

TESTIMONY – Instructional hours  
Salem-Keizer Stand for Children  
Dec. 11, 2014

### Oregon Instructional Hours proposal

Good afternoon staff and members of the Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts.

I am Christine Ertl, chair of the Salem-Keizer chapter of Stand for Children. Since 1999, our chapter has been advocating for the children of our community, and speaking out on issues for all Oregon children.

The leaders of our chapter reviewed the proposal of the Department of Education on revising how we define Instructional Hours.

We generally support these ideas. Our children already have one of the shortest school years in the nation, and that is a major reason why they cannot keep up. Oregon kids need a full school year.

We did not know, and imagine most parents don't know, all of the items that our state allows to be counted towards our final hours. Pep rallies, snow days, parent- teacher conferences, and professional development time should not count as instructional time. They simply are not. Parents should have accurate information.

We also support the proposal that high school hours should be accurate and only count actual hours students are in school, NOT just the number of hours are offered.

We think it's fair to only pay for the hours that students are in school; along the line of the "tenths" proposal. We understand some educational groups oppose this, but again we should be honest with Oregonians about what our kids are getting.

To make a sound decision, we need information on the costs, as well as the true amount of instructional time students need.

We do understand that more real school time will cost money. We do not want to see parent-teacher conferences disappear, nor do we want to eliminate all the fun field trips and activities. We don't want Districts to just raise class sizes either. If Oregon is faced with another recession with budget cuts, how will we be able to pay for parent-teacher conferences, Professional Development and meet these hours?

Districts must come up with real numbers about the costs, if we are to have a constructive discussion.

We also want to know what the research says on the number of instructional hours our students truly need.

Salem Keizer Stand for Children believes we need to uphold standards and not cheat our kids of their full school year. Thank you,