QUALITY EDUCATION MODEL

Identifying Best Practices and Calculating the Cost of a Quality Education

August 2026

Quality Education Commission

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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QUALITY
EDUCATION
COMMISSION

Quality Education Commission

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Quality Education Commission

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Preface

This 2026 report is the 15th biennial report since the first Oregon Quality Education Model (QEM) report was released in 1999. It describes the latest version of the model, and it also describes the QEM's structure and parameters. For the second time since the report's inception, the workbook used to develop the Status Quo and Full QEM Core K-12 State Funding projections for the 2027-29 biennium is published with the report. The Quality Education Commission (QEC) expects this to support transparency and facilitate information-sharing for the Legislative Policy and Research Office (LPRO).

The QEM was developed in 1999 to estimate the level of funding required for Oregon to operate a system of effective K-12 schools that meet the quality education goals of the state, including, but not limited to, achieving a 90% 4-year graduation rate. The model utilizes best practices and extensive data on actual audited school district and Education Service District (ESD) expenditures to estimate the cost of implementing those practices. Over the years, the model has been improved by integrating current data with emerging research on best practices. The QEM is a resource for education and community partners and policymakers to improve educational outcomes for Oregon's K-12 students.

The QEC and its Commissioners author the biennial reports with support from Oregon Department of Education (ODE) staff who facilitate meetings, perform analysis, visualize data, and synthesize research. The Best Practices section of the report describes current research and its benefits for Oregon schools. These best practices were reviewed by Oregon educators using a survey administered in the spring of 2026.

Quality Education Commission Mission

The Legislature created the 11-member Quality Education Commission in 1999 (codified in 2001) to research best education practices and determine the resources needed to provide a K-12 public education system that meets Education Goals identified in Oregon Revised Statute 329.015:

"(1) The Legislative Assembly believes that education is a major civilizing influence on the development of a humane, responsible and informed citizenry, able to adjust to and grow in a rapidly changing world. Students must be encouraged to learn of their heritage and their place in the global society. The Legislative Assembly concludes that these goals are not inconsistent with the goals to be implemented under this chapter.

(2) The Legislative Assembly believes that the goals of kindergarten through grade 12 education are:

a) To equip students with the academic and career skills and information necessary to pursue the future of their choice through a program of rigorous academic preparation and career readiness;
b) To provide an environment that motivates students to pursue serious scholarship and to have experience in applying knowledge and skills and demonstrating achievement;
c) To provide students with the skills necessary to pursue learning throughout their lives in an ever-changing world; and
d) To prepare students for successful transitions to the next phase of their educational development."

The Quality Education Model (QEM) is used to estimate the costs of meeting these education goals.

2026 QEM Report Executive Summary

The Quality Education Model (QEM) was developed as a research and data-driven tool to evaluate educational practices and estimate the level of state school funding required to meet Oregon's education goals. The model uses key data, national research, and lessons learned from Oregon schools to promote more informed conversations among policymakers, educators, the public, and community partners. The Quality Education Commission (QEC) develops the QEM and assists others in using it for policy analysis and decision-making every even-numbered year.

For the 2026 QEM Report, the QEC used estimates of implementing school- and district-based best practices from national research that subject matter experts in Oregon have refined to be applicable for local communities and schools. The equity-centered practices support improvement in student engagement and learning and expect to improve student outcomes as measured in the 2025 Education Accountability Act.

Using extensive research, updated salary and material costs, and current school data, the QEM estimates state funding needs for two scenarios for the 2027-29 funding cycle:

- **Scenario 1 (Status Quo Core K-12 Funding):** The funding level required to continue delivering all school, district, and education service district operations at the level they were delivered in the prior biennium;
- **Scenario 2 (Full QEM):** The funding level required to continue all prior activities and fully implement additional recommended best practices and actively improve Oregon's educational outcomes.

In this report, the QEC made no discretionary changes to the model inputs from prior reports except updating the costs of materials, costs of staff compensation, and declining student enrollment. The updated costs and enrollment impact both scenarios. New since the 2024 report is the 2025 American Institutes of Research (AIR) evaluation of the QEM, which has been reviewed by the QEC, but time and financial limitations prevented changes to the QEM for the current report.

Exhibit 1 breaks down the funding needed for each scenario for the past two funding cycles and the upcoming cycle. For Scenario 1, the expected cost to the state for 2027-29 is nearly $13.78 billion, an increase of 21.6% from the prior funding cycle. 50.7% of these required funds are expected to be covered by the Current Service Level State School Fund estimate calculated by the Department of Administrative Services as directed in ORS 291.210, 44.4% are non-state funds, such as federal or local funds, with a 4.9% of the estimated need remaining to be covered by state-provided non-State School Fund allocated dollars or reductions to the level of provided services. Achieving Scenario 2, which models the service level needed to advance state K-12 educational goals, will require an estimated $16.21 billion in state funding resources, an increase of 19.8% from the Full QEM estimate from the 2025-27 budget cycle.

EXHIBIT 1: Oregon Education System Funding Need ($ in Millions)

Model Description	2023-25	2025-27	2027-29
State School Fund	$10,200.0	$11,359.4	$12,558.41
▪ Percent change from prior funding cycle	+9.7%	+11.4%	+10.6%
Scenario 1: Current Service Level total funding requirements from all sources	$19,217.8	$22,848.7	$24,754.8
▪ Local, federal, and non-State School Fund sources	-$8,508.0	-$11,516.6	-$10,978.9
QEM Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding Estimate	$10,709.8	$11,332.1	$13,775.8
▪ Percent change from prior funding cycle	+16.9%	+5.8%	+21.6%
Scenario 2: Fully-Implemented Quality Education Model funding requirements from all sources	$21,735.0	$25,043.5	$27,186.8
▪ Local, federal, and non-State School Fund sources	-$8,508.0	-$11,516.6	-$10,978.9
Full QEM Core K-12 State Funding Estimate	$13,227.0	$13,526.9	$16,207.9
▪ Percent change from prior funding cycle	+18.4%	+2.3%	+19.8%

The QEC wants to emphasize that the Full QEM Core K-12 State Funding Estimate is not an arbitrary target; it is a rational calculation of the level of funding needed to improve educational outcomes in Oregon. The QEC continues to consider and analyze new inputs as future additions to the model, including, but not limited to, research-aligned best practices, an increase to a 180-day school year, and the suggested updates outlined by the 2025 AIR evaluation. Should the state legislature be unable to fund Oregon's K-12 Education system at the Full QEM level, two alternatives are proposed:

1. Funding grounded in a holistic system of support
2. Funding grounded in the outcomes of the Education Accountability Act

The 2026 Quality Education Model report brings together information on student outcomes in Oregon, research-supported best practices, and the technical components of the QEM.

