

This resolution does not amend the OSBA Constitution. Submitted by the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee, Resolution 3 is the formal adoption by the membership of the 2009 OSBA Legislative Policies and Priorities.

RESOLUTION 3 – Adopts the Recommended 2009 OSBA Legislative Policies and Priorities

We, as OSBA members, do accept and resolve to support and participate in the 2009 OSBA Legislative Policies and Priorities recommended by the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee, as follows:

OSBA 2009 Legislative Priorities

1. Funding

OSBA will vigorously pursue a sustained K-12 investment through an appropriation to the 2009-2011 State School Fund that exceeds the “essential budget level” target, as defined by the School Revenue Forecast Committee, by an amount that represents significant progress toward attainment of adequate funding as defined by the Quality Education Model. This investment should begin to restore public education’s share of the state budget that has been eroded over the past decade, and should adjust for the lack of inflationary increases over the same time period.

2. Accountability

OSBA will vigorously support a re-focused state K-12 accountability system in which the Governor, the Legislature, the Oregon Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and education service districts share with local school districts in the responsibility for reaching established standards and objectives for student achievement.

A meaningful Oregon K-12 accountability system must:

- provide a focus for improving student achievement
- determine the level of sustained investment required to meet student achievement goals; and
- hold schools and policy makers accountable by fairly, clearly and accurately reporting progress toward reaching student achievement goals, as well as sustained investment goals.

3. Capital Improvement

OSBA will vigorously pursue a comprehensive statewide review of K-12 capital infrastructure and needs, increased flexibility for expenditure of revenues dedicated to capital construction, and an increased state role in paying for K-12 capital improvements.

2009 Legislative Policies

Section 1: Finance

1.1 K-12 Funding Adequacy/State School Fund Appropriation

OSBA supports the continued use of the Quality Education Model to define K-12 funding adequacy. For the 2007-2009 biennium, the QEM called for a state appropriation of \$7.766 billion, whereas the actual appropriation was \$6.245 billion, a difference of \$1.521 billion.

OSBA supports an appropriation to the State School Fund sufficient to provide each school district and ESD with no less than the resources necessary to support the operational, instructional and student achievement goals as defined by the Quality Education Model.

OSBA further supports the continued use of the School Improvement Fund as a vehicle for sustained investment on the path toward adequate funding.

1.2 State Resources for Public Schools

OSBA supports state-level and legislative efforts that assure the availability of state and local funds necessary to provide stability and adequacy in elementary and secondary school funding.

OSBA opposes tax-reduction mechanisms that limit or reduce state or local funds available to provide stability and adequacy in elementary and secondary school funding.

OSBA supports increasing the maximum allowable size of the current Education Stability Fund, but opposes converting it into a general state rainy day fund.

OSBA opposes reducing the allocation of state aid to school districts and education service districts (ESDs) for either general operating or categorical purposes based on the receipt of additional federal education funds.

OSBA opposes requiring the use of state or local resources for implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind Act; federal programs should be fully supported by federal funds.

1.3 Structural Tax Reform

OSBA supports structural tax reform that will reduce the volatility of Oregon's current tax system and raise the revenue necessary to provide K-12 school funding adequacy as defined by the Quality Education Model.

OSBA supports modification of the state's personal and corporate income tax "surplus-kicker" law to allow general fund revenue in excess of projections to be deposited into a reserve account and used in times of economic distress.

1.4 Funding of Department of Education Programs

OSBA supports adequate funding of state Department of Education programs and services that provide a research-based direct benefit to school districts and ESDs.

1.5 Distribution of the State School Fund

OSBA supports changes to the State School Fund distribution formula that maintain equalization and contain factors that consider only those situations or circumstances that may be externally measured, for which adequate and reliable data exist and require additional per-student program costs.

OSBA opposes using the State School Fund distribution formula to mandate school district or ESD expenditures by formula factor categories.

1.6 Local Option Property Tax and Revenue-Raising Authority

OSBA supports granting authority to school districts to seek from their voters supplemental operating revenue from a variety of additional sources.

OSBA opposes offsetting any local option property tax revenue against school districts' State School Fund resources beyond the amount necessary to maintain funding equalization.

OSBA supports continued funding of local option grants to equalize resources between high- and low-property-wealth school districts that approve local option property tax levies.

1.7 Financial and Program Accountability

OSBA supports maintaining school district and ESD financial accountability for the expenditure of public funds and program accountability for student achievement of high academic standards.

OSBA supports local-control prerogatives to determine how financial and program accountability measures are achieved.

