OREGON LEARNS

Report to the Legislature from the Oregon Education Investment Board

December 2011

Acknowledgements and Outreach

The Oregon Legislature established the Oregon Education Investment Board by passing Senate Bill 909 in June 2011, "for the purpose of ensuring that all public school students in this state reach the education outcomes established for the state. The board shall accomplish this goal by overseeing a unified public education system that begins with early childhood services and continues throughout public education from kindergarten to post-secondary education."

Members were formally confirmed by the Oregon Senate in November. The short timeline since then understates the many months and the broad participation that went into the creation of this plan and report.
Precursors to the formal OEIB include:

- *The Oregon Education Investment Team, created by executive order, which met from February to September of 2011.*
- *The Early Learning Design Team, which met from March through June 2011,*
- *The Education Budget Design Team, which met from April to August 2011, and*
- *The Senate Bill 909 Work Group, including the nominees to the OEIB, which met from September through November prior to confirmation.*

Each of those groups met publicly, and materials and reports from their efforts are posted on the Governor's Office website.

Extensive outreach by the Governor, members of the OEIB and Early Learning Council, and the Governor's Office staff has taken them to communities across Oregon, where they have heard from teachers, professors and educators at every level, visited schools, daycare centers and colleges and met with members of statewide organizations. News coverage in dozens of papers has highlighted the issues, and a survey on K-12 student achievement and accountability has attracted 6,000 responses. Public testimony has been a featured part of the OEIB meetings, which are all streamed live on the web, with video posted later. (See Appendix # for a summary of community engagement and communications efforts.)

Outreach will continue in December and January, with targeted engagement of communities around the waiver application for flexibility under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and with community meetings around the achievement compacts and education investment strategies.

This engagement has underscored the necessity of staging our work — laying out a thoughtful and deliberate integration of our educational institutions into one coordinated public education system. This report presents the first phase of our plan — with legislative action proposed for the February 2012 session -- and outlines the next phase, which will be brought to the Legislature in 2013 for full implementation in the following biennium.

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The Oregon Education Investment Board

Under Senate Bill 909, Governor John Kitzhaber chairs the Oregon Education Investment Board. The 12 additional members, nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the Oregon Senate on November 18, are:

Richard C. "Dick" Alexander, Bank Board Chair of Capital Pacific Bank, entrepreneur, Board member of the Children's Institute, and leader in the Ready for School campaign to ensure early childhood success

Julia Brim-Edwards, Director for U.S. states/global strategy for NIKE, Inc., Government and Public Affairs, Co-Founder of the NIKE School Innovation Fund, and former Co-Chair of the Portland School Board

Dr. Consuelo Yvonne Curtis, Superintendent of Forest Grove School District and former member of Oregon Quality Education Commission for eight years

Matthew W. Donegan, Co-President of Forest Capital Partners and President of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education

Dr. Samuel D. Henry, professor at Portland State University, former Chair of the Oregon Commission on Children and Families, and member of the Oregon Board of Education

Nichole Maher, Executive Director of the Native American Youth and Family Center in Portland and Co-Chair of the Communities of Color Coalition

Dr. Mark Mulvihill, Superintendent of InterMountain Education Service District in Pendleton and member of the Oregon Quality Education Commission and the Vision and Policy Superintendent Task Force

David Rives, President of the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon and teacher of English to speakers of other languages at Portland Community College

Ron Saxton, Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer of JELD-WEN Inc., and former Chair of the Portland School Board

Dr. Mary Spilde, President of Lane Community College and Co-Chair of the Post-Secondary Quality Education Commission

Kay D. Toran, President and Chief Executive Officer of Volunteers of America - Oregon and Board member of the Oregon Community Foundation, University of Portland, and Chalkboard Project

Johanna "Hanna" Vaandering, Vice President Oregon Education Association, Elementary Physical Education teacher, and Chair of the OEA Foundation

Nancy Golden, Superintendent of Springfield Public Schools, serves as chair in the Governor's absence.

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1. The Challenge and Our Goal

"Oregon has got to do better to keep up with our changing world. We want employers to know they can locate and grow in Oregon, and find highly skilled productive employees right here in our state. We want Oregon graduates to be ready to contribute to our state and to our economy, and we want them to feel confident that they are on the path to those careers that produce family wage jobs. And we envision an Oregon where our per capita income is driven back up above the national average, in every part of our state, urban and rural, and where we have erased the income disparity within our communities of color…We will not get there if we hold tight to the status quo, set our sights low and continue to let school funding be the only statewide education debate that matters. The path forward in this new century requires innovation, requires the willingness to challenge assumptions, requires the courage to change."