1 For 2027-29, the State School Fund amount is assumed to be the Department of Admin Services State School Fund Current Service Level Projection, as the QEM Report is published before the budget is legislatively adopted.

Introduction

The QEC believes that learning is always happening for all of Oregon's children. We have an ethical and moral responsibility to ensure an education system that provides optimal learning environments that lead students to be prepared for their desired individual futures and a prosperous future for the collective Oregon community.

A strong public education system is essential to Oregon and the diverse communities that call our state home. Public education is the building block of an informed and engaged community, and society benefits when we ensure that every student has access to a high-quality education. With these important values in mind, the Oregon Legislature established the Quality Education Commission to identify the best practices for delivering a quality K-12 education to all students and calculate its associated costs, as defined by the education goals listed in the Mission Section. The QEC reports the costs and informs state policymakers in determining education policy and budgets. To carry out this responsibility, the Commission reviews and enhances the Quality Education Model (QEM) every two years. The QEM is an educational costing model that is informed by the QEC Commissioners' professional judgment anchored in research, data, and expertise.

This is the 15th report issued by the Commission, written as the state K-12 education system continues, in some respects, to recover from the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic led to declining student enrollment and heightened inflation, which, combined, substantially impacted the spending data from districts that feed into the QEM. Access to high-quality instructional experiences for many of Oregon's students was negatively impacted by the pandemic, as well. The pandemic also increased economic stressors and spurred greater challenges in the areas of student and staff physical and mental health. Starting with the 2024 QEM Report, some system stabilities have returned to the state. Data collections are reliable and complete, allowing for realistic benchmarks based upon previous data trends in district spending for skilled labor costs, services, and supplies required to provide a quality education to the average student in a prototype brick and mortar school.

To set an appropriate stage for interpreting the QEM, the Commission emphasizes that the Full Implementation QEM projection is neither an arbitrary target nor a capricious wish list. Rather, it represents a rationally considered model of the services necessary to achieve Oregon's educational goals under ORS 329.016 calculated at the actual cost of delivering those services. These are the benchmark goals the Commission is statutorily required to evaluate under ORS 327.506. By modeling prior expenditures, enrollment trends, and economic inflation, the QEM forecasts state-level resource adequacy. It is not intended to dictate granular school- or district-level spending, but rather to establish an empirical baseline for state funding decisions. This report attempts to situate the QEM in the current context. Sections include:

- Oregon's Current Status, an overview of education in Oregon;
- The Education Accountability Act, a high-level description of Senate Bill 141 (2025) as it relates to the QEM;
- Oregon's Education Improvement Initiatives, the work underway to support students;
- Best Practices: Research-Informed Approaches Set in Oregon, practices from research, experience, and a survey of Oregon school districts;
- The Quality Education Model, a description of the QEM and how to interpret it for the upcoming biennium;
- Alternatives for Meeting the Quality Goals, considerations for alternative approaches to fully funding the QEM;
- Methodology for Calculating the Current Service Level, a resource for understanding the Current Service Level calculations; and
- Findings, Recommendations, and Conclusions.

Oregon's Current Status

There are 197 school districts in Oregon. The majority (54.1%) are small districts of 80-1,650 students; however, the plurality of students (49.7%) attend large school districts of 7,500 or more students. In 2024-25, Oregon had 1,268 public schools, 342 (27%) of which served students in the high school grades. 127 (10%) of Oregon's public schools were charter schools and 52 (4.1%) virtual schools. Charter school students made up 8.2% of students (44,178), and virtual school students were 5.2%, or 27, 978 students.

There were 539,644 students enrolled in Oregon public schools at the beginning of October 2025. Oregon's K-12 public schools experienced a dramatic, unprecedented enrollment decline during the 2020-21 school year with smaller decreases continuing each year through the 2025-26 school year. Oregon's public schools now serve 21,273 fewer students (-3.8 percentage points) than 2020-21. Analysts attribute the overall decline in enrollment to the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing demographic changes in Oregon's youngest children. Understanding enrollment patterns is critical to decision-making for Oregon schools as student enrollment determines state school funding and local resource allocation.

Oregon continues to have an experienced teacher cohort with 24.5 percent of licensed teachers having 20 or more years of experience. The percentage of new teachers (0-4 years of experience), however, decreased from 28.1 percent in 2023-24 to 25.1 percent in the 2024-25 school year. The total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) school employees in 2024-25 increased overall from 2023-24 by approximately 0.8 percent statewide. Notable changes in staffing by position group include a decrease in Teacher FTE for the second year in a row with a decline of approximately 0.8 percent statewide between 2023-24 and 2024-25. Staffing categories that experienced the largest percentage increases include Educational Assistants (3.6 percentage point increase), Licensed Library and Media staff (4.8 percentage point increase), and Psychologists (6.3 percentage point increase). Library and Media Support staff saw the largest percentage decrease in Staff FTE shrinking by approximately 3.9 percentage points statewide.

Oregon's spring 2025 graduation rate was 83.0 percent for all students and has trended upward for all students and student groups over the past decade. With the 2024-25 school year's graduation, almost every single student group had an increase from the year prior.[2] The 2024-25 State Report Card shows that the statewide class size median was 23, an increase from 22.5 in 2023-24.[3] The average statewide proficiency rates were 43% in English Language Arts, 31.5% in Mathematics, and 30% in Science. These rates increased by 0.2 percentage points from the previous year in each subject.

