO THE MOTION:

PENNY: The only way a school district is going to know whether a home school student is passing or taking those five courses is by some certification from the parent. There is no other mechanism in the law.

310 REP. KATZ: We do not have anything in the statute right now requiring assessments for third, fifth, eighth and eleventh grades. We may want to require assessments at those grade levels and include home schoolers.

LINEBURG: If lines 16 and 17 were removed completely it would clear up any confusion schools may have.

TRESSIDER: Recommends section two, lines 16-18 be deleted and continue to allow the test score to serve as a guide for participation for home school children.

MOTION: REP. PICKARD moves to withdraw his motion for an amendment.

TAPE 50, SIDE A INVITED TESTIMONY ON RURAL SCHOOLS Witnesses: Nancy Canon, Fossil School District Larry Frank, Applegate School District Mike Cohen, Applegate School District Jeff Pagan, Applegate School District Katie McGruen, Applegate School District Jim Buck, Orient School District Joby Bucher, Damascus-Union School District Mike Keown, Pine-Eagle School District Ian Gravenhorse, Sheridan School District

035 REP. KATZ: For those of you who have the 2020 programs, what have

you learned from that process?

IAN GRAVENHORSE, SHERIDAN SCHOOL DISTRICT: The 2020 program has been nothing but positive for our district.

JOBY BUCHER, DAMASCUS-UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT: The 2020 program has been great for teachers and students. My concern is grant writing for rural school districts. Larger school districts can afford to provide that service. Submits information on Damascus-Union School District (EXHIBIT B).

JIM BUCK, ORIENT SCHOOL DISTRICT: The 2020 program has provided for the training of our teachers. Our problem is finding the time for training.

100 NANCY CANON, FOSSIL SCHOOL DISTRICT: Discusses instructional hours: >Uses four and a half-hour days which gives the staff three hours a week for staff development. Submits written testimony (EXHIBIT C).

JIM BUCK: Disagrees with the instructional time requirements. Feels they are too minimal.

REP. KATZ: You have the ability to waive anything you want waived if there are obstacles preventing you from getting your work done.

MIKE COHEN, APPLGATE SCHOOL DISTRICT: Would like to have more money provided to complete the process of standardization.

REP. OAKLEY: You have a low dropout rate. Do you feel standardization takes more time than it is really worth?

COHEN: We have not had students drop out of our school in the last two years.

REP. KATZ: What do you do?

JEFF PAGAN, APPLGATE SCHOOL DISTRICT: The atmosphere is supportive which leads to good retention.

178 LARRY FRANK: Addresses mandated programs: >Implementation of kindergarten for three years. >Implementation of the Talented and Gifted program. >Implementation of electives for the seventh and eighth grades Does not challenge the intent, needs financial support to maintain these programs.

REP. KATZ: What is your cost per student?

COHEN: Just under \$13.

256 REP. OAKLEY: Where do your students go to high school?

FRANK: We have a contract between Hidden Valley and South Medford High Schools.

REP. OAKLEY: What percentage of students go to Hidden Valley as opposed to South Medford?

FRANK: Our first year, six to eight students attended South Medford.

PAGAN: This is the first school year we have provided transportation to both high schools. Once transportation was offered, the majority of

students chose to attend South Medford.

REP. SCHROEDER: What is the reasoning for that?

PAGAN: In speaking to the parents, the decision was based on academics.

REP. OAKLEY: Do you have any ideas on how we can make standardization easier for you?

337 PAGAN: Consistency would be a good place to start. Standardization created stacks of paperwork.

REP. KATZ: What difference does stacks of paper make to students?

PAGAN: One difference was developing a health curriculum that was more appropriate for the students of Applegate.

REP. KATZ: Was that a standards issue?

PAGAN: Yes.

REP. KATZ: What else do you have that impacts the students' performance.

PAGAN: The english curriculum.

REP. KATZ: Would an assessment not prove that?