-- Governor Kitzhaber, Springfield State of the Schools speech, Sept. 6, 2011

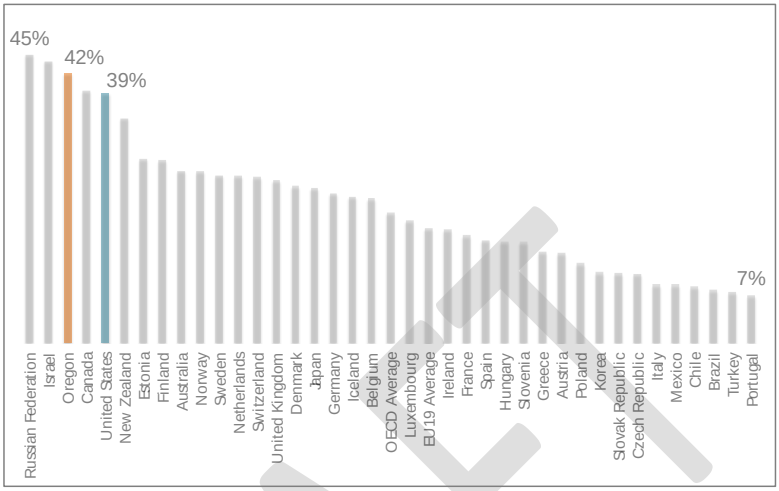
An urgent challenge

Never has education been more important to the lives and fortunes of Oregonians and our communities. Education cements shared values, enriches our culture, and expands the personal horizons of individuals. It advances family life, civic stability, and democratic ideals. And as knowledge and innovation become the prime capital in our global economy, education increasingly determines the fortunes of individuals, communities, and nations. To revitalize our Oregon economy, our workforce needs higher levels of knowledge and skills than ever before.

Yet Oregon is falling behind.

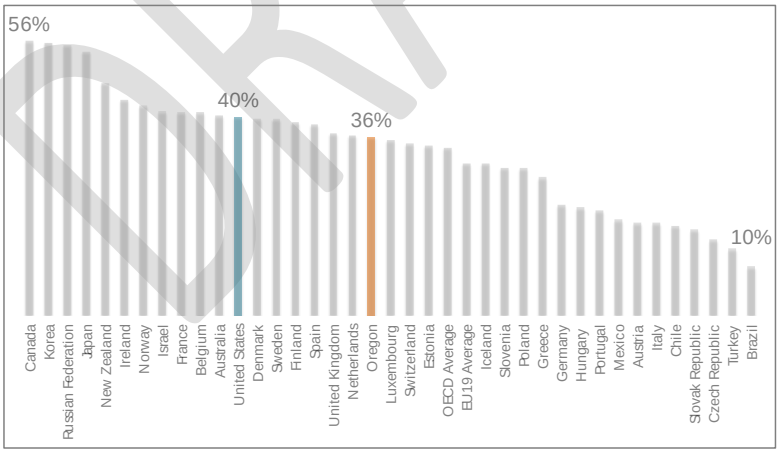
Our current generation of young adults — ages 25-34 — are less educated than their parent's generation, with fewer earning a certificate or degree beyond high school. In addition to being less educated than older Oregonians, they are less educated than the national average and are falling behind compared to other countries (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1. Percentage of 55- to 64-Year-Olds with an Associate's Degree or Higher, 2007



Source: OECD

Figure 2. Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate's Degree or Higher, 2007



Source: OECD

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The 2011 Oregon Legislature faced this challenge head on, passing the most ambitious package of education reforms in 20 years. In Senate Bill 909, the Legislature called for the creation of a seamless system of public education — from preschool through graduate school — overseen by the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB) and a Chief Education Officer.

And in Senate Bill 253, the Legislature raised the bar for educational attainment in Oregon. The goal: By 2025, every Oregon student, 100 percent, must earn a high school diploma –one that represents a high level of knowledge and skills. And 80 percent must continue their education beyond high school — with half of those earning associate's degrees or professional or technical certificates, and half achieving a bachelor's degree or more. This is often referred to as the 40/40/20 goal.

To reach that goal, we must have the courage to change.

The high school graduates of 2025 start kindergarten next September; the college graduates of 2025 are already several years into their elementary education. Improving Oregon's educational achievement starts with them, and there is no time to waste.

By most measures, student achievement in Oregon has been stagnant. Oregon students' performance is basically flat, both on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and on our own Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS).

Comment [s1]: CHART: NAEP AND OAKS scores . . . on a facing page? somewhere?

