Received via email – 6/15/12

Dear members of the Oregon Education Investment Board,

In his May 1st memo to you regarding "Project Underway and Questions for Discussion," Tim Nesbitt posed a number of questions to you. Among them was question #3a: "What are the other features of a P-20 system that we have yet to address?"

There are two significant features which have been overlooked. Both are megatrends shaping our lives in many ways: globalization and digitalization. Neither is reflected in your Board efforts to date. Both are reshaping all categories of businesses, and both should, with your guidance, reshape education in Oregon.

Globalization is the increasing interaction between people, cultures, and businesses around the world. In practical terms, it means Oregon's economic future will increasingly depend upon the abilities of our next generations to sell Oregon goods and services globally. The current Oregon educational system is not preparing students for these tasks. In particular, foreign language skills, especially in strategic languages like Mandarin, need to be strengthened. This is best done through immersion programs that begin in preschool or kindergarten. Utah, for example, has been rapidly expanding immersion programs statewide in six strategic languages. They will soon reach their goal of 100 new immersion schools. Rapid expansion of immersion programs should be one of your tasks. It has enormous implications for the training, credentialing, and hiring of future teachers.

Additionally, many more Oregonian students, both high school and higher education, should study abroad. It need cost no more to send a high school student abroad for a year of high school to one of our future strategic trading partners than the annual cost in a local school district in Oregon. Again, one of your tasks should be to shift some public funding to create and develop such study abroad programs.

Digitalization is, of course, putting information in electronic forms and moving it about. In education, it is the online learning or education revolution. It is a disruptive technology that will reshape all of public education, preschool through higher education. Oregon is behind in using these newer technologies to improve learning, to increase learning opportunities, and to cut costs. You as a Board cannot get Oregon to the goals you have set without immersing yourselves in the

emerging potentials of online learning. One of your tasks is figuring out how to do that. You cannot avoid it and do anything meaningful.

So, in response to question #3a, I urge you as a Board to address the features of foreign language learning (and study abroad) and online learning in reshaping the P-20 education system in Oregon.

Sincerely,

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PS – I've put this email online at http://daveporter.typepad.com/global_strategies/2012/05/oeib-question-what-are-the-other-features-of-a-p-20-system-that-we-have-yet-to-address.html.