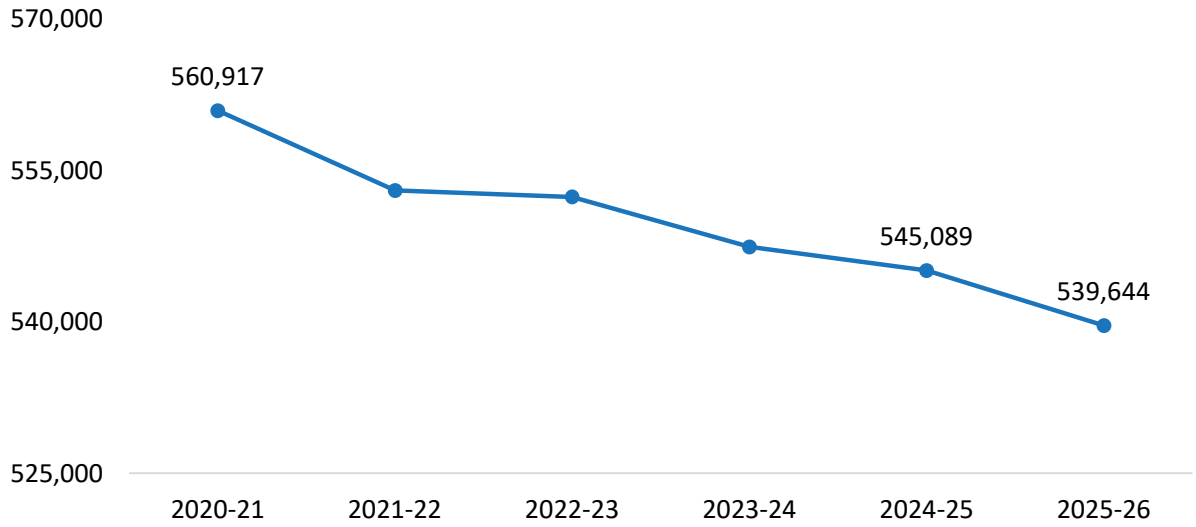
2 See the 2024-25 Graduation Trends Report for more graduation and completion data.

3 2025 Oregon Statewide Report Card

Enrollment

Districts reported a total of 539,644 students in October of 2025. This represents a drop of 5,445 students compared with fall 2024 and a decline of 21,273 since the fall of 2020. According to the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis, "The growth in K-12 population (ages 5-17) was very slow during the last decade, turned negative in 2021, and is expected to decline consistently through the forecast years [2035] mainly due to the declining number of births over the years. This will translate into a decline in school enrollments. On average for the forecast period, this school-age population will decline by -1.4% annually. The growth rate for children under the age of five has remained below zero percent in the recent past and will show virtually no change over the forecast period".[4] Enrollment declines primarily affect grades K-3 and 8-11.

EXHIBIT 2: Enrollment by School Year, 2020-2025



The loss of enrollment has funding implications. More than 30,000 students, primarily in the lower grades, left the public school system over the four years of the COVID-19 pandemic. This decline affects school funding in the districts experiencing significant losses. While the State School Fund's use of extended student enrollment is formulated to delay the funding decreases seen by lower enrollment, ultimately, it still impacts district budgets.[5]

Exhibit 3 provides a summary of the racial and ethnic demographics of Oregon students. Federal regulations for reporting race/ethnicity as a single identity masks some of the diversity in the students served in Oregon's K-12 public education system. The reporting system categorizes all students who identify as Hispanic as Hispanic, regardless of their race(s). Non-Hispanic students who identify with two or more races are reported as multiracial. Students who identify as Black, for example, might be reported as Black, multiracial, or Hispanic. As seen in Exhibit 3, different measurement approaches produce widely varying racial and ethnic data. Expanded (+) race/ethnicity data, which includes students in every racial and ethnic category that they identify (removing the multiracial category and including Hispanic students within their racial categories as well), shows the difference in reporting. The importance of demographic representation goes beyond student enrollment counts–it also impacts how student groups are represented in achievement data and the media.[6]

4 Office of Economic Analysis Population and Demographic Outlook

5 See the State School Fund website for more information.

6 See Goal 2 in the 2025-30 American Indian and Alaska Native Student Success Plan for more information on the impacts of student demographic data.

EXHIBIT 3: Race/Ethnicity Reporting Counts and Percentages, Fall 2025

Count and Calculation	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	White	Multi-Racial	Total
Federal Definition Student Count	5857	22,058	4,959	13,745	143,439	308,424	41,162	539,644
Percentage of Enrollment*	1.1%	4.1%	0.9%	2.5%	26.6%	57.2%	7.6%	
Expanded (+) Definition Student Count	37,461	42,564	13,527	34,030	143,439	471,925	N/A	539,644
Percentage of Enrollment^	6.9%	7.9%	2.5%	6.3%	26.6%	87.5%	N/A	

*Sums to 100% as student race and ethnicity fall within one category using the federal definition. ^Sums to greater than 100% as students can identify as more than one racial and ethnic category using the expanded definition.

Exhibit 4 below shows ten-year changes to student enrollment by federally defined race and ethnicity. Oregon's White student population decreased substantially, and the American Indian/ Alaskan Native student population has decreased less than half a percentage point. The remaining racial and ethnic populations experienced growth, substantially for Hispanic/Latino and multiracial students.

EXHIBIT 4: 2015-16 and 2025-26 Federal Race and Ethnicity Student Enrollment Counts

Year	American Indian / Alaska Native	Asian	Black / African American	Hispanic / Latino	Multi-Racial	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	Total
2015-16	8,305	22,726	13,744	129,410	32,597	4,032	365,593	576,407
2025-26	5,857	22,058	13,745	143,439	41,162	4,959	308,424	539,644
Change from 2015-16 to 2025-26 (%) *	-2,448 (-0.4%)	-668 (+0.2%)	+1 (+0.2%)	+14,029 (+4.1%)	+8,565 (+2.0%)	+927 (+0.2%)	-57,169 (-6.3%)	-36,763

* Percentage point change from 2015 to 2025 for the percentage of the population that the student group holds; Asian has a positive % change despite a reduction in counts due to an overall student enrollment decrease.