But if you look closely, there are signs of innovation at work and hard-won student gains across the state. At every level, educational leaders and teachers are challenging the status quo and shifting their funding to deliver services, programs, and efforts that do better for our learners:

- In early childhood services, Oregon increased the number of young children in the early Head Start program by 11 percent in the last year alone.
- In our public schools, many districts have greatly increased their investment in practices such as early intervention, full-day kindergarten, and support for high school students to graduate and go on to college.
- In higher education, our community colleges and universities,are increasingly investing in partnerships with high schools to offer dual credit, to provide first-in-their-family students with college opportunities, and to retain students through to graduation.

Comment [t2]: SIDEBAR: University of Oregon first-year students are all assigned to a faculty advisor and are also encouraged to work with professional advisors in the Offices of Academic Advising (OAA) and Multicultural Academic Success (OMAS), or, if eligible, advisors associated with specialized programs such as Pathway Oregon, McNair Scholars, TRiO, Undergraduate Support, Disability Services, and intercollegiate athletics. The UO has a faculty-mandated advising policy that requires all entering students to meet with an advisor prior to registration. The policy is strictly enforced and advising is part of the orientation program that proceeds each term. In addition, advising is offered year-round by academic departments and by the programs listed above.

We have islands of excellence throughout our public education system — now we need to create a culture of excellence across the system.

This report summarizes where we are today and how much of a stretch it will be to reach the state's educational goals. It identifies critical elements and strategies, and proposes decisions for the Legislature to consider in 2012. It describes

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excellent educational practices in place today — ones ripe for replication — and proposes new ideas for improving student success in the future. And it outlines the next steps that will allow the state to invest in better outcomes for learners. We are committed to creating a true system of public education, one that sets Oregon's students and communities on track to achieve the ambitious, yet critical, goals we have set for ourselves.

The Long-Term Goal

Oregon intends to become one of the best-educated citizenries in the world. The Oregon Legislature has set an ambitious goal to ensure that by 2025:

- 40 percent of adult Oregonians have earned a bachelor's degree or higher;
- 40 percent of adult Oregonians have earned an associate's degree or postsecondary credential as their highest level of educational attainment; and
- 20 percent of all adult Oregonians have earned at least a high school diploma, an extended or modified high school diploma, or the equivalent of a high school diploma as their highest level of educational attainment.

Why aim so high? Oregon's economy is shifting. We see dwindling numbers of well-paid jobs that require only a high school diploma — the millwork or manufacturing jobs of the past — and new jobs in this information age that increasingly demand post-secondary education. The shift in our Oregon economy is happening quickly: Two-thirds of all jobs in Oregon by 2020 will require a career certificate or college degree, a proportion that is only going to accelerate by 2025. Students emerging into this market need skills and education to compete,

Today, Oregonians with associate's degrees earn at least $5,000 per year more than those with high school diplomas, and those with bachelor's degrees earn $17,000 per year more. Over the next decade, 61 percent of all Oregon jobs will require a technical certificate/associate degree or higher level of education. And for Oregonians who strive for "family wage" jobs that pay more than $18 per hour, 89 percent of those jobs will require a technical certificate/associate degree of higher level of education.

Employment rates in this difficult economy shine another light on the need for higher education: the national unemployment rate for adults with a college degree is 4.4 percent — half that of those with only a high school diploma, and one-third of the 13.2 percent unemployment rate for high school dropouts.

Comment [s3]: SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment status of the civilian population 25 years and over by educational attainment," December 2, 2011. http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t04.htm

But education is not just about improving one's income or job security. Higher levels of education are associated with better health, longer lives, greater family stability, less need for social services, lower likelihood of involvement with the criminal justice system and increased civic participation. All are benefits that

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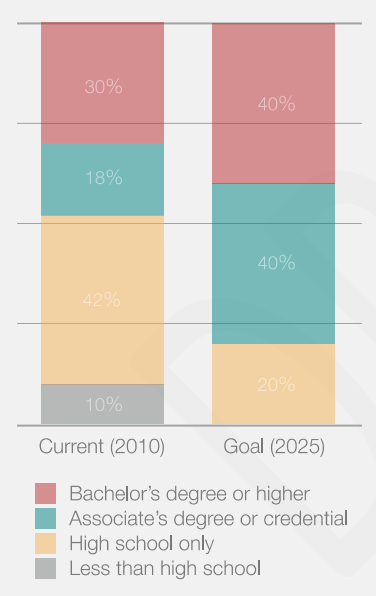
accrue not only to the educated individual and his or her family, but that help support healthy, thriving communities across Oregon.

