

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Board Proposal for providing)	
one time only contributions to schools)	RESOLUTION
in Multnomah County in order to)	96-81
give school districts time to enact)	
a long-range stabilization plan)	

WHEREAS, school districts in Multnomah County have experienced severe reductions since the passage of the 1990 property tax limitation (Measure 5); and

WHEREAS, school district cuts that will take place in the 1996-97 fiscal year are of such magnitude that a crisis exists in the educational systems within Multnomah County; and

WHEREAS, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners understands the importance of a stable, effective school system in maintaining a healthy, vibrant urban environment; and

WHEREAS, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners recognizes that the entire State of Oregon is in the midst of a school funding crisis, and

WHEREAS, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners does not want to send the message to the public that local government has sufficient resources to solve this problem, the County is willing to offer a short-term solution to help bridge the gap until the state legislature can craft a long-term, statewide solution in 1997; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners intends to take action to mitigate the reduction in the number of teachers in fiscal year 1996-97 and to maintain class size by devising a distribution formula to provide funding to every school district in the County based on the cost per student, ratio of students to staff, number of students and the effects of previous reductions in funding; no significant amount will be forthcoming until the districts detail exactly what their shortfall is, the number of layoffs that have occurred, and the effect on class size; and

WHEREAS, the County's mission is to provide services and programs to a large, diverse population; and

WHEREAS, significant cuts in federal and state funding for these County programs are anticipated, it is important that this one-time only school support be supplied in a manner that does not significantly interfere with the County's ability to fulfill these responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the County is already providing \$6.5 million to provide the following programs to stabilize families and help children succeed in school: drug and alcohol intervention programs, school retention and anti violence programs, Touchstone, early intervention, early screening and referral, Hispanic retention and retrieval, STARS, Teen health clinics, library homework programs, school dental services, pregnancy prevention, alternative schools, DARE, school resource officers, school based mental health, Partners, family resource centers, Headstart, caring communities, Counteract, and PAX; and

WHEREAS, Multnomah County has substantial unmet long-term financial obligations including: \$290 million for maintaining and upgrading the Willamette River bridges; increasing public safety activities; providing health services to the needy; financing and managing an effective library system; implementing the animal control ordinance; providing effective services to an aging population, including adult foster care oversight; providing mental health services to burgeoning numbers resulting from closure of Dammasch Hospital; providing affordable housing; providing services to those affected by welfare reform cutbacks; providing services for abused and battered women and children; transition services for women leaving prison; all provided with reduced funds from all sources; and

WHEREAS, in order to build on the work of the spring School Summit, maintain a long-term partnership with the business community, and recognize that any long term solution to this crisis will require the support of the entire community,

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that it is the intention of the Board of County Commissioners to transfer to the school districts in Multnomah County at least \$10 million in FY 1996-1997 from the following resources:

- revenues derived from Community Service Fees under the Strategic Investment Program in 1996-97;
- the General Fund resources that have been reserved in the 1996-97 Proposed Multnomah County Budget pursuant to Board policy to offset short term revenue reductions so that the County does not need to scale down and restore ongoing programs in response to annual changes in resources;
- savings from the General Fund; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that the County, the school districts and the education service district commence a working group by July 1, 1996 to evaluate a functional realignment of responsibilities for district librarians, nurses, counselors/psychologists, child development specialists and other positions that fit within the County's human service mission and area of expertise. The goal of functional realignment is to be a long-term solution that frees up district revenues for maintaining teachers and class size, by the County's assumption of payroll and management responsibility for employees that fit in the County's human service mission.

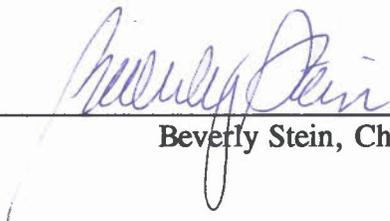
FURTHER RESOLVED that the functional realignment working group will bring forward recommendations by June 1, 1997, and County commitments to further funding of schools in FY 97-98 will be based on the progress of the working group.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board challenges the business community to continue corporate contributions to the school districts in Multnomah County and to be proactive in solving the long-term funding problem faced by school systems in Oregon.

DATED this 2nd day of May, 1996.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON


Beverly Stein, Chair

REVIEWED:

LAURENCE KRESSEL, COUNTY COUNSEL
MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON


Laurence Kressel