

Plan to dismantle vocational funding scrapped — for now

By Kristena Hansen
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — A proposal by the state's teachers union to fundamentally alter a voter-approved mandate for college-prep, vocational and dropout prevention funding in Oregon high schools effectively failed last week in Salem — at least for now.

Debates are heating up over Oregon's looming \$1.6 billion budget deficit as the second half of the 2017 session begins, and the \$300 million high school spending requirement set forth in Measure 98 is among the many areas still on the table for cuts.

The Oregon Education Association's revised version of Senate Bill 353 would have stripped Measure 98's funding carve-out and essentially turn it into an optional grant fund. That proposal stood in contrast to House Bill 2246, which was revised to make modest adjustments so that school districts would have more flexibility with spending.

The House revisions were proposed by the four bipartisan lawmakers who sat on a work group with the teachers' union, state education officials and Stand For Children, the nonprofit behind Measure 98. The work group hit a roadblock during final negotiations this month so the lawmakers separately drafted the bill revisions.

Track athletes go faster, higher, farther

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

Big meets can produce big results, and Keegan Greaney appears to be proof of that. He faced a fast field of competitors at the Summit Invitational on Saturday and came away with the fastest time of his career for the 300 hurdles, coming within inches of a sub-40-second mark by finishing in 40.02 seconds.

His mark is a school record.

His time not only launched him to the top of the 4A ranks, but places him sixth among all Oregon classifications. It was all part of a busy day for Greaney, who went on to take part in the Mr. SHS pageant later that evening.

"Keegan is coming into his own on the track," said Head Coach Jeff Larson. "His technique is improving and he just seems to be getting stronger and stronger."

The Summit Invitational drew schools from throughout Oregon, including 6A powerhouse Jesuit, along with Boise High School and Centennial of Idaho, making it one of the most competitive meets in Oregon. Proof of this is that Greaney's great effort, which would win nearly any meet around, was only good enough for fourth place.

It was a perfect situation for Keegan to run against four or five other top-level hurdlers, according to Larson.

Other Outlaws who produced season and career bests at the meet included Keaton Green in the 800 (2:09.56), as well as three 400-meters runners, Tucker Flannery (53.0), Korbin Sharp (53.18), and Jose Luquin (56.87).

As one of only two 4A teams at the meet, Sisters athletes faced a deep field of talent in every event, but held their own according to

Larson.

"A meet like this can bring out the best in the kids, unless they allow themselves to be intimidated," he said. "I think our kids handled themselves very well."

A number of freshman girls rose to the occasion with personal bests as well. Ryliereece Morgan ran a personal best in the 100 (13.25), and cleared 5 feet 2 inches in the high jump tying the school record, while classmates Hallie Schwartz (30.30), Allison Mansfield (31.05), and Caitlyn Schwab (31.29) all ran lifetime bests in the 200. Only two 4A girls have jumped higher than Morgan, and her 100 time is the top time in the Sky-Em League.

Sophomore Tate Ricker ran a season best in the 800 (2:41.15), while senior hurdler Sabrina Reifschneider lowered her season bests in the 100 hurdles (16.12) and the 300 hurdles (48.97). Her time in the 100 hurdles ranks third among 4A girls and moved her very close to her lifetime best of 16.00.

On Thursday, Sisters hosted a three-way Sky-Em meet against Junction City and Elmira, which all three schools appeared to be using as more of a practice meet than a full-fledged, tooth-and-nail competition. This is in part due to league meets not figuring into the district championships any longer, according to Larson, along with the trend toward making



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Erynn Ricker won the pole vault in a three-way meet last week, with a personal best of 10 feet 4 inches.

the big Saturday Invitationals the focal point.

Nonetheless, some notable performances came out of the meet, including Erynn Ricker's personal record in the pole vault at 10 feet 4 inches, which puts in at the fifth-ranked 4A vaulter this season. Mandi Calavan continued lowering her season bests in the 200, with a time of 27.41, which is the top time in the Sky-Em League this year.

The Outlaws host an invitational of their own this Saturday as the Sisters Rotary Invitational returns after a three-year absence due to the track facility being unusable. Teams from throughout Central

Oregon including Culver, Gilchrist, Madras, Lost River, Paisley, Redmond, La Pine, Lakeview, Mountain View and others will gather at the brand-new facility for a full day of competition.

Field events begin at 11 a.m. and running events commence at 1 p.m. Limited bleacher seating is available, so fans are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs. Concessions will be available to fuel fans and athletes alike.

Sisters Rotary members comprise the bulk of the volunteers who help keep the meet running smoothly. Anyone interested in helping at the meet may contact Mike Bidasolo at 541-419-3737 or Jeff Larson at 541-910-3434.

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