May 30, 2012
Members of the Oregon Education Investment Board,

Oregonians anxiously await the new C.E.O. Since Oregon's Department of Education[1] and public schools are facing a "funding cliff," we need someone like Rudy Crew[2] who has "been there and tried it" in the poorest school districts in the nation!

Advice from this 2005 Lumina funded report[3] is applicable today. "(T)ake advantage of opportunities budget crises sometimes bring. In an era of deregulation and accountability (performance oriented budgeting) boards can gain control by 'replacing rigid line-item budgets with block funds... and carryover budget authority…"

All taxpayers know that education budgets are bloated.[4] The Beaverton School District is a model for appropriate action. Trim labor costs.[5] Just do it! 344 jobs.[6] Woosh![7]

But the BSD is not just eliminating jobs. They are innovating and creating efficiencies. With 5 years of Nike coaching "two critical leadership projects[8]" in Beaverton, the Nike Innovation Fund website boasts "more stories like this" including *Confession of a cheating teacher* and *Is the classroom obsolete*?

An excerpt from the latter[9]:

> Each student "constructs" knowledge based on his or her own past experiences. Because of this, the research demands a **personalized education model** to maximize individual student achievement. Classrooms, on the other hand, are based on the erroneous assumption that efficient delivery of content is the same as effective learning.

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[1] http://tinyurl.com/7taxbsy p.3
[2] http://susanohanian.org/atrocity_fetch.php?id=2427
[3] Recession, Retrenchment and Recovery: State Higher Education Funding & Student Financial Aid http://tinyurl.com/8ya259j p.18
[4] Beaverton's 2012-13 budget totals $465,196,582 for all funds; the general fund budget totals $302,580,062. http://www.beaverton.k12.or.us/pdf/bus_off/bus_off_2012-13%20Proposed%20Budget%20Document.pdf
[5] Examples: schedule counselors into a teaching rotation; reduce high school Campus Monitors; increase caseload for speech pathologists, school psychologists, Autism Spectrum Disorder specialists, Adaptive Physical Education teachers. P.E. on alternating days in elementary school.
[6] http://www.oregonlive.com/beaverton/index.ssf/2012/05/beaverton_school_district_budg_5.html
[7] Not to be confused with the trademarked Nike swoosh; Used to denote when a comment has gone over someone's head. Onomatopoetic to the sound of an object moving past you at an accelerated pace. http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=woosh
[8] Aspiring Administrator Program and Standards-Based Learning System for Grades 6-12. In 2012, the BSD contributed $849,386 to the $674,389 contribution by Nike. http://nikeschoolinnovationfund.org/2012/02/beaverton-school-district-receives-support-for-leadership-programs/

[9] http://nikeschoolinnovationfund.org/2011/08/is-the-classroom-obsolete/

In his 2011 State of the Union speech, President Obama said ""We need to out-innovate, outeducate and outbuild the rest of the world."

Can we do that in today's classroom?

Good question! Indeed, Beaverton's $37 million shortfall leverages schools to transform to a 21st Century Knowledge Economy.[10] Consolidation, conformity and technology are essential.

- All middle schools will use a common instructional schedule. High school principals will work together to identify elective courses that could be more efficiently offered at a single campus.
- Eliminate certified media specialists and replace with classified technology assistants to assist and supervise students in the computer lab; an I.T. Administrator provides guidance and support.
- A more robust portal that will let parents change information anywhere and anytime. In addition to the greater convenience for parents, this feature will save office staff data entry and processing time. A student portal will provide students information about homework and assignments all in one place.
- Implementation of the EduPoint Synergy[11] student information system will allow parents and students access to student information and provide a collaboration platform that helps parents, students, teachers and administrators work together for student success.

Public education is too big to fail. There *should* be NO EXCUSES when outcomes are on the line!

Where better place to look than Western Governors University? Lauded by USED Secretary Arne Duncan,[12] WGU is an inspiring model of reform. A 21st Century Best Practices Award Winner[13] two consecutive years, it even has online teacher licensure degree programs.[14]

As a school without teachers, classrooms, or its own courses, Western Governors University takes a novel and unusual approach to education...[15] So why is it a *"challenge for the university to gain*

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[10] http://www.beaverton.k12.or.us/home/departments/community-involvement/news/2012-2013-budget-information/

[11] http://www.edupoint.com/Portals/0/PR_OSIS_2.27.12.pdf

[12] http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/30/education/duncan-calls-for-urgency-in-lowering-college-costs.html?_r=3

[13] From the United States Distance Learning Association for Best Practices in Distance Learning. http://www.wgu.edu/about_WGU/WGU_receives_USDLA_award_5-1-12

[14] http://www.wgu.edu/degrees_and_programs

[15] http://www.wgu.edu/about_WGU/1-07_career_education_review.pdf *The School's faculty members do not teach courses. The university acquires the rights for its students to use online courses from other colleges or universities and companies that have created independent learning tools such as Thompson, NETg, Pearson and McGraw-Hill... We want businesses to define the competencies they expect, and in many cases aren't getting from college graduates," Mendenhall said. "We have 23 major corporations as significant partners, financially and educationally.*

acceptance for its courses from school districts that base teachers' raises on seat time or credits towards master's degrees"?

These are just the kinds of teachers needed in the classrooms of the 21st Century knowledge economy! Streamed education using a common instructional schedule and taught by instructional coaches, using these teachers as aids. Beaverton's 2005 local option levy money[16] funded math and literacy coaches who participated in University of Kansas research.[17] Certainly coaches can expand beyond the role of embedded professional development to share their best practices throughout the state!

Imagine the options. Rather than bricks and mortar, a student can learn from the comforts of home, with a "Voucher for laptop" initiative! Free education through Kahn Academy[18] and a cornucopia of apps[19] to **personalize education!** What's more, districts would decrease costs for buses and bonds.

How green are the pastures of the 21st Century Knowledge Economy!

Kris Alman

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[16] *In 2003-04 the general fund ending fund balance grew to over $40 million due to a local option levy approved by voters. The District has purposefully spent down the fund balance to support improvement to the instructional core through the use of literacy coaches and embedded professional development through the Professional Learning Community (PLC) district-wide strategy* http://tinyurl.com/7bfpmy5 p. 29

[17] *Despite serious financial difficulties, the Beaverton, Ore., school district renewed its commitment to this project and to instructional coaching. "It's a testament to the power of coaching that they're going to keep it even though they're really struggling financially in the district," Knight says*. http://www.kucrl.org/profiles/single/teacher-quality/P2

[18] http://www.khanacademy.org/

[19] http://www.apple.com/education/apps/