So we have a goal. Now we need to set a course to meet it. Oregon needs to substantially improve student success rates and performance among our own students — in-migration of better-educated adults from other states is not going to meet our goal. This will require a thoroughgoing system transformation that highlights student success and progress from earliest learning to entry into workforce and career. The needed transformation has been set in motion through the creation of the OEIB, which is charged with ensuring that educational dollars are distributed to programs and practices where they have the most impact on student success.

Figure 3. Educational Attainment of Working-Age Population in Oregon (ages 25-64)



To shrink from the challenge at hand is to accept that Oregonians will continue to fall farther behind and earn less than their fellow citizens. Right now, Oregonians as a whole are not sufficiently well educated: about 30 percent of working-age adults report that they have completed a bachelor's degree or more, 18 percent have an associate's degree or postsecondary certificate, 42 percent have only a high school diploma, and 10 percent have not completed a high school level program[1] (see Figure 3).

There are pockets of our state where far fewer Oregonians have high school degrees, and areas where our lack of progress is masked by better-educated new arrivals from other states.

Projecting current rates of enrollment and degree completion into the future, and holding all else equal, attainment rates will likely remain relatively flat between now and 2025. In short, native Oregonians with lower incomes and more educational needs than earlier generations could put downward pressure on attainment rates and offset the gains expected through the arrival of educated in-migrants.

So, absent a significant change in policy and investment, Oregon is headed for 30/18/42 (with at least 10 percent dropouts) rather than 40/40/20.

What It Will Take

According to the language of Senate Bill 253, by 2025 all adult Oregonians should hold degrees, certificates, and diplomas in the proportions stated. A rigid interpretation of this goal would imply a massive effort in adult education. We would have to push even older adults, perhaps at the ends of their working

careers, into retraining, whether or not that benefited them or the state. We also would have to be concerned with whether newly arrived Oregonians met our goals for educational attainment. That rigid interpretation would apply the letter, but not the spirit, of the law.

Attention to working age adults, especially those who need retraining to find work and progress in their jobs, must be part of our educational goals. But our initial focus must be on the educational success of our students in Oregon now — those in the education "pipeline." Thus, a more realistic and modest,but still substantially ambitious — approach is to ensure that the educational system is graduating young adults at the stated levels by 2025.

Achieving this goal will challenge the will and capacity of our education systems. It will require the kind of commitment and investment that Oregon made in the 1950s and 1960s, when it dramatically increased the number of students in our university system and developed the community college system. And while strengthening the pipeline for young learners, we can and should expand adult education initiatives that are closely tied to economic development and workforce needs.

If by 2025 the state can tell the nation and the world that at least 40 percent of the emergent adult population has a university education, another 40 percent has a degree or credential that links to good jobs, and all have earned a meaningful high school diploma, Oregon will have done everything a state can do on the supply side of economic and social development.

To reach 40/40/20 for young adults by 2025, the state must drive its high school dropout rate as close to zero as possible. The first step here is defining the problem by reconciling the difference between what the system tells us about high school graduation rates versus what young adults report in the Census data.

Graduation rates are a relatively new and still-muddled statistic, and Oregon, like most states, only adopted a true measurement a few years ago. Our "cohort" graduation rate tells us what percentage of students who entered our high schools — as freshman or as later arrivals — graduated. We know that more than one quarter (26 percent) of students don't graduate within five years. Some may well earn their diploma or GED later in life, in their 20s or beyond, (This could explain part of the gap between 74 percent and the self-reported rate of 87 percent in the Census.) But we also know that staying in high school through to graduation — no matter how long it takes — gives a student far better odds of eventual success than dropping out and trying to catch up later.

To improve our graduation rates, we need to do important work at the district and school level—identifying which schools are beating the odds, which aren't, and why. Middle and high schools will have to be more rigorous about predicting the likelihood of dropping out on a student-by-student basis and understanding which conditions—inside and outside the school—raise the odds of graduation. Many

Comment [t4]: SIDEBAR: Beyond Lebanon High School is a dual-enrollment partnership between Lebanon High School and Linn-Benton Community College. Now in its seventh year, Beyond LHS enrolls about 170 Lebanon students each year at Linn-Benton, where they earn high school and college credits simultaneously. Many of the students are non-traditional home-school students; a few are returning drop-outs. A coordinating counselor works with students "one at a time" to ensure they have education plans to suit their individual needs. Lebanon High also offers students the opportunity to earn an "expanded high school diploma." This program allows students to bypass Oregon's standard high school graduation requirement of 24 credits and enroll at LBCC. Students earn the "expanded diploma" after earning 37 credits (13 over the standard 24) while simultaneously earning credits toward a college degree. About 80 students take advantage of the program each year. A high school counselor describes them as students ready to "step outside the four-year box."