EXHIBIT 5: Changes in Student Race and Ethnicity Demographics, 2020-2025

Student Group	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
American Indian/ Alaska Native	6,570	6,357	6,532	6,150	5,951	5,857
American Indian/ Alaska Native +	47,927	45,368	43,366	40,943	39,539	37,461
Asian	22,733	22,145	22,181	22,288	22,344	22,058
Asian +	40,423	40,470	41,186	41,754	42,325	42,564
Black/African American	13,021	12,731	12,982	13,114	13,439	13,745
Black/African American +	30,374	30,655	31,789	32,334	33,307	34,030
Hispanic/Latino^	137,101	138,112	139,928	141,060	144,115	143,439
Multiracial^	38,629	39,219	40,024	40,294	40,853	41,162
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	4,335	4,454	4,633	4,720	4,745	4,959
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander +	11,776	12,168	12,681	12,885	13,155	13,527
White	338,528	329,995	326,100	319,800	313,642	308,424
White +	486,105	480,970	481,175	477,610	476,162	471,925

^ Hispanic/Latino is the same for both the federal definition and the expanded definition and has been included only once in the table. There is no multiracial category for expanded definition as those students are counted in each of the racial and ethnic groups they identify with instead. Rows with a grey background are the expanded definition races.

Poverty and Housing Instability

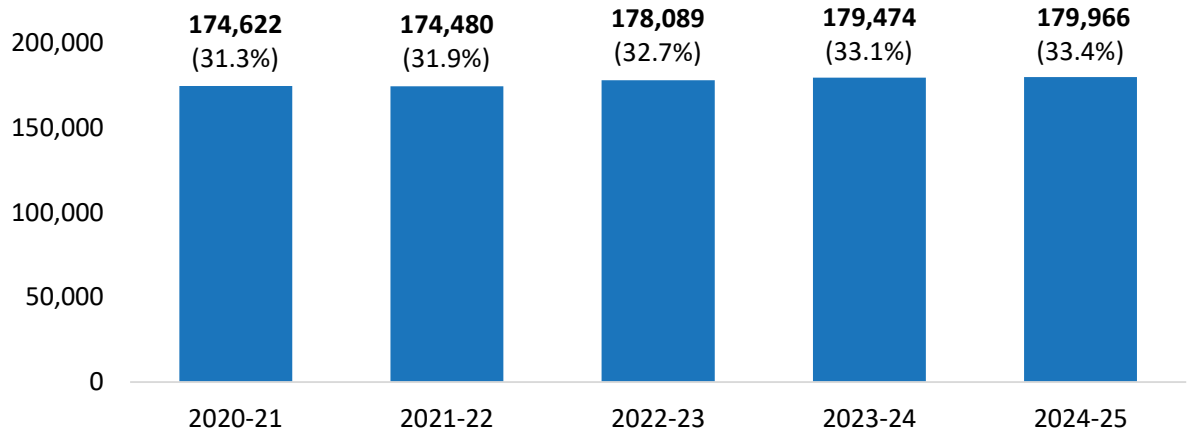
The impacts of socio-economic status on student learning are well-documented.[7] Researchers have demonstrated a strong connection between family income and student achievement. In 2018, after eight years of uninterrupted economic growth, Oregon's poverty rate stood at 13 percent, meaning that more than one in 10 Oregonians met the federal definition of poverty and likely lacked one or more basic needs, representing more than 516,000 Oregonians, including 134,000 children.[8]

The 2024 estimate for poverty in Oregon was 11.8%.[9] For children under 18, the poverty rate was 13.0%; 14.9% for children under 5 years old. Between January and April of 2020, this rate dropped nearly five points, following the release of federal COVID-19 pandemic relief funds, such as the Child Tax Credit.[10] That tax credit expired in December 2021, sending many recipient families back into poverty. When measured using the 2022-adopted definition of poverty,[11] one third (33.4%) of enrolled students experience poverty.

Researchers and agencies define poverty using a variety of indicators that have changed over time as the primary purpose of data used has shifted. For example, prior to 2022, the ODE relied on child nutrition data for its poverty measure; however, increases in use of the Community Eligibility Provision[12] to reduce paperwork burdens in high-poverty school districts meant that individual student data was inaccurate. In 2022, the State Board of Education defined Student Experiencing Poverty as any student that a) Receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; b) Receives Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits; c) is experiencing foster care; d) is navigating housing instability; or e) is migrant. This change in definition increased data accuracy and is now used for reporting of student outcomes and enrollment. Matching to prior data allowed ODE to calculate rates before the 2022 definition change.

In 2024-25, just over a third of all students in Oregon were identified as experiencing poverty. Both the number and rate of students experiencing poverty has increased yearly over the past 5 years.

EXHIBIT 6: Percentages of Students Experiencing Poverty, 2021 to 2025



7 Baker, B.D., Farrie, D. and Sciarra, D.G. (2016), Mind the Gap: 20 Years of Progress and Retrenchment in School Funding and Achievement Gaps. ETS Research Report Series, 2016: 1-37.

8 Audrey Mechling, A Portrait of Poverty in Oregon, Oregon Center for Public Policy, August 7, 2021.

9 U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months. American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701

10 Ashley Walker, Children's Institute, Federal Aid Program Brought 60k Oregon Kids Out of Poverty

11 The State Board of Education adopted the definition of Students Experiencing Poverty in December 2022. It includes all students in at least one of the following groups: Receiving SNAP, Receiving TANF, Navigating Foster Care, Navigating Housing Instability, or Migrant.

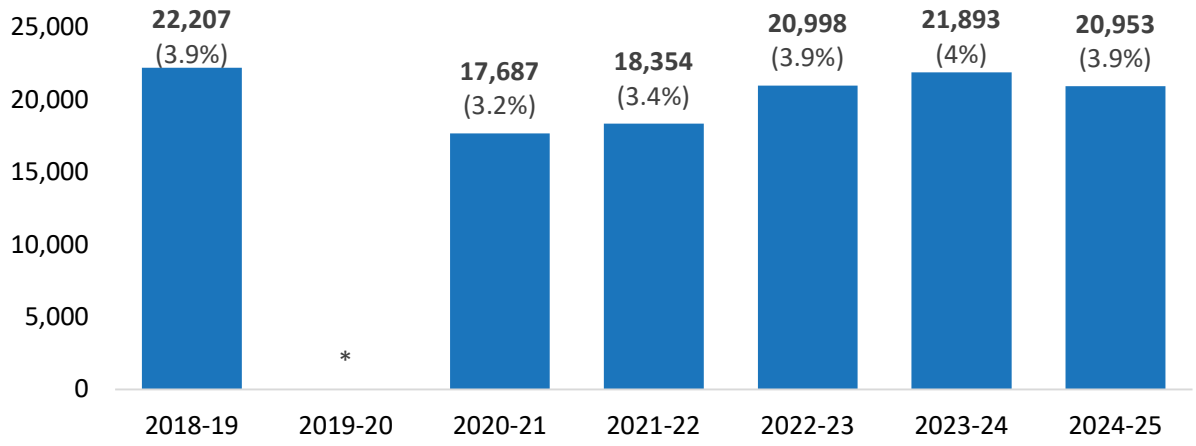
12 Community Eligibility Provision | Food and Nutrition Administration

Oregon's 21,122 students and youth navigating housing instability[13] (2024-25) suffer some of the greatest barriers to learning, due to trauma, insecurity, frequent school moves, and inability to study in a home environment while making up approximately 4% of the total population of students K-12. Several state and federal programs support some relief for these children, but Oregon's housing crisis has grown so large that these resources cannot fully address the size of the problem.