PAGAN: Yes. We also have to prove it through written documentation to show that we are meeting the Oregon Administrative Rules.

REP. KATZ: Would another school district's curriculum on language arts have helped you?

TAPE 49, SIDE B

013 PAGAN: We did use other districts' curricula as models.

REP. OAKLEY: Do you think if there was a curriculum developed by rural schools it would be pretty much in line with what you came up with?

PAGAN: A model curriculum would help. Your curriculum has to be developed on what you are actually doing.

CANON: When there is a mandated program and you give us money for the program, we also need the personnel or resources.

066 MIKE KEOWN, PINE-EAGLE SCHOOL DISTRICT: We are in the process of a societal shift. It is very difficult for us to deal with the old and new systems. We are being asked more than often to focus on the individual students' needs and develop a program around their needs rather than around a structured need. Discusses other areas of concern: >When new laws and mandates come out, would like to have help from the Department of Education. >Would like to have more time for staff school-based management activities. >Would like to see the state focus more on academic areas, stating which areas they are going to measure. Could meet those needs without a lot of paperwork. Submits written testimony (EXHIBIT D).

REP. SCHROEDER: How will Rep. Katz' proposal affect your individual

school districts?

KEOWN: It would be massive. It would be a major turnabout in education in terms of what we now traditionally do. We will have to retrain the school district and the community.

151 JOYCE REINKE, OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: There is going to be a new standardization process. There will be teams going out to schools giving technical assistance to meet those goals. Next year schools will have a choice of going through the old standardization process or the new model. The new model will eventually be phased in.

BUCHER: Felt standardization was a very positive process. It allowed the district to review what had been accomplished throughout the school year.

217 BUCK: The standardization process can be very helpful. It does not recognize the age of some of the facilities. Have no place to house a computer or typewriter for teacher access. Cannot have breakfast programs, do not have kitchens to support the programs that are now required.

REP. KATZ; Can you contract it out?

BUCK: We looked at that. We cannot see any savings in contracting out food services. Early childhood is the same way. We have nowhere to house this program. Had a 10 percent enrollment gain last year. Passed a bond measure last year. It will be difficult for the bond measure to address the present enrollment growth.

REP. KATZ: What are you going to do?

BUCK: We will change the bond to accommodate more classrooms rather than upgrade. Our proposed budget for next year is one percent less than the current school year with a 10 percent enrollment gain.

271 REP. KATZ: How are you going to accomplish that?

BUCK: Less will go into maintenance, capital expenditures will be less than one percent of the budget, textbooks will be cut 30 percent. It is hard doing more with less.

REP. MIKE NELSON: Would like to hear comments on how transportation costs impacts budget?

BUCK: Over 90 percent of our students are transported by bus. That represents eight percent of our total budget.

BUCHER: The safety of getting children to and from school is a priority. Would give up other things to maintain busing.

FRANK: Our transportation budget is between eight to ten percent of our total budget. We feel it is unsafe for children to ride a bike or walk. It would be a burden to parents. The Legislature should develop a process where any bill that is being brought up for law has a method to access the impact on every school district.

REP. KATZ: That can work both ways. Can we also provide some kind of

rating of some of the programs you decide to put into your schools that we would frown upon?

FRANK: For example, the breakfast program. Our district does not need a mandated program. We provide breakfast for children who need it. If we were to have to develop a breakfast program where we are serving breakfast to everyone, that would impact our budget significantly.

REP. KATZ: Why is this breakfast program coming up over and over again?

354 FRANK: It is a new mandated program.

REP. KATZ: Is this program for everyone?

FRANK: It is not required.

REP. KATZ: Do you not think if you are a Chapter One school and you have a lot of youngsters who come from families that are below poverty level that the provision of breakfast might assist them in learning?

COHEN: The problem with our coordinated busing between four districts is that our students are now arriving five minutes before school starts.

REP. NELSON: Could they eat on the bus?