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students signal an intention to drop out well before they formally leave school. Chronic absenteeism—missing more than 10 percent of the school year—is one way they do that. Chronic absence rates start to pick up after elementary school and rise gradually into high school. Districts and schools need to monitor this early indicator, pinpoint why some students lose the motivation to learn, and offer the support to help them get back on track.

A recent study isolating the factors that make a difference in school effectiveness suggests that it boils down to five fundamentals: frequent teacher feedback, data-guided instruction, frequent tutoring and counseling, increased instructional time, and high expectations.[2] And decades of research widely confirm that early investments are key to later educational success. Investing early and focusing on the basics should go a long way toward improving graduation rates in Oregon.

Comment [t5]: SIDEBAR: The Tigard-Tualatin School District is one of Oregon's lead districts in the successful implementation of the Response to Intervention program. Under RTI, Tigard-Tualatin provides early, effective assistance to children having difficulty learning to ensure that every student has mastered basic reading skills by the end of second grade. Tigard-Tualatin screens all students to identify struggling readers, and then seeks to prevent academic failure through early intervention, frequent progress measurement, and increasingly intensive researched-based instructional interventions for children who continue to struggle. Since 2006 Tigard-Tualatin has raised student performance on OAKS reading tests at all grade levels, and has reduced its racial achievement gap by 36%.

Once students graduate from high school, many more of them need to enroll in college. By one estimate, Oregon ranks 47th among states in the share of high school graduates who head to college.[3] If 80 percent of students are going to attain a postsecondary degree, almost all young students will have to aspire to postsecondary education. Today about half of students do. Oregon will have to tackle this "aspiration gap."

One aspect of this challenge is that many of the new generation of students come from families with no college-going experiences. Oregon must work on this from all fronts. First, the state should work toward a wider definition of what achievement means, getting beyond the minimal standards on reading and math. Those are gateway skills, to be sure. But Oregon should reach beyond the gate to see the wider path to a range of knowledge and skills that line up with differentiated interests and aptitudes of learners. College readiness extends well beyond content knowledge. Some students may fare reasonably well on standardized tests but lack academic habits — a mix of skill and discipline — that they need to survive in a less supervised college environment. Conducting a comprehensive school-by-school diagnosis of college readiness will be an important first step to understanding how to make progress in college enrollment and persistence.

Second, the state must be more strategic in instilling a college-going culture. If we expect 80 percent of young adults to move beyond the high school diploma, the postsecondary conversation will have to start early. Savings accounts issued at birth, college pennants in elementary schools, need- based aid agreements that start in middle school, targeted financial aid counseling, and pervasive exposure to college coursework in secondary schools could be powerful ways to increase attainment rates.

Boosting enrollment is a multi-faceted challenge that requires setting tuition within reach of all high school graduates and persuading a much larger share of learners that a postsecondary degree brings returns in the job market. State and local support of institutions is squeezed in lean times, and boards typically respond by

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raising tuition. Only by linking and integrating tuition flexibility within a clear state policy on affordability can we make sure that increases in tuition get matched by increases in aid to protect those least able to afford higher education.

And college retention rates must improve. The work of the Postsecondary Quality Education Commission (PSQEC) indicates the first and most important step to boost overall degree production is retention and completion of those who do start college.

To reach 40/40/20, we need to double the number of students who receive associate's degress and postsecondary certificates. But first, we must define them. Current data do not supply a reliable count of Oregonians with certificates or credentials. Community colleges report that they are awarding about 5,000 certificates per year, but some of those go to learners who have associate's or bachelor's degrees, and some people earn more than one certificate. The Census does not track certificates, and the one survey in Oregon that asked about certificates was discontinued in 2008. Not only do we not know how many people have certificates today, we also don't know how many certificates are issued by entities other than community colleges, or which types of certificates would or should count toward the 40/40/20 goal.

Nationally and in Oregon, a little more than one quarter of associate's degree-seeking students earn a degree within three years. While statistics are debated at this level, few argue with the fact that far too many students are enrolled with no clear educational goal in mind. A significant share of Oregonians (27 percent by one measure[4]) have completed some college but did not earn a certificate or degree. Depending on the credits or coursework they have completed, the state might offer those individuals a way to apply for and receive a certificate or degree that matches the work completed, or to earn additional credits to take them the final step toward graduation.