In addition, children who are in Oregon unaccompanied by a parent or legal guardian have faced challenges caused by recent immigration enforcement actions from the federal government that are resulting in increased disengagement from school.

The federal McKinney-Vento Act ensures that children and youth experiencing housing instability have access to a free, appropriate public education, regardless of their housing situation. Under this program, students identified by district liaisons are entitled to key supports, including immediate enrollment, free school meals, and transportation to and from their school of origin.[14] School districts are required to identify and report annually to the ODE on students eligible for these rights and services. In 2026, the Oregon legislature passed House Bill 4149,[15] which further codified protections for students navigating housing instability.

EXHIBIT 7: Percentages of Students Navigating Housing Instability from 2019 to 2025



*Data from the 2019-20 school year are not available in this report due to the COVID-19 pandemic interruptions in reporting.

While numbers of students identified as navigating housing instability decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic, the counts were back to nearly pre-pandemic levels in 2023-24, then had a slight decline for 2024-25. This aligns with Portland State University's 2025 Statewide Homelessness Report[16] which reports an increase from 2023 estimates. Their 2021 report[17] posits that, assuming data are accurate, possible explanations for the COVID-19 pandemic era decreases include either a decrease in shelter capacity or avoidance of shelters for fear of COVID-19 and an increase in government and community support that kept or placed people in housing.

13 The term Students Navigating Housing Instability is used in this report to represent students and youth that have been identified for McKinney Vento services. Other terms used include McKinney Vento students, Students Navigating Houselessness, and Homeless Students.

14 The school of origin is also known as the school last attended when housed or the last in which they were enrolled.

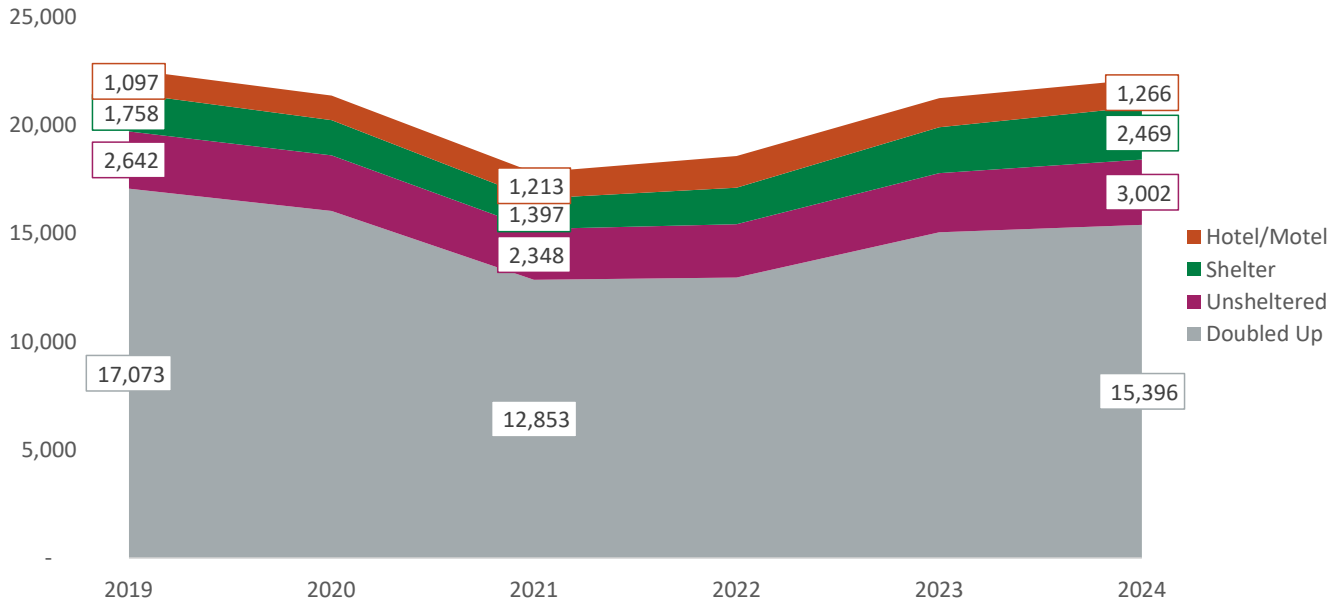
15 House Bill 4149 full text

16 PSU Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative (HRAC) 2025 Statewide Homelessness Report

17 Oregon Statewide Homelessness Estimates 2021

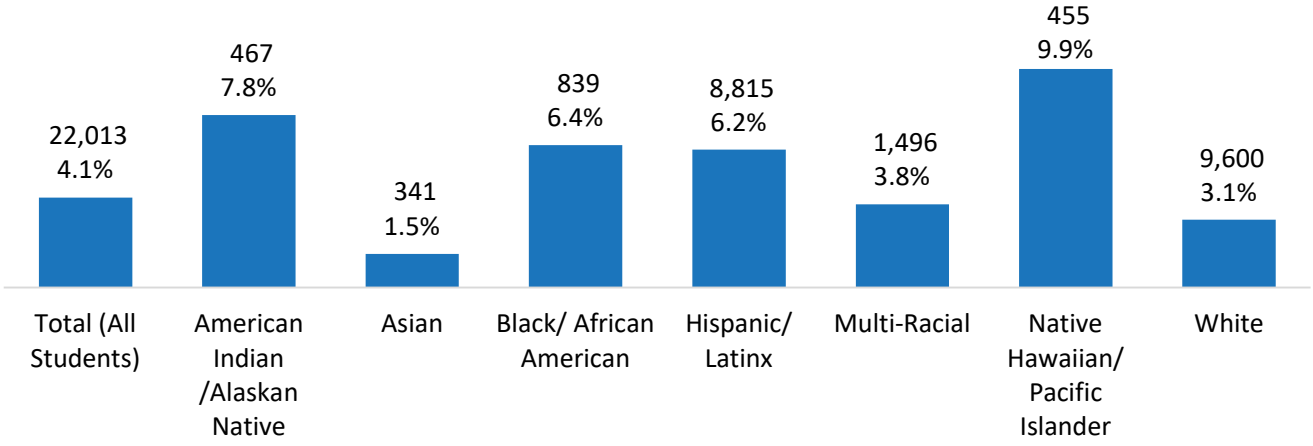
Students are most commonly staying with others (doubled up), followed by unsheltered, then shelters. Staying in a hotel or motel is the least common residency type. As shown in Exhibit 8, these proportions have been consistent over time.

