



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Oregon Youth Authority

Office of the Director

530 Center Street NE, Suite 200

Salem, OR 97301-3765

Voice: 503-373-7205

Fax: 503-373-7622

www.oregon.gov/OYA

June 26, 2012

MEDIA ADVISORY

Contact: Ann Snyder, OYA Communications Office, 503-378-6023,

ann.snyder@oya.state.or.us



Salem's Robert S. Farrell High School to graduate nine seniors June 28

Nine seniors will receive diplomas Thursday during commencement exercises at Robert S. Farrell High School, which serves youth at the Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility in Salem.

The graduating seniors are among nearly 100 high school graduates this spring across the Oregon Youth Authority's 10 close-custody facilities.

Principal Bill Conlon said these seniors are in the first graduating class required to meet new state reading requirements. These requirements include demonstrating the ability to read and understand text; summarize and analyze key points; interpret significant ideas and themes; and follow instructions from text. "If you do not pass this requirement you cannot graduate with either a regular or modified diploma," Conlon said.

Speaker for Thursday's commencement will be Pat Evenson-Brady, superintendent of the Willamette Education Service District; at least one student; and Lonnie Jackson, director of OYA's Office of Minority Services.

Work of OYA's Office of Minority Services includes ensuring treatment is culturally specific, providing multicultural support groups, promoting multicultural events, doing gang intervention and counseling, and arranging voluntary removal of gang and other anti-social tattoos. More than 40 percent of youth OYA serves are

minorities. OYA has the only minority services office in a juvenile corrections agency nationally.

Robert S. Farrell High School is a fully accredited high school operated by the Willamette ESD through a contract with the Oregon Department of Education. It is one of nine year-round high schools in OYA's close-custody facilities statewide.

Youth in OYA facilities have access not only to year-round high schools but also to post-secondary online classes, vocational opportunities and treatment that helps them get back on track.

School achievement by youth helps OYA fulfill its mission to protect the public and reduce crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments. Research shows an inverse relationship between educational attainment and criminal behavior.

OYA has custody of approximately 750 youth ages 12-24 in correctional and transitional facilities in Albany, Burns, Florence, Grants Pass, La Grande, Salem, Tillamook, Warrenton and Woodburn. OYA juvenile probation and parole officers supervise an additional 1,050 youth on probation and parole in communities throughout Oregon.

#