

**TESTIMONY On Instructional Hours proposal
from the Lane County Chapter of Stand for Children
11/21/14**

Our local chapter of Stand for Children has advocated for better schools and school funding for 12 years. We have children in public schools, and are well aware how tight the budgets can be. Over the years, no group has worked harder or knocked on more doors to pass school funding measures.

Nonetheless, we do not accept tight budgets as an excuse for giving students almost the shortest school year in the nation. Our members who are teachers tell us they cannot get through a curriculum in such a short year. Our children cannot get the education they need in our current school year. We do not believe our state should include so many non-academic items as "Instructional hours". Therefore, we support the general approach of the Department of Education's proposal.

We do not believe that

- 1. teacher professional development days**
- 2. parent-teacher conferences**

should be counted as Instructional hours.

We do think that student orientation can be instructional, so we don't see the need to exclude those hours.

We recognize that in high school, we need to be flexible to meet the needs of older students. Some benefit from work study programs or other community work that is worthwhile, educational real-world experience that they have chosen to do, and can get credit for. We need to be flexible with online classes that really benefit some students. So it is possible that the 90% requirement may not be best in every case. However, in our District, we have had as few as a third of our upper class students fully scheduled, and that is clearly unacceptable.

Oregon has been cheating our students of a full school year. We need to be honest about this, and the Department's proposal is a step in the right direction.