

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### Nonpartisan seats are important, too

Superintendent of Public Instruction Stan Bunn has set a dismally bad example for both students and government officials. He is well-educated, with degrees in economics and law; he has considerable experience in government, but he has blatantly abused state policy regarding personal use of phones and vehicles—and now whines about how unfairly the state ethics commission is treating him. He made no reimbursement for personal use of state property until his behavior was made public; he is still trying to blame somebody else, anybody else, for his actions. Stan Bunn does not understand personal responsibility and should not be re-elected.

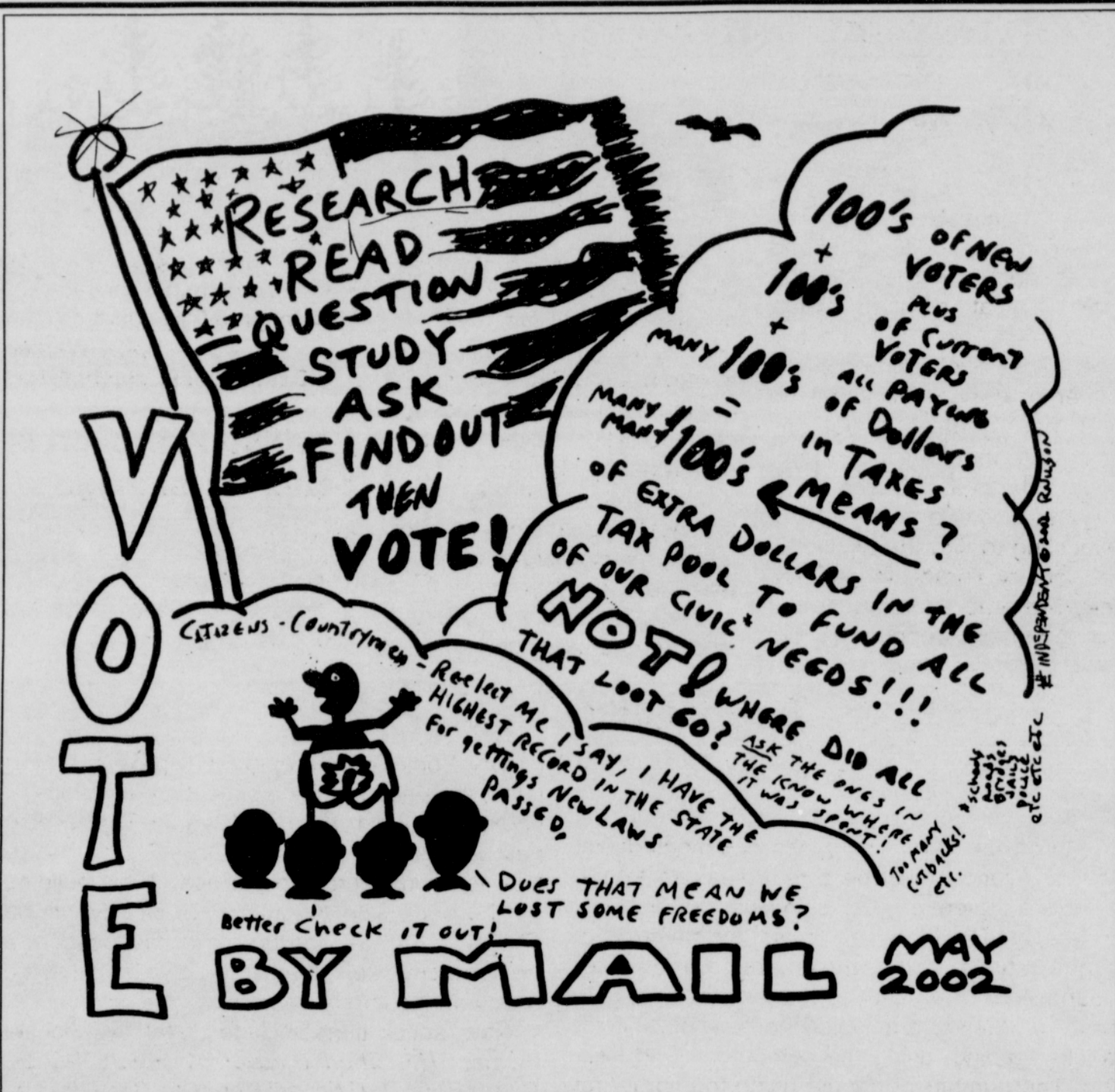
There are two other candidates for Superintendent of Public Education – Susan Castillo and Rob Kremer – both of whom have good credentials and a background of support for education. So how does the average person pick one (NOT on the basis of television and radio commercials!). Endorsements are one important area, and Susan Castillo has impressive endorsements from people in both major parties, plus endorsements from both labor and administrative organizations. Kremer includes only three endorsements in the voters pamphlet, two people from the same political party and one ESD chairperson, which indicates a lack of broad-based endorsements.

The Superintendent of Education needs to have acceptance from all areas of the public. For this reason, we recommend Susan Castillo.

There has been a lot of noise on the airwaves about the Judge of the Court of Appeals. The incumbent, David Schuman, is eminently qualified. He has been both prosecutor and defender, was associate dean at the U of O law school, and has endorsements that cut across political philosophy.

His challenger, David Hunnicutt, has extensive experience in land use law and, as attorney for Oregonians In Action, has been working hard to destroy the practices that have made Oregon so desirable. That may be great from a "Let us make more money" point of view, but it sure won't save farm land.

David Schuman is a good choice for re-election to the Court of Appeals.



### More Opinion Measure 13

Ever since Measure 5 in the early 1990s, when voters passed control of school funding over to Salem, it has become more difficult for public schools to plan for the future. It's even difficult to plan for next year.

With subsequent voter-approved reductions in property taxes, school funding must rely on income taxes—along with everything else in the general fund. Now the recession has reduced income taxes, so the legislature, which is filled with people who were elected because they promised to support education, chose to cut school support rather than increase taxes on anything else, even tobacco and alcohol.

Kids can't vote; smokers can. Instead, the legislature decided to raid an education endowment fund for \$220 million. Is there anything wrong with that? In this case, yes.

It is bad fiscal policy to deplete a fund that was just begun. The only way that fund will ever do what is intended is if it is allowed to grow large enough to earn adequate interest.

Measure 13 also requires a super-ma-

majority of the legislature in order to spend the money for education, which means that a minority of lawmakers can block education funding.

Perhaps the worst element of Measure 13, however, is that its proponents tout it as support for education without mentioning that they have not provided anything at all for the next biennium, when the financial crunch will hit the state even harder. This is like blowing your last \$100 on a fancy meal when you know there is no more meal money.

Do the schools need the \$220 million? Yes. Is this good fiscal policy? No. It would be better for the legislature to deal honestly with the economy, instead of pretending that \$220 million will solve the problem. Long term stability is needed, not one last meal.

Measure 13 will harm education in the long run. It is better to vote NO and force our reluctant legislature to start doing the job they promised to do and were elected to do — support education.

The Independent endorses Republican Ron Saxton and Democrat Beverly Stein for their party gubernatorial nominations.