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TO: Oregon County Commissioners
From: Board of Directors
Association of Oregon Counties
RE: Participation in Back to School Week,
April 28 – May 2, 2003!
DATE: February 15, 2003

At a recent meeting, our board enthusiastically endorsed **Back to School Week!** – a week in the spring when schools open their doors to invite their community in for a visit. The fourth annual **Back to School Week, April 28 – May 2, 2003** is sponsored by the Statewide Organization for Schools (SOS) with a goal of strengthening the connection between schools and communities.

During the last decade, Oregon voters have been asked repeatedly to make decisions on issues relating to schools and education. **Yet three out of four Oregon adults have no children in school and no opportunity to know what goes on in Oregon schools.** *Schools are different today* and **Back to School Week** is a chance for the three out of four Oregon adults who do not have kids in school to see for themselves the successes and challenges of today's schools.

In endorsing **Back to School Week**, we join with the Oregon League of Cities, Oregon League of Women Voters, Oregon Mayors Association, Oregon Business Council, Oregon School Board Association, and others in building a stronger connection between schools and communities. But we are asking you to do more than join in our endorsement. We are asking you to participate. Here's how:

- Plan to hold an April/May meeting in a neighborhood school. Contact a school superintendent, principal, or school board member and schedule a meeting at school during **BTSW 2003**. The principal, students and/or teachers at the school can prepare a brief presentation to give Commissioners the opportunity to see for themselves the exciting things going on in public schools today.
- Write a letter to the editor of the local newspapers encouraging community members to participate in **Back to School Week**. Or, write a letter letting members of your community know what you learned from your visit.

Enclosed is the Back to School Week brochure that gives you an idea of the rewards of participation. Let's join Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Clubs, and other elected officials in going *back to school!*

If you need help making contact with schools in your community, or would like more information, contact Statewide Organization for Schools: (503) 228-3465, or email: sos@sosoregon.org

739 schools in 156 Oregon communities took part in Back to School Week since 2000.

"One member said this was the best meeting we've ever had. Great to get older people back-to-school!"
Charles Ross
Columbia View Kiwanis

"I was delighted to attend four different classes and have lunch in Ontario Middle School."
State Representative Tom Butler
Ontario

"It was back to school for a number of adults two weeks ago when they were invited to visit the Creswell schools... a chance to walk the halls again, hear the bells and banging lockers and sample that lunchroom fare."
Creswell Chronicle
May 8, 2002

"Extremely positive experience! Brought 50 influential adults from the community into the high school."
Robert Ball
Cottage Grove Rotary Club

"The joint Kiwanis and Key Club luncheon worked well."

"The majority of adult Oregonians won't set foot inside school during the next year. However, they vote on bond measures, initiatives and political candidates who shape our schools. That is why Back to School Week, thoughtfully promoted by the Statewide Organization for Schools, is worthy of your time."
Salem Statesman-Journal
July 21, 2001

"To help strengthen the connection between schools and communities... local schools are opening their doors to the community."
Lakeview Examiner

"Our May Day breakfast had about 230 people ... Legislators and Mayors attended."
Linda Clem
Coos Bay Schools

"I went to the Elkton grade school and read to the kindergarten class. It was the best day of the month for me."
State Representative Jeff Kruse
Roseburg

Join us for Back to School Week 2003, April 28-May 2.