GRAVENHORSE: We looked at putting in a breakfast program last year. We have experienced a number of students coming through those doors in the morning that have not had an adequate breakfast or none at all. It is an additional expense that we do not have the revenue to cover. It would mean we would have a problem continuing our busing program to provide the breakfast program.

408 REP. KATZ: If you were all locked in a room and told to solve this problem and you did not have much more money except for food, you could do it without the two extreme examples you just described.

FRANK: That is the basis behind Ballot Measure Five. The people are saying we want the Legislature to go behind that closed door and find a solution to the funding problem within public schools.

REP. KATZ: The Legislature has tried and will continue to try to find a solution. It does not want to short change children who need to be prepared to go to school to be prepared to learn. If it means a little breakfast box on the bus, that may be a solution.

GRAVENHORSE: In the area of the Talented and Gifted program and early childhood education for handicapped students, we have had an excellent relationship with the Educational Service District. We have been able to work with five other districts to lead us toward the Talented and Gifted mandate.

TAPE 50, SIDE B

018 KEOWN: Our buses run about 10 percent of our budget and we bus over 80 percent of our kids. There is not a bus trip from home to school that is under an hour. We spend more money per student in small school districts than you find in the larger districts.

REP. NELSON: What is your dropout rate?

KEOWN: It varies.

REP. NELSON: Has it been less than five percent in the last three years?.

KEOWN: Yes.

072 BUCK: All small or rural schools do not have a higher per student cost. Ours in the metro area is \$1,000 less per pupil than the Portland school district.

REP. SCHROEDER: Is there a uniformed way of measuring the cost per student in Oregon?

COHEN: The Department of Education has a method that they use for measurement. They look at various funds the district may have already established. When looking at per student costs, they make sure all of those same dollars are being accounted for.

CANON: You need to look at programs. We are spending \$753 per student. We have a very high rate. You need to look at more equitable programs. If you look at equity and say you are going to give additional money to those schools that are below the average of \$4,400, we miss out altogether.

REP. SCHROEDER: Spoke to a Superintendent from the south coast who says he took his total operating levy and divided a number of students into that to come up with the cost per pupil. He has been penalized for doing that.

CANON: Some will reduce their case carryovers. Does not know of a standard figure.

100 REP. SCHROEDER: If equity is based on the cost per pupil, the standard of cost per pupil should be the same statewide.

FRANK: Due to sound financial management of prior school boards in 1987-88, our district went into the fiscal year with a \$300,000 surplus. In complying with standardization, that cash carryover is now \$50,000. Currently for 1990-91, basic school support is \$297,000. The 1991-92 year is looking to be \$293,000. School support represents basically a third of our budget. The community supports the remaining two-thirds. We now have \$77,200 in ongoing maintenance costs to keep programs.

REP. KATZ: What can we do or what can you do to improve student learning and student performance?

FRANK: The best thing to do would be to not concern ourselves with school breakfasts on buses. We need to talk about money. We need to talk about supporting the schools and making the monies available.

REP. KATZ: We can give you all the money in the world and you would still have a performance and student progress that is not going to improve.

FRANK: Then give us all the money and come assess the job we do.

BUCK: We have students in our area who transfer to nearby districts. Sometimes it takes months for a student to be identified as having certain needs. The last Legislative session allowed for boards, by

mutual agreement, to allow students to remain in the district even though they did not continue to reside there. For kids that we know are in some jeopardy, it is a hassle for us.

REP. KATZ: Because?

BUCK: We would have to go to our board to get approval and to that district's board to gain approval in order to continue serving that student in our district due to the fact he or she is a non-resident. It would seem like we would have some provision that if the host or current district wants to keep that student, it would not be so difficult.

164 REP. KATZ: Can we have a bill with a relating clause that can do that so we can improve on what we did two years ago?

REP. OAKLEY: We will ask Lee if she can find such a bill.

