Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

State Library of Oregon

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Organization: State Library of Oregon
Date: November 3, 2026
Meeting: Rules Advisory Committee – COLF
In attendance: Representative Pam Marsh, Oregon House District 5; Kate Lasky, Josephine Community Library District; Jeremy Skinner, Curry Public Library District; Arlene Weible, State Library of Oregon; Tamara Ottum, State Library of Oregon; Buzzy Nielsen, State Library of Oregon.
OARs under review: Creating new rules to govern the Connecting Oregon Libraries Fund (ORS 357.790)

SUMMARY

Meeting started: 1:35 p.m.

State Library staff gave a general overview of the rulemaking process for the Connecting Oregon Libraries Fund (COLF). Participants then discussed specific aspects of the proposed language. Below are summaries of the discussions and decisions.

- Definitions
    - Reviewed the new definitions of "Connecting Oregon Libraries Fund (COLF)" and "Free and Reduced Lunch percentage." Added clarity to the latter about how the percentage is determined for multi-branch libraries.
    - Added a definition of "broadband," referring to where it's defined in statute.
    - Added tribal libraries to the list of participants in the definition of "resource sharing system."
- Eligibility
    - Clarified that libraries need to have "secured" federal funds to apply, not necessarily have yet received them.
    - Revised wording from "broadband access *projects*" to "broadband access *activities,*" to capture the breadth of federal broadband support libraries may get.
- Application process
    - Clarified that the State Library may run multiple application processes a year, based on available federal programs.
- Priority calculation
    - Discussed what factors are best to include when prioritizing applications.
    - Added factor for whether the library serves underserved communities.

    - Revised previous statement in proposed rules that de-prioritized previous recipients of COLF funds. Instead added a factor to consider whether the library has previously received funds.
- Removed statement that the State Library might not offer full matches to federal funds. The statement was confusing. Also, the State Library's existing grant practices already allow for partial funding.

Meeting participants also discussed the following:

- How to support libraries to apply for federal broadband monies.
- How the Oregon Broadband Office spent $500,000 that the Legislature allocated this quarter to study and support public libraries' participation in the federal E-Rate program.
- How to get funds allocated the COLF.

Meeting ended: 2:37 p.m.