

The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor
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Bottom line shows quality of program

What is the best way to judge the performance of a superintendent?

Could we judge the Sandy Elementary District's Clark Lund on the immaculate condition of Sandy Grade School, built in 1931? No. A superintendent is only as good as his maintenance supervisor.

Should we judge him by his cool demeanor under fire at school board meetings that are drawn to fever pitch by a school closure? No. Handling pressure is a good attribute for a superintendent but not the most important one.

Do we judge him on school programs? No. Teachers and administrators have a lot to do with the quality and direction of study.

Let's judge Clark Lund's performance on the bottom line. How do Sandy students stack up nationwide.

No results are available for the first five years Lund was in the district, and results from the spring of 1986 are currently being tabulated.

However, a look at this year's graduating eighth-grade class shows that in 1985, when they were seventh-graders, 71 percent of the students were above the national average in reading skills, according to California Achievement Test scores. In mathematics, 67.2 percent performed above the national average.

Did the students come in with above-average skills? At least one class, selected at random, did not. In the spring of 1980 the first-graders were average or below average in all categories. By the time they were fifth-graders, they showed a slight increase in math competency and a big jump in reading and vocabulary skills.

A 1984 study by Ralph Branson, director of special education and the administrator who does most of the testing for the district, shows a percentage larger than 50 percent in all grades doing above-average work. By class, Sandy had a range of from 66 percent to 78 percent of its students performing better than the national average.

Why bring all this up? Sandy Union High School and Sandy Elementary have both lost superintendents. A grade school principal and numerous teachers throughout the two districts have also left. Though no one is saying that the problem is with the Sandy area, school closures in both districts and a wealth of misinformation certainly aren't helping convince qualified people to stay.

A real estate agent was quoted in The Oregonian recently as saying people are wary of locating within Sandy's school districts.

It is hard for us to evaluate a lot of the people who are leaving the Sandy area, but one thing is for certain. Despite all the criticism heaped on Clark Lund the past year, when one looks at the bottom line his record is excellent.

The consequences of unstable school financing are finally beginning to surface. The "brain drain" has begun.

Letter to the editor

Family appreciates support

To our many friends, thank for your kindness and understanding at this time.

Helen Lomke and family
Sandy

State of the state

Oregon bridges mark 50 years of service

by GOV. VIC ATIYEH

The year was 1936. As Kodak officials in New York unveiled a new film called Kodachrome, bridge engineers in Oregon supervised completion of five bridges that would become among the most photographed in the world.

The five bridges, which span Yaquina Bay, Alsea Bay, the Siuslaw River, Umpqua River and Coos Bay, mark 50 years of service this year.

They are treasures of transportation, of Oregon history, and of engineering and architectural excellence that enhance the coastal landscape.

As you travel this summer, you may want to take a fresh look at these remarkable bridges.

Completed 90 years after Oregon's earliest recorded bridge was built over Dairy Creek in Washington County, the five coastal spans replaced free ferries. Construction employed 885 Depression-era laborers, and cost less than \$5.5 million.

You may want to keep these particulars about the five bridges for your next coastal visit. From north to south:

• Yaquina Bay Bridge: At Newport, this 6-mile span includes a 800-foot arched span. Construction employed 220 men. Cost was \$1.3 million. (Today it costs nearly that much just to repaint this bridge.) Opened to traffic Sept. 6, it was completed Nov. 28, 1936.

• Alsea Bay Bridge: At Waldport, this nearly 6-mile bridge features three arched spans, employed 150 men, and cost \$778,000. It opened May 9 and was completed June 15, 1936.

• Siuslaw River Bridge: Connecting Florence and Glenada, this double-arched span is the smallest and was the least expensive of the five. This 3-mile span includes a drawbridge, employed 140 men, and cost \$527,000.

• Umpqua River Bridge: Between Gardiner and Reedsport, this 4-mile span includes concrete-reinforced arched spans on either side of a movable steel swing span. Work employed 125 men and cost \$581,000. It was completed on April 7, 1936.

