



THE SITUATION

Some high school classes are so crowded now, students have difficulty getting into the classes they need and even a desk to sit in. In one high school physics class, there are 40 students and 36 desks. The last students to arrive must sit on the table in the back of the room. Next year, that teacher was told there would be almost 50 students in the class. And in a math class, there are 56 students. Students are packed in along the sides, because more desks won't fit.

CLASS SIZE

Oregon schools already have the 4th largest average elementary class size in the nation. [i] These class sizes mean less individual attention for students, and more time on classroom management for teachers.

The national average for an elementary school class is 20 children. Yet 4J elementary classes have over 35 students in many third, fourth, and fifth grades. If we don't pass Measure 20-182, next year some 4J kindergartens are scheduled to have more than 30 five-year-olds. Same story in Bethel - all but one of the elementary schools has class sizes above 30, and some have 36 and 37 kids in a class.

In our high schools, core classes have up to 40 students. The national average for class size in secondary education is 23.4 students. [ii] And with the cuts planned for next year, high school students will lose options to take advanced classes, making it difficult for them to take the rigorous courses necessary for admission to many universities. Measure 20-182 will reduce the need to limit class offerings.

Unless we pass Measure 20-182, class sizes at our elementary, middle and high schools will increase by an average of 4 students.

[i] National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2009 Digest of Education Statistics, Table 67, School year 2007-8
[ii] National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2009 Digest of Education Statistics, Table 67, School year 2007-8

"Why care about Class Size?"

Decades of research on class size proves that younger students must have smaller class sizes to ensure they start off right and ultimately succeed in school. Almost no research has been conducted on the impact of the huge class sizes of 35, 40, and more that we are facing today.

Reasonable class size increases student achievement through:

- More opportunity to learn
- Smaller group instruction
- More hands-on learning
- Teachers spending less time on classroom management and more time on instruction
- More personalized assessments and strategies to improve individual student performance
- More interaction with teachers, which leads to better motivation and skills



→ We can do better! ←



Vote Yes

ON MEASURE 20-182 ON MAY 17

FAQ

Q. Shouldn't the state fix this problem?

A. The current state budget has a \$3.5 billion shortfall. It is up to us if we want to shore up Eugene schools. Fortunately, we have the chance to do that by voting YES.

"We can't depend on the state to take care of Eugene students when it cannot adequately fund even statewide responsibilities like universities and health care for the poor. Strong schools are essential to the success of Eugene's children and our local economy. In May, we will have the opportunity to support our students and our economy by supporting this measure." - State Representative Phil Barnhart

Q. What will the tax be used for?

A. Two things only: holding the line on class sizes and restoring cut school days. The school districts will still have to make substantial cuts. The budget shortfall for the Eugene 4J and Bethel Districts is approximately \$32 million. For the two districts, this tax would provide only \$16.8 million total.

Q. Why not just increase property taxes?

A. The state constitution limits the amount of property taxes for schools. Eugene schools cannot further increase property taxes, except for building repair and construction.

Q. How come some people won't have to pay this tax?

A. Due to state law, some retirees won't be taxed on the retirement portion of their income. Fortunately, it is a small fraction of the overall taxable income - only about 6 percent of the total. Some kids in 4J and Bethel don't live in the city limits, so the city can't tax them, but 80% do. And we need all local children and schools to succeed.

Q. Will the state reduce our school funding if this tax passes?

A. Measure 20-182 protects Eugene taxpayers. The measure states that the tax will not be collected if the state "equalizes" or reduces our funding because of the additional local revenue. Further, Multnomah County passed a similar income tax for schools in 2003, and the state did not reduce its funding.

Q. What do you mean by "temporary?" What happens after 4 years?

A. The tax will be collected between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2014. There is no provision for renewing the tax.

Q. Didn't Measure 66 and 67 solve this?

A. Those measures helped, temporarily, as they were intended to. The unprecedented state budget cuts for next year require more action for this fall.

Q. In this economy, doesn't everybody need to share the pain?

A. Yes, this measure will only restore about half the budget cuts and only provide for the essentials that most directly impact the kids - class sizes and school days. And for the past two years, Eugene teachers have not been paid their contracted rates or benefits. In 4J this year, all employees took a cut in pay and benefits. They will be taking more hits whether or not this measure passes.

Q. What will happen if we don't do something?

A. If we do nothing, already too large class sizes will increase by an average of 4 students, and the school year will be shorter. This is not a maybe - this is certain. And we may not get this chance again.