

Crisis Team Urges Adoption of Report

Dear Community Member:

Public education in Portland is in a state of crisis. We encourage you to read the Crisis Team's publication and ask yourself, is this the kind of education I will accept for my child or other children? Then write or call school board members and ask that they immediately adopt Dr. Simon-McWilliams' mediation report. The report calls for system wide changes focused on quickly getting low-income children to grade level.

In June 2001, board member Lorenzo Poe recommended that the district seek the educational expertise of Dr. Simon-McWilliams. She agreed to mediate between the school district and the Crisis Team. Mediation centered on how to rapidly get low-income children to grade level. Strategies developed during mediation were designed to address teacher quality, English language learners, Title I programs for disadvantaged children, special education, curriculum, instruction and monitoring. The strategies were specific and based upon proven practices and programs.

The board has refused to implement the report. Instead, board members turn to school administrators for answers to academic problems they have never solved in their professional careers. Neither the current superintendent nor his key staff has ever had low-income children performing at or above grade level.

Gross disparities exist within the public education system. Sadly, education looks different based upon race, income and where children live in the city. Poor children tend to be taught by the least experienced and lowest paid teachers. In addition, schools in low-income neighborhoods have hazardous health and safety risks that administrators ignored for years.

Low-income children in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are taught by teachers who do not speak their language. This contrasts with the school district's language immersion schools with faculty that speak both English and the foreign language children are being taught. These children's parents are more affluent than ESL parents. Ninety-eight percent of ESL 10th graders are below grade level.

Portland school board members and administrators have touted numerous plans to close the achievement gap that exists between low-income children and their more affluent peers. Not one of the plans has been implemented.

Over a year ago, Kati Haycock, president of Education Trust, a well-respected research organization recommended that the district be more specific about steps to close the achievement gap. The trust, in response to the school district's request, detailed steps that should be taken to close the achievement gap. School administrators and the board have failed to implement the recommendations.

We think you will agree that our children deserve much better. As a first step, please call the board and ask that they immediately implement the changes called for in Dr. Simon-McWilliams' report.

If you want to help in our efforts to ensure that all children receive an excellent education, call us at 503-282-1447.

Sincerely,
Ron Herndon, Co-Chair Crisis Team

Entrepreneurs Will Revitalize Weimer Building

continued from Front

there's not much within walking distance," Woolley added. "It helps to have people collected together. If we can energize this block, the new businesses and those already there can help make this an active, vital commercial district."

The Heritage Group also consists of Stephen Foust, former land use committee chair of the neighborhood association and principal author of the King Neighborhood Plan; Dennis Hadley,

architect and Eliot neighborhood resident; Howard Loucks, a construction contractor and a volunteer with the Eliot Neighborhood Association for more than 15 years; Barry Pappenheim, a northeast Portland developer; and Eric Wentland, a former Eliot Neighborhood Association land use committee chair and developer of properties on Northeast Alberta, including the Chez What building.

Carter Wins Census Lawsuit

continued from Front

adjusted numbers said the ruling likely would face an immediate challenge by the Census Bureau and head to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco.

"It's possible the government will go all the way to the Supreme Court," said Steven Blackhurst, one of the attorneys representing state Sens. Susan Castillo, D-Eugene, and Margaret Carter, D-Portland.

Castillo and Carter had filed a federal Freedom of Information Act request to see the adjusted population count, which could show an undercount of renters and minorities, altering the amount of federal funding some communities receive.

"The people of Oregon are the winners," Castillo said. "The Census Bureau acknowledged that the numbers released as the 'official' census again left out millions of Americans," she said. "Now, hopefully, we can ensure that Oregon receives all the federal funds coming to us."

The Census Bureau had sought an exception to the general federal law that requires government to be conducted in the open barring special circumstances.

At a hearing last month, U.S. District Judge James A. Redden had warned it would be difficult to find that secrecy was justified in this case.

Blackhurst said he believes Redden based his decision on a 9th Circuit ruling nearly a decade ago that forced the Census Bureau to release its adjusted 1990 counts, as requested by the California Legislature.

Census Bureau attorneys had argued the 2000 Census was different because the adjusted numbers were too flawed to be useful.

In addition, government lawyers said that in 1990, the bureau released adjusted counts for every state and county before it tried to halt the release of adjusted counts down to the very detailed "block" level.

For the 2000 Census, the bureau kept secret its adjusted population totals for states and counties, as well as for city blocks — so the government argued that releasing the numbers would be a major and very disruptive disclosure.

The adjusted counts were designed to improve the accuracy of Census 2000 by boosting the count of renters, minorities and other undercounted populations in some places while reducing the count of whites, college students and other overcounted people in other places.

Sharing Thanksgiving With Others



Pastor B.E. Johnson (left) and Larry Collins of the Community COGIC Church, stand outside the church doors to welcome people from throughout the city, including the homeless, to a free Thanksgiving dinner held Saturday at the church on Northeast Killingsworth.

PHOTO BY JOHNNY HUFF/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Season Begins for Christmas Tree Cutting at Mt. Hood

The Mt. Hood National Forest began selling \$5 personal use Christmas tree cutting permits Monday to cut or dig a tree up to 8 feet tall.

Because winter weather in the forest can change rapidly, forest service officials encourage cut-

ters to be prepared for rain, snow and icy conditions. Bring extra food and clothing. Start early in the day and be out of the forest before dark. Carry an axe, shovel and tire chains. Tell a friend or family member where you are going and when you plan to return.

To purchase your permit and get more information, contact the Zigzag Ranger District, 6500 E. Highway 26, Welches, 503-622-7674; Clackamas River Ranger District, 595 N.W. Industrial Way, off Highway 224, Estacada, 503-630-8700; Hood River Ranger District, 6780 Highway

35, Mt. Hood Parkdale, 541-352-6002; or the Barlow Ranger District, Dufur Ranger Station, 780 Court, Dufur, 541-467-2291.

All offices will be closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day, but the permits are available from some local vendors.

It's not whether you win or lose,



The game is just a game... It's how you play that makes it fun, or frustrating, or dangerous. It's true for all types of games — including gambling. Three percent of Oregonians have a gambling problem — and when they play, it's more than a game. The way they play puts them and their families at financial and emotional risk.

If someone you know is playing out of control, call the Problem Gambling Help Line:

1-877-2-STOP-NOW

Licensed treatment providers are there to listen, help and make referrals to local treatment centers 24 hours a day.

Or log on to www.oregonlotteryhelp.org for:

- Warning Signs
- Treatment Centers
- How to Get Help
- Reaching Out

TREATMENT IS FREE, CONFIDENTIAL AND IT WORKS.