Finally, Oregon needs to generate a third more bachelor's degrees by 2025. Universities are on their way to achieve this ambitious goal, but they face several challenges: offering classroom space and teaching staff to keep up with growing enrollment demand, improving affordability as state funding shrinks, and serving the rapidly growing population of students from low-income and minority families and families with no college-going experience. Improving the retention and eventual success of college students would decrease costs to students and the state and make better use of existing investments in facilities. (Students who leave without graduating spend their own money and the state's resources without yielding a degree.) Expansion of online learning offers great potential in this regard. And success at lower levels of education—so that students are truly prepared for college --will greatly help the universities meet their goals.

Overall, the state will need both more educational capacity and better performance of the capacity it has.

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Outcomes

Achieving the 40/40/20goal will require a strong effort by learners, parents, educators, and local communities to improve educational outcomes at every stage of the continuum. This is not just a challenge for our students, our high schools, or our colleges — it is a challenge for the entire community. We need to set a course that motivates students to pursue their own education with dedication and persistence. We need to engage families in their children's education, and community organizations and employers in supporting educational institutions and their learners. Our preschools, public schools, community colleges, and universities must reach out and help bridge the gaps for students, helping them along a seamless pathway to their success.

We must work together to support all Oregonians in achieving key state-level outcomes:

- All Oregon children enter kindergarten ready for school
- All Oregonians move along the learning pathway at their best pace to success
- All Oregonians graduate from high school and are college and career ready
- All Oregonians who pursue education beyond high school achieve a degree or certificate and are ready to contribute to Oregon's economy

These outcomes will drive necessary changes in policy and investment and will shape the state's 10-year plan for education. But they also need to work at multiple levels — allowing individual learners to gauge their own progress, helping schools or colleges to judge their own teaching success, galvanizing communities around key outcomes, and challenging school districts or university systems to appraise their own performance and recalibrate their efforts.

Challenges

Oregon's youngest children—the next generation who will be entering our public schools—face greater challenges to their learning than in the past:

- More than one in five (21 percent) of Oregonians under six years old live in poverty. Among African-American children, 40 percent live in poverty.
- More than one in four (29 percent) live in households where no English is spoken.
- More than one in three of our youngest Oregonians — 35 percent — are students of color.

Poor children. English language learners. Racial and ethnic minorities. These are the groups who are least well-served by Oregon's current public education system — and the challenge is only going to increase.

An examination of key points along the education continuum shows Oregon can and must do better.

Comment [t6]: SIDEBAR: Project GLAD is a professional development program for teachers in language acquisition and literacy. Developed by the Orange County, California Department of Education, Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) engages children in listening, speaking, reading and writing as they learn a variety of subjects like history and science. Under GLAD students are guided through five sequential components in which they learn background information, participate actively in direct instruction, engage in team tasks, and exercise creative thinking. With the support of the Oregon Community Foundation's North Coast Leadership Council, Over 85 teachers from Astoria to Tillamook participated in GLAD training, and then put it to work in their classrooms. Teachers called it the "best professional development experience" they ever have had, and testify that literacy skills are up, attendance is up, and behavioral referrals are down. Nationally Project GLAD is initiating a comprehensive evaluation of program ...

Comment [t7]: SIDEBAR: Clackamas Middle College (CMC) is a four-year high school-college transition program that opened in 2003. Operating as a public charter school, CMC gives students opportunities to earn both high school and college credits simultaneously with the goal of earning a high school diploma, a transfer degree, or a certificate of completion. Students begin in the College Prep Program on the CMC campus and transition to college classes through the Cohort and College Extended Options Programs at Clackamas Community College. CMC provides every student personalized teaching, counseling and academic planning to build individual pathways to learning. Supports are provided to all students through an academic specialist, an ...

Comment [t8]: The Youth Transition Program (YTP) prepares youth with disabilities for employment or career-related post-secondary education and training. A partnership between Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the Oregon Department of Education, and the University of Oregon, YTP currently serves youth with disabilities in 115 high schools in 55 school districts. During the 2009-11 biennium, YTP provided transition services for 1,415 youth, and of those, 86% exited the program with a high school completion document, and 78% still were engaged in employment or post-secondary training 12 months after exit. YTP received a Best Practices Award from the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs in 2010. ...

Comment [t9]: Rogue Community College President Dr. Peter Angstadt and his board are developing a different metric of institutional success. In addition to retention, transfer and graduation rates, RCC is compiling data on job placements under a metric titled, "Creating New Taxpayers." According to the metric, RCC graduated 161 students this year into manufacturing, electronics, dentistry and three other select fields, with a per hour wage range of $13-$24 and a combined annual income of about $6 million.