KEOWN: We are not doing a bad job in education. We are being asked to take care of society and solve all of societies' problems. We are just a school. Our original mission was to educate students. Now we are being asked to do everything including giving the children breakfast, taking them from birth and educating them up to age 21. This is getting to be harder and harder. It costs a lot of money to do that. Your proposal is for a different type of school than what we do right now. We need to change. We are going to have to compete in a global economy.

REP. KATZ: There are other parts of this state that attract single head of households, a high level of poverty and dysfunctional families. They come to a metropolitan area because they think they can make a living and survive for one reason or another. The school has to become more than a place to learn.

KEOWN: There are so many things that have to happen before you can teach the child in the classroom.

REP. KATZ: We have put money into prenatal care, we want to put in Headstart, we want to deal with teenage pregnancy. We have made the commitment as a Legislature, both Republicans and Democrats, to begin to deal with those early years to make it a little easier. You can not keep families together if they do not want to stay together.

KEOWN: It goes back to the issue that you can give us all of the money in the world, we still may not be able to do it. We have a finite resource and we are asked to do so many things. We can barely keep our heads above water.

217 REP. SCHROEDER: It is a two-way street. Can remember years ago when the schools were asking for more of these responsibilities.

CANON: You asked for some specific things that you could do to help us. Give us less paperwork.

REP. OAKLEY: Give me an example of something specific that you think you are doing that is not worth the time it takes to do?

CANON: If we had one form to fill out that gave demographics for our district, we would do a lot less paperwork.

REP. OAKLEY: How many times are you filling out the forms now?

CANON: Does not know.

REP. OAKLEY: Do you suppose you could go through and list some of these things and share them with the committee?

CANON: Did list some of these things. Asks to refer to her testimony (EXHIBIT C). We are asked to fill out forms for programs we have not been able to afford.

REP. OAKLEY: Do you have the option of saying you do not offer a program?

CANON: States on the form that the program has not been given in five years and it is returned to fill out.

266 KATIE MCGRUEN, APPLGATE SCHOOL DISTRICT: When you mandate something, make it so we are able to follow through. We need money to do these things. Know the financial impact it would have on different sizes of districts.

REP. NELSON: Wants to make sure all the school districts have enough money for busing children. We, as Legislators, need to be aware of the financial needs that go along with mandated programs.

COHEN: In reference to the consolidation issue, you have to consider it case by case. Broad, general laws covering education in Oregon are more of a burden than help when they do not apply to the small rural school that cannot provide or needs to provide breakfast. Consolidation does not help in the Applegate valley. Somehow you need to pass these laws, mandates, and new ideas that accommodate each situation. A strong Department of Education is not what is necessarily needed in Applegate.

355 REP. KATZ: You are different than an urban area but you are not that different in terms of the expectations for those children. We have the responsibility to educate them.

COHEN: Parents have chosen to live where they live. Knowing they are not living in a metropolitan area where there are many opportunities for vocational education.

REP. KATZ: Those youngsters do not necessarily stay in Applegate, they move on.

COHEN: You cannot do everything. You make choices. It is not up to the State to tell me what is the best choice.

FRANK: Do not assume that our children are receiving less of an education. If anything, they are receiving a better education because they are accountable.

414 REP. KATZ: Then your job is so much easier and you should be doing a better job.

FRANK: What concerns us is the financial stress that is being put on our district that is not going to allow us to do that job. We have to come up with some type of funds to support our district.

REP. NELSON: Tell me where you are going to get the funds?

FRANK: If the people of this state were presented a reasonable, realistic sales tax, that would identify education as its sole purpose, you might have a chance. As of right now, the people of this state will not fund or support a sales tax because they do not know where the money is going to go. REP. NELSON: Is that our fault?

FRANK: Yes. It is a catch 22 situation, they do not trust you and you can not please them.

