

April 1, 2013

House Committee on Education

Chair Beyer, Members of the Committee:

I'm writing this letter in support of SB 627 and the proposed changes that would reduce the burden on contracting agencies. Central Point School District 6 developed an RFP for transportation services in April of 2011. Based on House Bill 2867 in 2009, changes were made to ORS 279B which increased the requirements for the contracting agency prior to procurement. District 6 addressed these requirements in great detail prior to procuring a contract but was still challenged in court by the Oregon School Employees Association. A Summary Judgment hearing was held October 24, 2011, which the District won in March of 2012. OSEA immediately filed an appeal, which is currently pending.

The time, cost and effort required by the District to contract transportation services has been significant. Prior to procurement, we hired a transportation expert who systematically examined our existing fleet, the cost of upgrading our fleet, and the potential cost or savings over a seven year period between running our own program or contracting services. This study produced a report that was presented to the District 6 Board of Directors in June 2011. Based on the findings of that study, the Board chose to contract with First Student to provide transportation. District 6 is currently in the second year of a five year contract with First Student and the savings are tracking as expected. The conditions of the contract allowed the District to save over \$600,000 in the first year, it also reduced the average age of our fleet by over 10 years and provided newer safer technology on each bus, such as GPS, driver safety checks and more efficient communication equipment. With the recent financial reductions in State School Funding it would have taken many years for the District to update the old fleet with newer busses and technology.

Senate Bill 627 would allow contracting agencies to fulfill the obligation of an appropriate cost analysis without the burden of unreasonably proving the anticipated

savings through complex comparisons of personnel and equipment costs. As the Superintendent of District 6, I am constantly looking at providing high level services at reduced costs in order to drive the majority of our resources to the classroom and students. Allowing School Districts to reduce non-instructional costs by contracting with agencies that can provide better services at a lower cost is wise use of public funds and benefits our students.

Randy Gravon

Superintendent

Central Point School District 6