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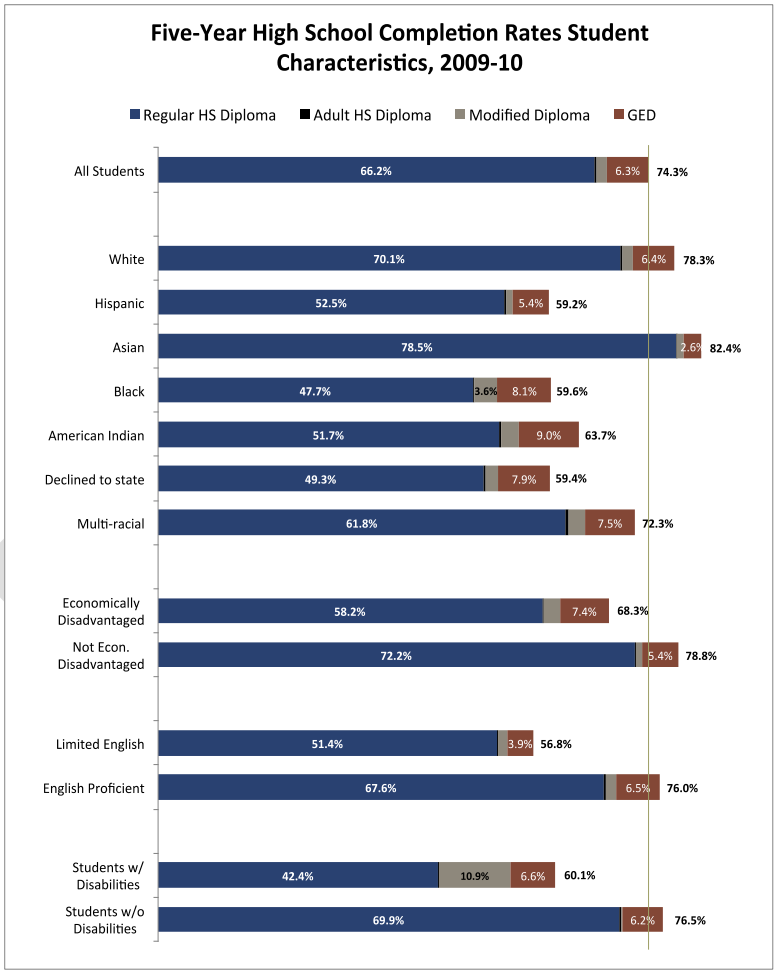
Of the 45,000 children born in the state each year, an estimated 40 percent carry significant risk factors — ranging from family poverty and instability to parents engaged in substance abuse or criminal behavior.

Only two thirds of Oregon students graduate from high school in four years — and only about half of African American, Hispanic, and limited-English-proficient students meet that mark. Add in those who earn GEDs, modified diplomas or regular diplomas within a fifth year, and the overall graduation rate still stands at only 74 percent.

Comment [t10]: SIDEBAR: Since Forest Grove High School moved to proficiency-based teaching and learning, with student evaluation based on performance on the recognized essential skills for each course, FGHS reached its highest graduation rate ever in 2008-2009, raised students' average scores on SAT and ACT tests, raised the value of scholarships to FGHS graduates from $1 million to $5 million, and raised the rate of FGHS graduates attending community colleges or universities from 40 percent to 70 percent.



Only 60 percent of Oregon's high school graduates enroll immediately in college, even now with record high enrollments in in Oregon's public universities and community colleges. And of those who do enroll in college, too few continue on to earn a degree (especially in community colleges). Students of color and English language learners are even less likely to finish.

Comment [s11]: CHARTS on college enrollment/retention/completion.

The Task Force on Higher Education Student and Institutional Success, created by House Bill 3418, has identified significant barriers to post-secondary education attainment, including inadequate high school preparation, support services such as advising and tutoring, support for career and technical education programs, data on students, management of transitions between institutions, faculty resources, physical infrastructure and instructional equipment to meet students' needs and students' ability to pay.

By most measures, Oregonians' educational achievement is stagnant, the gaps for low-income learners and students of color are significant, and we are not meeting the needs of English language learners. The end results are not what we want, nor what we need to meet our vision as a state.

It will take greater resources to reach our goal — and the constraints of our recovering economy are likely to be felt in the state budget for some time. But even as we work to improve education funding, we must work to improve education. We cannot afford to wait. Our students have one chance at their education. We must move forward with the resources we have. Only then can we determine how much progress we can make together by investing for outcomes and improving educational practices, and how much will require new resources. By improving educational outcomes we will make the best case for more resources that will help us reach our goals.

Principles

Most states—and for the past decade the nation as a whole—have tried to get substantially better education results by defining the challenge strictly as a performance problem. Strategies have focused on tougher standards and specific consequences for inadequate yearly progress; today there are calls for principals and evaluation systems to push teachers to be more effective.