TAPE 51, SIDE A

021 REP. SCHROEDER: We want to have a similar opportunity for every child in Oregon to have the same type of education within reason. The problem is the different delivery systems. Applegate is going to deliver that same type of opportunity in a different way than the city of Portland. That is what we are talking about. We are agreeing on that very same thing. Similar opportunity but a different delivery system to get to that goal.

REP. NELSON: Not interested in passing anymore mandates unless funding can be found.

PAGAN: Would like to ask all Legislators not to pass any legislation unless funding is included.

REP. SCHROEDER: A law was passed in the 1989 Legislative session that stated we could not mandate anything without funds.

PAGAN: In the comments we have heard, districts would like some local discretion. Would like to have some latitude, rather than having a requirement that does not fit our exact needs.

REP. KATZ: Does not want focus on the resources to hold back the educational agenda from moving along.

077 CANON: Would like to interview teachers who have knowledge in common curriculum goals. State colleges should be mandated to teach those goals to beginning teachers.

PAGAN: Is that one of the focuses of the bill you have introduced Rep. Katz?

REP. KATZ: No. We have truly tried, but it is not enough. The bill gives the schools of education enough time to change their ways. They are going to have to. The teachers are going to have to be retrained. Then a whole new generation of teachers are going to have different kinds of skills.

PAGAN: The school districts also represent a major employer and we need to have the products of educational institutions ready.

BUCK: We depend heavily on the Educational Service Districts and the Department of Education. Would like to keep those facilities fully funded. Would like to make sure the Department of Education continues to receive the support for doing things that would be of benefit to small and medium-sized school districts.

REP. OAKLEY: Refers to letter from Newell Cleaver (EXHIBIT E).

PENNY: Summarizes letter (EXHIBIT E).

137 FRANK: There is a bill that will force Applegate to consolidate with Medford. Would like committee to know that the community is against consolidation. Money will not be saved if consolidation takes place.

BUCK: Appreciates proposal Rep. Katz has introduced. It is helping the public to capture a vision of what could happen in the schools.

REP. KATZ: The public is aware of the fact that children are coming out of school untrained and unskilled. Hopefully the public will support the bill and the funding to have the program implemented by the year 2000.

229 KEOWN: We have too much paperwork for our small staffs. We do not have the technical abilities to do what needs to be done to acquire some programs.

REP. OAKLEY: Can the Educational Service District help you at all?

KEOWN: The Educational Service Districts are as unique as school districts.

REP. OAKLEY: Do you have any suggestions along that line Joyce, in dealing with grants?

REINKE: Just one thing. When applying for 2020 grants all small schools are judged against each other. They are not competing with any schools that are not in their category.

KEOWN: Under the new system, we do not have the opportunity to get money to implement programs from the voters. We have to use our limited resources. We are going from a local-based education to a state level. That is hard for people to take, especially in rural schools.

318 REP. OAKLEY: Would it be helpful if the Department of Education sent a video with basic information?

KEOWN: It would be helpful. When the forms are changed, it would be nice to have model to work with.

REP. OAKLEY: Would it be helpful during interim to have a work group that got together every two months, talked about some of these issues and came up with ideas to make things easier for you to deal with in your individual school districts?

BUCHER: That would be extremely helpful.

368 MCGRUEN: If consolidation is to take place, it is really necessary to look at each district individually and access it that way.

REP. KATZ: You are in the business of judging how well students are performing. That is the issue.

REP. SCHROEDER: Would like to see ideas implemented, not just talked about.

428 CHAIR OAKLEY closes the informational meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Submitted by: Reviewed by:

Karen Edwards Lee Penny Assistant Committee Administrator

EXHIBIT LOG:

A - Testimony on HB 2574 - Gary Lineburg - 1 page
B - Testimony on Rural Schools - Joby Bucher - 20 pages
C - Testimony on Rural Schools - Nancy Canon - 4 pages
D - Testimony on Rural Schools - Mike Keown - 2 pages
E - Testimony on Rural Schools - Newell Cleaver - 1 page