

October 16, 2008

09-030

RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO INITIATIVE
MEASURE 58

PREPARED BY: Denise Frisbee, Chair, Portland Community College
Board of Directors

REPORT: The Portland Community College Board of Directors
opposes passage of Measure 58, which would prescribe
the way that teachers teach English to speakers of other
languages.

Analysis:

1. Measure 58 does not accommodate children with special language or learning needs.
2. Similar laws were passed in California in 1998, in Arizona in 2000 and in Massachusetts in 2002. In none of those cases did academic outcomes improve.
3. Research in the field of pedagogy do not back the contention that limiting education in a student's first language is efficacious.
4. The measure does not specify how the system would work, who qualifies for the program and how it would be implemented.
5. The measure would have a fiscal impact on public schools, which already are under-funded.
6. Measure 58 was written by Bill Sizemore, who has not been trained in pedagogy.

Findings:

1. Classroom teachers, administrators and elected school board members are better situated to know which classroom activities are "best practices."
2. Oregon's 197 public school districts already provide opportunity for parents to provide input on classroom practices.
3. English-only mandates in other states have not improved academic outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION: The Portland Community College Board of Directors urges all students and community members to become fully informed regarding Measure 58, and to carefully consider the negative consequences for students throughout Oregon.

This resolution was prepared and distributed with non-public money.

Note: This resolution was brought to the Board of Directors by Director Frisbee at the Board meeting.

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