EXHIBIT 8: Unduplicated Count of Students Navigating Housing Instability, 2019-2024 by Night Residence Type



Students do not experience housing instability equally across races and ethnicities. Exhibit 9 demonstrates that Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students have the highest percentage of students experiencing housing instability, followed by American Indian and Alaska Native students.

EXHIBIT 9: Percent of Total Enrollment Identified as Navigating Housing Instability, 2023-24 by Federally Defined Race and Ethnicity



Special Education

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) makes a free appropriate public education available to eligible students aged 3-21 and ensures special education and related services to those students. The percentage of Oregon students receiving special education services under IDEA in K-12 has been increasing in both the number and percentage of students. District enrollment was 15.4 percent in 2025 and has averaged 14.7 percent of total enrollment over the last five years, even though each school district's special education weight is capped at 11 percent in the State School Fund distribution formula. A high-cost disability grant supplements some of the difference for students whose support needs exceed $30,000 per year; in 2026, the grant is able to reimburse only about 25 percent of the actual costs.[18] Special Education enrollment trends from 2019 to 2025 are shown in Exhibit 10 below.

Similar to the Students Experiencing Poverty data, the counts and percentages of Students with Disabilities have steadily increased since the COVID-19 pandemic. These counts reflect students across the state that have an individualized education program to support their educational development.[19] Students with Disabilities receive additional 1.0 weight in the State School Fund formula, with a cap of 11% of students per district, as there is a higher per-pupil cost to provide federally required specialized instruction and support to allow students to access curriculum and education.

EXHIBIT 10: Special Education Enrollment, 2018 to 2024

Enrollment Type	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Special Education Enrollment	80,436	82,485	79,782	78,716	79,998	82,196	83,969
Total Fall Enrollment	581,730	582,661	560,917	553,012	552,380	547,424	545,088
% of Total Fall Enrollment	13.8%	14.2%	14.2%	14.2%	14.5%	15.0%	15.4%

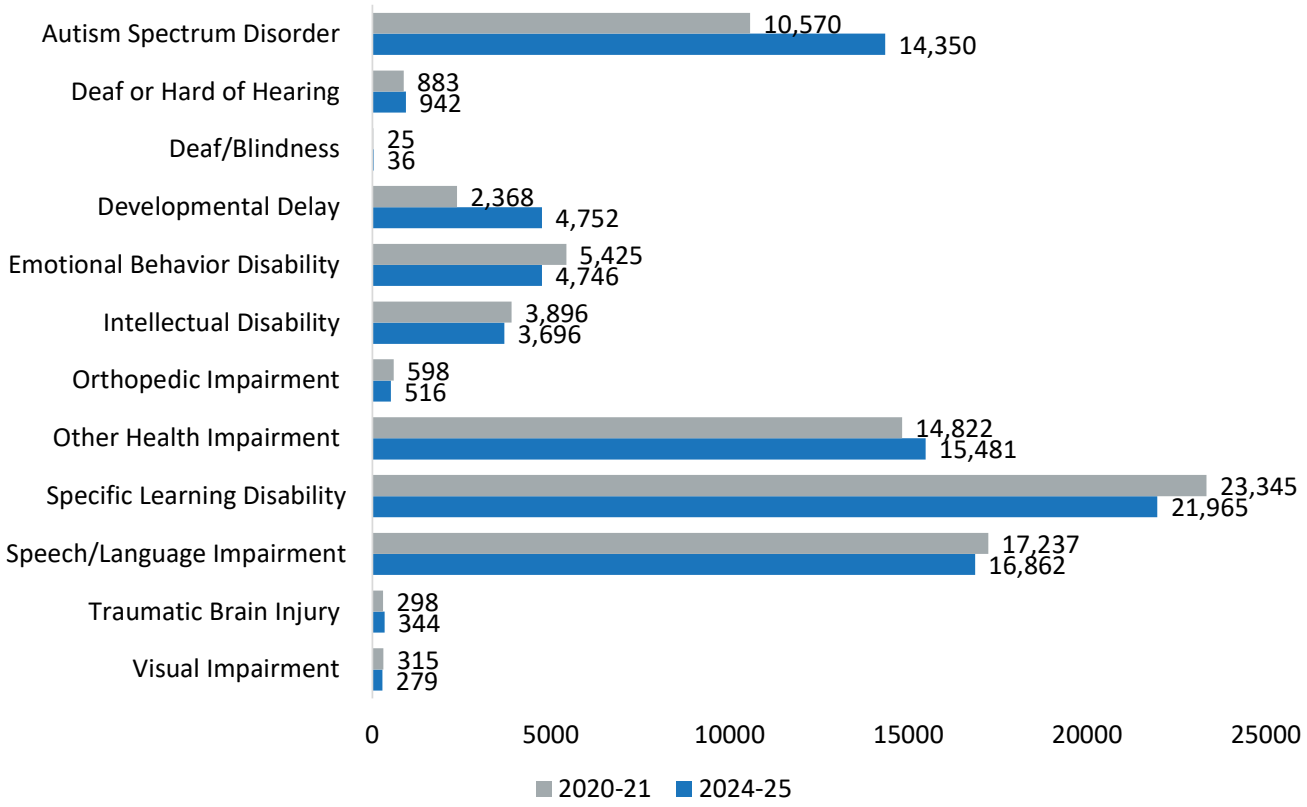
Data Sources: December Special Education Child Count and Fall Membership

Each school age (5-21) special education student in Oregon qualifies under at least one of 12 different disabilities under IDEA. The following exhibit shows the trends by disability category. The prevalence of types of disabilities may provide insight into the types of support needed–at both the local and state level, including funding and educator expertise and training. Tracking changes over time is one component of correctly understanding how to support students.

