

Measure 9 may put schools in bind



PORTLAND (AP) — Teacher Vicky Barrows remembers the death of a 15-year-old boy who was a neighbor, her son's friend, and a homosexual.

"He hanged himself. He was being teased at school because he was different," said Barrows, now president of the Portland Association of Teachers.

Barrows said the death led her to promote training for teachers and counselors to help gay and lesbian teen-agers adjust in school. She worries that Ballot Measure 9 would shut down the program.

Sharon Cabe, the mother of three children at a Tigard elementary school, worries teachers will tell her children that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle.

Cabe knows the elementary school currently doesn't address homosexuality. Yet efforts by educators like Barrows have led her to believe gay and lesbian activists slowly will begin to push their views in the classroom.

That's why she supports Measure 9.

"Measure 9 will prevent it from getting any further than it has," Cabe says. "I do not want to see homosexuality promoted in any way."

Schools remain front-and-center in the debate over Measure 9.

The Nov. 3 ballot initiative would amend the Oregon Constitution to require government, especially schools, to discourage homosexuality and label it wrong and perverse.

Most education leaders in the state oppose the measure. They say it would threaten the jobs of gay and lesbian teachers, censor teacher's discussions of literature in the classroom, and trigger the banning of books which discuss homosexuality but fail to condemn it.

The exact impact of the measure's broad wording is unclear. Some of the measure's critics have said "questionable" books would be left on library shelves under the guarantee of the First Amendment right to free speech.

Oregon Citizens Alliance Chairman Lon Mabon has said Measure 9 would require schools to deny children access to books that clearly "promote" homosexuality as a normal and acceptable lifestyle.

The OCA has said educators are overreacting to the initiative.

Gay and lesbian teachers would not lose their jobs — as long as they stayed in the closet, Mabon said. Teachers could still talk about homosexual artists and their works — provided that they reminded students homosexuality is wrong.

However, Mabon said helping students adjust to their homosexuality would be no different than helping them adjust to drug addiction because it is wrong.

"If one of my children did come to me and said 'I am gay,' I would still love him," Mabon said. "I would definitely say, 'I am against the behavior, but if it is your choice, it is your choice, and I will always be here for you.'"

Ballot measure brings out fears

MEDFORD (AP) — Ballot Measure 9 is polarizing this community, where some residents say they fear their neighbors.

"It's kind of scary," said Dace Brown, who said people have been shouting at him from pickups and ripping "No on 9" signs off his lawn.

"We're now leaving the lights on all the time." Brown is one of many homosexuals who say Measure 9, which would declare homosexuality a perversion, has created a climate of fear among them.

But the anger extends in both directions, some residents say.

Carleen Morgan, a former member of the Jackson County AIDS Task Force, got an anonymous phone call Friday at work.

"He railed and screamed at me, swore at me," Morgan said Saturday.

Morgan resigned from the task force Oct. 14 when it took a stand against Measure 9. She believes the task force should not take a political stand because it could jeopardize community support.

"I've never heard such foul language in my life," Morgan said. "He said, 'It's people like you who are trying to run every gay out of the state of Oregon.'"

"I was actually afraid last night that there was a chance he would do me harm on my property."

Student gets jail term in SAT cheating case



ROCKVILLE, Md. (AP) — A 19-year-old man who admitted paying a friend \$200 to take his college entrance examination was sentenced Friday to six months in jail.

Lawrence H. Adler, of Potomac, wept and begged for mercy from Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge Paul Weinstein, saying he was truly sorry.

Weinstein rejected the plea. "Quite frankly, Mr. Adler, you've been conning people all your life. The con ends here, today," Weinstein said.

Outside the courtroom, Adler lashed out at reporters. "You guys created this whole mess," he said. The Educational Testing Service, which conducts the Scholastic Aptitude Test, said it's the first time someone has been criminally prosecuted for cheating on an exam.

Weinstein sentenced Adler to 18 months on two perjury-related charges but suspended all but six months of the jail term.

Weinstein also ordered the college student to perform 100 hours of community service, undergo psychotherapy and be placed on three years probation. Adler does not have to report to jail until after the fall college semester ends in December.

Testimony also revealed that Adler had been sexually molested twice as a child.

The perjury-related charges stemmed from a civil suit Adler brought against ETS after it refused to validate his scores. Adler and a friend, David Srulevich, said at a March hearing that Adler took the test last November. But Adler's friend later told the testing company that he had been paid to take the test.

Srulevich is scheduled for sentencing next Wednesday.

Black colleges may soon face closure

WASHINGTON (AP) — Black educators debated Friday how they could fend off mass closings of black public colleges if a federal judge allows Mississippi to close or consolidate some of its black schools under a desegregation plan.

The state is trying to respond to the Supreme Court's ruling in a 17-year-old lawsuit that its university system is separate and unequal. As a remedy, the state's College Board has proposed closing one black school and merging staffs and programs of three others into nearby institutions.

Mississippi's response is being watched by at least 18 other states with black public colleges. Some states, such as Georgia and South Carolina, have been pumping extra dollars into their historically black colleges.

But if U.S. District Judge Neal Biggers approves closing Mississippi Valley State University, other states may see that as a green light for eliminating some of their schools, said Howard University President Franklyn Jenifer.

"Some of us say we have too much clout to let anything like that happen," Jenifer said. "We

'The challenge is to make certain the other states understand that this is a march backwards.'

— Elias Blake, Howard University

cannot speak as individuals any longer. We must somehow arrive at a consensus.

"The way things are going now, if we are not very sophisticated about how we deal with these troubles, we shall see the demise of ... the historically black colleges in the very near future."

Alvin Chambliss, attorney for the plaintiffs in the Mississippi case, urged a grass-roots mobilization of blacks on the issue of preserving black colleges.

"They would close every last one of these black schools if we let them," he said. "Somehow, the strike force is going to have to be massaged and brought into this thing. If we don't, then we fail as a race."

In a Thursday hearing, Big-

gers asked the state of Mississippi and black plaintiffs to determine, over the next 30 days, what issues need to be addressed to settle the suit. Black college officials plan to use that time to stir national interest in the Mississippi case, said Elias Blake, an education policy expert at Howard University.

"The challenge is to make certain the other states understand that this is a march backwards," Blake said. "We have to mobilize and go back to Mississippi with more detailed documentation that what happened in other states is the correct way to do desegregation."

There are at least 117 black U.S. colleges, 75 of which are state-run schools. Thirty-eight are historically black — they were built during times of segregation to educate black students.

These colleges award 33 percent of the bachelor's degrees earned by blacks, and graduate 43 percent of blacks who go on to earn doctorates, according to the United Negro College Fund.

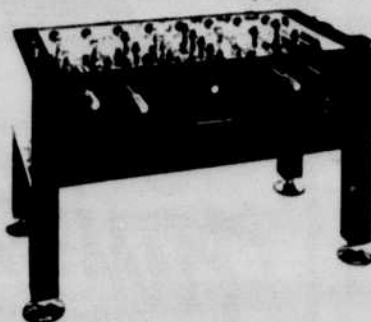
Since the Supreme Court's ruling in the Mississippi case last June, black college officials have been trying to determine what the fallout may be.

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