Simply put, the results have fallen short. Testing, largely for school accountability purposes, has consumed enormous amounts of time and money. Students disengage from a narrowed curriculum, as relevant and motivating classes, projects and opportunities disappear from constrained schools. Too many teachers, feeling blamed for broader societal trends, set back by budget reductions, and indicted by high-stakes standardized testing j, report they are demoralized and disrespected. The post-secondary picture is not much brighter. Students struggle with higher tuition, increasing debt loads at graduation and trying to schedule into the overbooked courses they need to keep on path to their

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degree. Faculty face steep competition for tenured positions, pay freezes and long-term budget uncertainty.

While supporting high standards, Oregon is choosing a different approach: Performance will never rise enough unless and until the circumstances under which learners experience school are designed to arouse their motivation; until funding and investments follow priorities; and until teachers have an environment in which they are supported to do what they do best, to try what they believe will work, and have both the authority and the accountability for getting better results.

For performance to be better, the system must support motivation and talent among teachers and students. It must overcome barriers such as fear of costs and uncertainty about the value and route to higher education for many citizens who could benefit the most from its opportunities.

Oregon must commit to success for all learners, including all racial and ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. To meet our 40/40/20 goal, we need every group of learners to maximize their potential. We simply cannot meet our vision for Oregon if the most educated Oregonians — those our public education system serves best — remain disproportionately white, native English speakers, relatively affluent and without disabilities. The very promise of the American Dream, of opportunity available to all who strive for success, demands that we include all Oregonians in our goal, and that we very specifically and intentionally plan for an education system that meets our varied students' needs equitably and effectively.

We recognize that all students learn at their own pace and that individualized teaching and learning helps students achieve their potential and creates a culture of lifelong learning for all Oregonians. Islands of excellence around the state—based on evidence of graduation rates, statewide assessments, and success at the next level of learning —will provide helpful information about improving educational outcomes for all students.

Comment [t12]: SIDEBAR: Each year State Schools Superintendent Susan Castillo recognizes public schools for their significant progress in closing the achievement gap that separates low income and minority students from their peers. The Department of Education uses a data screen to identify schools where student subpopulations (minority groups, students with limited English, special education students, etc.) make significant progress in relation to comparison groups. Castillo notes that gains often are attributable to strong leadership, engaging families and communities, high quality instruction, and high expectations for students. In 2011 Castillo recognized schools in the Tigard-Tualatin, Salem-Keizer, Forest Grove, David Douglas, Klamath County and Woodburn School Districts for "continuing success" in closing gaps, and schools in the Portland, North Clackamas, Redmond, Grants Pass, Tigard-Tualatin, Salem-Keizer, and Woodburn School Districts for first-time recognition in closing gaps.

Comment [t13]: SIDEBAR: With the support of the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Washington, the Oregon Business Council and Employers for Education Excellence established the Oregon Proficiency Project in 2009. Education leaders conducted extensive field research to develop guiding principles for proficiency-based education, and provided intensive training and technical support in proficiency-based education at two pilot sites – Beaverton's Health and Science School and Woodburn's Academy of International Studies. A by-product of the project is the establishment of a network of proficiency practitioners, both teachers and administrators, across Oregon.

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[1] High school, associate's degree, and bachelor's degree attainment rates are draft results from a partially calibrated model using data from PUMS, Oregon Department of Education, and the National Student Clearinghouse. High school includes GED, AHS, and those who are accepted into a college degree program without a high school diploma. Depending on the method used, on-time graduation rates in 2009 fell between 66 and 75 percent. And yet, self-reported Census figures suggest that 90 percent of working-age adults eventually earn a diploma or the equivalent.
Associate's degrees account for 9 percent of the 18 percent with an associate's degree or certificate. Reliable postsecondary certificate attainment rates are not available. Community colleges report that they are awarding about 5,000 certificates per year, but some of those go to learners who have associate's or bachelor's degrees, and some people earn more than one certificate. Based on data from the 2008 Oregon Population Survey, we estimate that 62 percent of certificates go to people without an associate's or bachelor's degree, and that 9 percent of young working-age adults have a certificate as their highest level of attainment. We were not able to estimate the number of certificates or credentials issued by institutions other than community colleges, so 18 percent with an associate's degree or certificate is probably a conservative estimate.

[2] Dobbie, W., Fryer, R.G. (2011). *Getting Beneath the Veil of Effective Schools: Evidence from New York City*. NBER Working Paper No. 17632.

[3] U.S. Dept of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, 2008.

[4] http://completionagenda.collegeboard.org/state-performance/state/oregon

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