18 High-Cost Disability Fund: Student Needs, Service Delivery and Statewide Impact. Presentation from ODE to the legislature, June 2026.

19 For more information including counts by type of disability, see the Oregon IDEA Federal Reports webpage: Oregon IDEA Federal Data Reports: Special Education Reports and Data

EXHIBIT 11: Changes in Special Education Enrollment by Disability Type, 2021 to 2025



Data Source: December Special Education Child Count

Language Diversity[20]

Multilingualism is a benefit to students, families, and the State of Oregon, with research linking multilingualism to academic, cognitive, and social advantages as well as broader economic and civic benefits.[21, 22, 23] Oregon schools see a diversity of languages spoken. According to data submitted to the Oregon Department of Education by two of Oregon's largest districts, Salem-Keizer School District reports 106 different languages spoken in their schools; Portland Public School District is a close second, reporting 104 different languages.

To identify students for English language support, schools send home a home language survey. If caregivers say there is a language other than English spoken at home, it catalyzes the administration of an English language proficiency screener. If a student scores below a threshold on the screener, they are classified as an English learner and are eligible for language development support. In 2024-25 there were 68,038 students who were federally defined as

20 Multilingual learner is one of many terms used to reflect students that are currently or have received services to support development of the English language. For data, the terms current English Learner and English Learners is used to reflect enrollment in an English Language Development Program to align with the federal definition. Ever English Learners are students who have graduated out of an English Language Development Program. Other related terms include emerging bilingual students, and linguistically diverse students. See the Oregon Multilingual Learner Strategic Plan for more information.

21 Thompson, K. D., & Bovee, J. (2026). Bilingual education enrollment for multilingual English learner-classified students with disabilities: Evidence from Oregon. Bilingual Research Journal, 49(1), 1–19.

22 Steele, K. et.al. (2017). Effects of Dual-Language Immersion Programs on Student Achievement: Evidence from Lottery Data. American Educational Research Journal.

23 Cano, M. & Motamedi, J. (2024). Bilingüismo es un superpoder: Exploring the long-term results of Beaverson's dual language programs. Education Northwest.

English Learners. This is an increase of 2,073 students having federal EL status from the 23-24 year. In 2024-25 about 12.6 % of Oregon's K-12 students held federal English learner status, compared to 12.2% in 2023-24.

As of May 1, 2024, 542,735 students were enrolled in Oregon public schools and districts. Among those students, 11.5 percent were current English learners (62,522 students), 4.3 percent were former English learners (23,310 students), 3 percent were monitored English learners (16,034 students), and 81.2 percent were never English learners (440,869 students). Both current, monitored, and former English learners (i.e., Ever English learners, constituting 18.8 percent of students) represent an incredibly diverse student population in 2023–24.

The distribution of current English learners varied across grade levels and districts in Oregon during the 2023–24 school year. Woodburn School District served the highest percentage of current English learners, with 45.8 percent of students learning English in an English Language Development program as of May 1, 2024. On the other hand, about 65 percent of Oregon districts either had no current English learners or very few (i.e., fewer than 5 percent of all students).

Other key features of the multilingual learner population in the 2023-24 school year include the following:

- Most current English learners were in elementary grades (59.2 percent), while the majority of former English learners were in high school grades (55.6 percent).
- The population of English learners has been increasing while the overall student population has shown a decreasing trend.
- The number of recently-arrived current English learners (i.e., new immigrant students) increased from 4,851 in 2022-23 to 6,647 students in 2023-24.
- Spanish was the predominant home language of current English learners (76 percent), but overall, there were 247 documented unique home languages (an increase of 25 languages from the previous year) spoken by current English learners. Other prevalent languages include Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Chuukese, and Ukrainian.
- Approximately 77.2 percent of current English learners were Latino/a/x, and 34 percent of Latino/a/x students were current English learners. A similar percentage of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students (32.4 percent) were current English learners.

Oregon students are becoming increasingly diverse with regard to race/ethnicity, and in terms of language diversity. Exhibit 12 below conveys the counts and percentages of K-12 students with diverse linguistic backgrounds in Oregon who are currently classified as English learners. Exhibit 13 below shows that English is the most common language of origin for Oregon's students, followed by Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, Arabic, Ukrainian, Chuukese, Japanese, and Somali.

EXHIBIT 12: Percentage of Students Federally Identified as English Learners, 2019 to 2025