• McCullough Memorial Bridge: Spanning Coos Bay for more than a mile, this cantilever-style bridge is the longest and costliest (\$2.1 million) of the five, employing 250 men. Opened May 9 and dedicated June 6, it was completed Sept. 11, 1936.

As with any anniversary, the 50-year milestone also represents a beginning.

When these bridges were built, designers gave them a life expectancy of 50 years. The Alsea Bridge at Waldport, which suffers the greatest deterioration because of its exposure to the marine environment, will be replaced with a new, \$44-million span that will incorporate the architectural spirit of the old bridge.

The state also expects to contract for up to \$5 million in restoration work on the south end of the Yaquina Bay Bridge, which like the Alsea Bay structure, is showing signs of concrete deterioration owing to its proximity to the ocean.

However, our studies indicate that the bridges at Florence, Reedsport and Coos Bay — headlands give them greater protection from marine erosion — will be serviceable for another 20 years or more.



Salem Scene

Legislature could upgrade rankings

by JACK ZIMMERMAN
Associated Oregon Industries

Oregon's manufacturing climate received mixed reviews early this month from two national firms that measure the potential for attracting new industry.

Both based in Chicago, one ranked Oregon in general among the worst of all 48 contiguous states and the other gave Eugene-Springfield a positive rating compared with specific similar-size western states communities.

Grant Thornton, in its seventh annual examination of manufacturing climates among contiguous states, placed Oregon 44th for the second year in a row.

Fantus Company, which returned to re-study Eugene-Springfield following a negative report in 1982, found that region had rebounded positively and went so far as to recommend specific types of new businesses to recruit.

As one would suspect from the widely disparate findings, each study utilized different criteria in reaching its findings. Grant Thornton utilized 22 subject areas in achieving its rankings among states and weighted each according to relative impor-

ance in the opinion of survey designers.

Fantus utilized 38 factors in its examination of Eugene-Springfield and a number were more subjective than those utilized by Thornton. In some instances Fantus measured attitudes, for example, and Thornton dealt almost exclusively with recorded data.

Predictably, results of the Fantus study were enthusiastically received in Eugene-Springfield, while Thornton's results were generally discounted by Gov. Vic Atiyeh and the state Department of Economic Development.

The Thornton study assesses the general manufacturing climates of the 48 states in a range of business-related categories including fiscal policies of state and local governments, state-regulated employment costs, costs of labor, availability and productivity of labor force, population density, education and energy and environmental costs.

Of all 22 Thornton factors, only six reflected positively — above national average — in Oregon's tabulation.

The more wide-ranging Fantus examination measured some of the same factors utilized by Thornton but

also gave high or low marks for subjects such as rail freight service, utility services, quality of life, availability of industrial sites, housing costs and air service.

In its final tabulation, Fantus gave Eugene-Springfield high marks in 20 categories, rated another 13 average and found only five were liabilities.

In some instances there were overlapping factors in which both the state and Eugene-Springfield scores poorly. Two were relative property and income tax burdens.

Over the last seven years, Thornton has never placed Oregon above 35th (1981) and three years ago determined the state was next to the bottom, 47th.

Fantus did conduct a survey similar to the Thornton study in 1975 and its findings put Oregon in 40th place among the states.

Meanwhile, both the validity and value of such studies remain controversial — particularly those of the Thornton type that attempt to weigh the relative attractiveness of states to business on a so-called objective basis. Critics are quick to point out all factors are not measured or recorded identically from state to state. They also refute some findings

on the basis that certain measured systems differ in operation among the states.

Fantus' Eugene-Springfield survey is probably better accepted because it is more more subjective and includes factors more difficult to measure but nevertheless important to businesses seeking new locations and the employees who will work in those regions or communities.

All of this notwithstanding, there appears to be a message for Oregon that continues to be largely ignored by those who make this state's laws and produce the regulations that control large segments of the economy.

What the Thornton studies tell us is that there are some things that can be done to improve the business climate and others over which we have little control.

Laws can't be enacted that immediately impact Oregon's population density, for instance. But 12 of Thornton's 22 factors are controlled or strongly influenced by state and local governments.

In view of Oregon's consistently low scores, it does seem odd that more attention isn't directed toward improving those conditions when the Legislature meets in Salem.