1.8 State Funds for School Facilities Construction

OSBA supports the allocation of state resources, including lottery proceeds, in addition to and not in lieu of the appropriation of state aid for school districts' operating costs, to assist in funding public school construction, remodeling and maintenance projects, technology and capital equipment purchases.

1.9 Unfunded Mandates

OSBA strongly opposes state legislative mandates that require school districts and ESDs to provide new or expanded programs, services, responsibilities or functions without full and continuing funding of the additional operating and capital costs associated with the mandates.

1.10 Vouchers/Tuition Tax Credits/Private School Choice

OSBA opposes any mechanism that diverts public funds, including tax credits, to private or religious schools or erodes financial support of the public school system.

Section 2: Programs

2.1 School Improvement

OSBA supports state-level school improvement efforts provided they are implemented in ways that grant local school officials maximum flexibility to incorporate community needs and priorities.

2.2 Special Education

OSBA supports categorical funding, in addition to and not in lieu of general state operating aid, that recognizes the increased cost of providing educational programs to students with disabilities.

OSBA supports enhanced levels of state aid for the extraordinary costs associated with programs required for students with the most severe low-incidence, high-cost disabilities, including those served in out-of-district or out-of-state placements.

2.3 Education Service Districts

OSBA supports the role of education service districts (ESDs) to assist school districts and the state Department of Education in achieving Oregon's educational goals by providing equitable, high-quality, cost-effective, locally-responsive educational services on a regional basis.

OSBA opposes the expansion of the three-ESD pilot governance model enacted by the 2005 Legislature and supports allowing the three pilot districts to choose whether or not to continue under the pilot governance structure.

2.4 Curriculum

OSBA opposes legislatively imposed curriculum, specific course or subject of instruction mandates.

OSBA fully supports the continued use of English Language Learner programs as a viable way to integrate non-native English speakers into the standard district curriculum.

OSBA supports full-day kindergarten when accompanied by a separate and distinct state appropriation and implemented at the local district's option.

2.5 Public Charter Schools

OSBA opposes changes to the current charter school law that would channel public funds to private and religious schools, allow entities other than school district boards to authorize charter schools within their boundaries, mandate direct access to the State School Fund by charter schools, increase funding to charter schools, or decrease school district authority for chartering or oversight.

OSBA opposes diluting the 50% in-district student residency requirement for virtual or local charter schools.

Section 3: Personnel

3.1 Collective Bargaining

OSBA supports a collective bargaining structure that preserves and enhances the prerogatives of school district and ESD boards and the administrators they employ to manage the school system and to establish and enforce educational policies that respond to the needs and priorities of their communities and students.

OSBA supports continued local control of collective bargaining and opposes statewide bargaining and the creation of a statewide salary schedule.

OSBA supports changing the collective bargaining structure to eliminate status quo and establish shorter bargaining time lines.

3.2 Retirement

OSBA supports an actuarially-sound statewide retirement program for school employees that balances benefit adequacy for employees against costs and administrative requirements for employers.

OSBA opposes state-mandated early retirement options.

3.3 Employee Rights and Benefits

OSBA supports determination and definition of school employee rights and benefits through the collective bargaining process at the local level.

OSBA opposes granting or enhancing such rights and benefits through legislation or administrative rules which circumvent the local bargaining process.

3.4 Teacher/Administrator Licensing

OSBA supports licensing requirements that assure a level of preparation necessary to teach to rigorous academic standards and recognize licenses from other states.

OSBA opposes overly detailed licenses and endorsements that decrease needed flexibility in staffing schools or endangers districts' ability to attract and retain qualified personnel.

Section 4: Governance and Operations

4.1 Governance at the State Level

OSBA supports a state Board of Education, whose members are appointed by the Governor and subject to Senate confirmation, as the appropriate state-level policy-making body for elementary and secondary schools and community colleges.

OSBA supports the statewide election of the state Superintendent of Public Instruction.

OSBA opposes the creation of a single board of education for kindergarten through higher education, but supports intentional collaboration between the state Board of Education and the state Board of Higher Education.

4.2 Governance at the Local Level

OSBA opposes legislation which is unnecessarily restrictive and inhibits the ability of locally-elected school district and ESD boards to conduct the public's business in the best interests of their communities and students.

OSBA supports maximum local decision-making flexibility in determining district budgeting and spending priorities.

OSBA opposes the imposition of arbitrary limits on school district and ESD administrative and support service spending categories.

4.3 School Safety

OSBA supports local measures that promote safety in the school environment for students, staff, parents, patrons and the community as a whole.

4.4 Local Elections

OSBA opposes measures that would place additional restrictions on local voters' ability to govern their school districts.

OSBA supports maintaining a simple majority voting requirement for local district finance measures.*

* pending outcome of Ballot Measure 56.