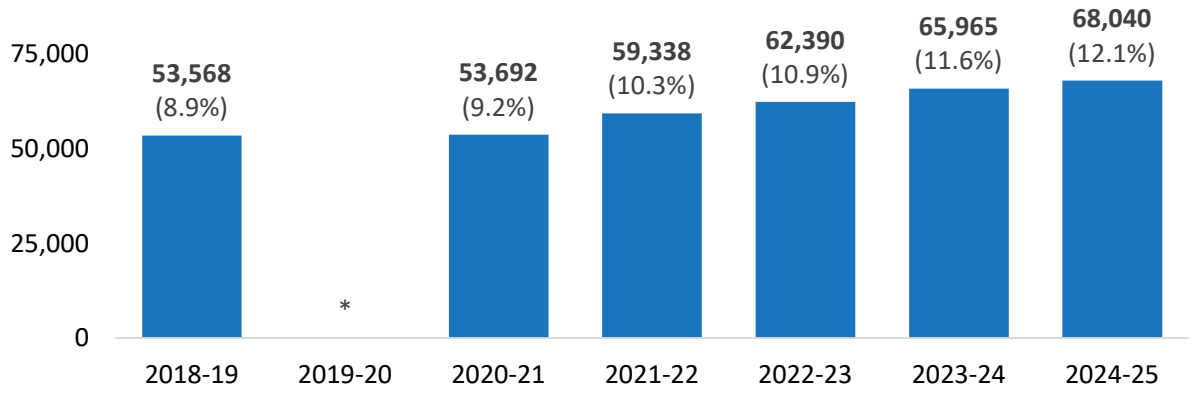


EXHIBIT 13: Language of Origin Counts and Percentages, 2025

Language of Origin	Number of Students by Language of Origin	Number of English Learner Students	Percent of Enrollment	Percent of English Learner Student Enrollment
English	421,714	504	78.2%	0.7%
Spanish	87,118	51,345	16.1%	75.5%
Chinese	3,802	1,293	0.7%	1.9%
Russian	3,423	1,661	0.6%	2.4%
Vietnamese	3,380	1,220	0.6%	1.8%
Arabic	1,775	882	0.3%	1.3%
Ukrainian	1,318	939	0.2%	1.4%
Chuukese	1,237	902	0.2%	1.3%
Japanese	1,036	369	0.2%	0.5%
Somali	963	581	0.2%	0.9%
Korean	941	253	0.2%	0.4%
Telugu	641	164	0.1%	0.2%
Tagalog	560	214	0.1%	0.3%
Marshallese	554	422	0.1%	0.6%
Hindi	546	127	0.1%	0.2%
Mam	542	500	0.1%	0.7%
Swahili	511	359	0.1%	0.5%
Romanian	509	235	0.1%	0.3%
Amharic	498	269	0.1%	0.4%
Dari	419	382	0.1%	0.6%
Tamil	409	83	0.1%	0.1%
French	398	131	0.1%	0.2%
German	362	57	0.1%	0.1%
Thai	335	157	0.1%	0.2%
Hmong	330	141	0.1%	0.2%
Portuguese	320	133	0.1%	0.2%
Persian	304	208	0.1%	0.3%

Language of Origin Table notes: The count of unique languages does not include the “Non-applicable to Reporting” and “Undetermined” categories. The language of origin information comes from the Cumulative ADM collection; the English learner counts are from the unduplicated ESEA Title III: English Learner Collection, excluding students determined not to be currently eligible for English Learner Services. Percentage columns may not sum to 100 due to rounding. American Indian/Alaska Native students may qualify for English learner services even if the student has English as their language of origin.

The current prototype schools model does not allow for consideration of potential differences in cost for operating a variety of bilingual school models, which could be something to consider in future iterations–especially with forthcoming data collections on Oregon's dual language programs. For now, the QEM includes updated estimates on the need for English Learner (EL) educators and professional development of all teachers. Recent research suggests that effective support for multilingual learners requires not only language specialists, but also strong access to core academic instruction across content areas.[24] Rates of English Learners impact QEM estimates, and districts that have students identified as English Learners receive additional weight in the school funding formula.

As with Students with Disabilities, English Learners that are in programs to support their English development receive additional 0.5 weight in the State School Fund distribution formula to provide specialized language development support. See The English Learner Outcomes Program section later in this report for more information on supports for students designated as English learners.

Combined Focal Student Group Enrollment

Starting with the Student Investment Account within the Student Success Act, the State Board of Education and the ODE have worked together to identify groups of historically and currently marginalized students, called focal student groups as these are groups of students to focus support for closing gaps in opportunities and outcomes. To support Performance Growth Target development and tracking,[25] ODE created a Combined Focal Student Group.[26] If a student is a member of any of the focal student groups, they are also included in the Combined Focal Student Group; students are included only once even if they are in multiple focal student groups.

Focal Student Groups

- American Indian/Alaska Native students
- Asian students
- Black/African American students
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students
- Hispanic/Latino/a/x students
- Multiracial students
- Multilingual learners/ English Learners/ Emerging Bilingual Students
- Migrant students
- Pregnant or parenting students
- Recent arrivers
- Students navigating housing instability
- Students experiencing poverty
- Students in foster care
- Students with disabilities
- Students with experience of incarceration or detention

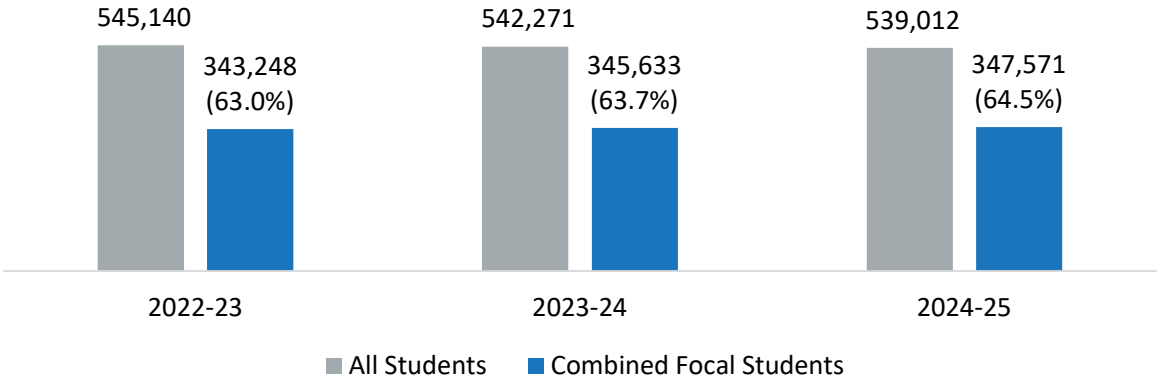
24 Umansky, I. M., Shin, N., Thompson, K. D., Avelar, J. D., & Bovee, J. (2024). Beyond English instruction: A multistate analysis of Lau's unfulfilled promise of access to core content. Bilingual Research Journal. 47(4), 504–531.

25 Performance Growth Targets are the common and local metric targets established in the 2025 Education Accountability Act. See that section of the report for more information.

26 "Combined Focal Group Students" means students reported to the Oregon Department of Education through standard data collections in any of the following student groups: (a) Economically Disadvantaged Students; (b) Students Recently Arrived; (c) Justice Involved Youth; (d) Students from Racial or Ethnic Groups that Have Historically Experienced Academic Disparities; (e) Students who are Pregnant, Parenting, and/or Students who Experience any Pregnancy-related Condition; (f) Students with Disabilities; (g) Foster Students; (h) Students Navigating Housing Instability; (i) Migratory Students; and (j) Emerging bilingual students (OAR 581-003-0001).

Exhibit 14 below shows that both the count and percentage of the Combined Focal Students group has increased each of the last two years.

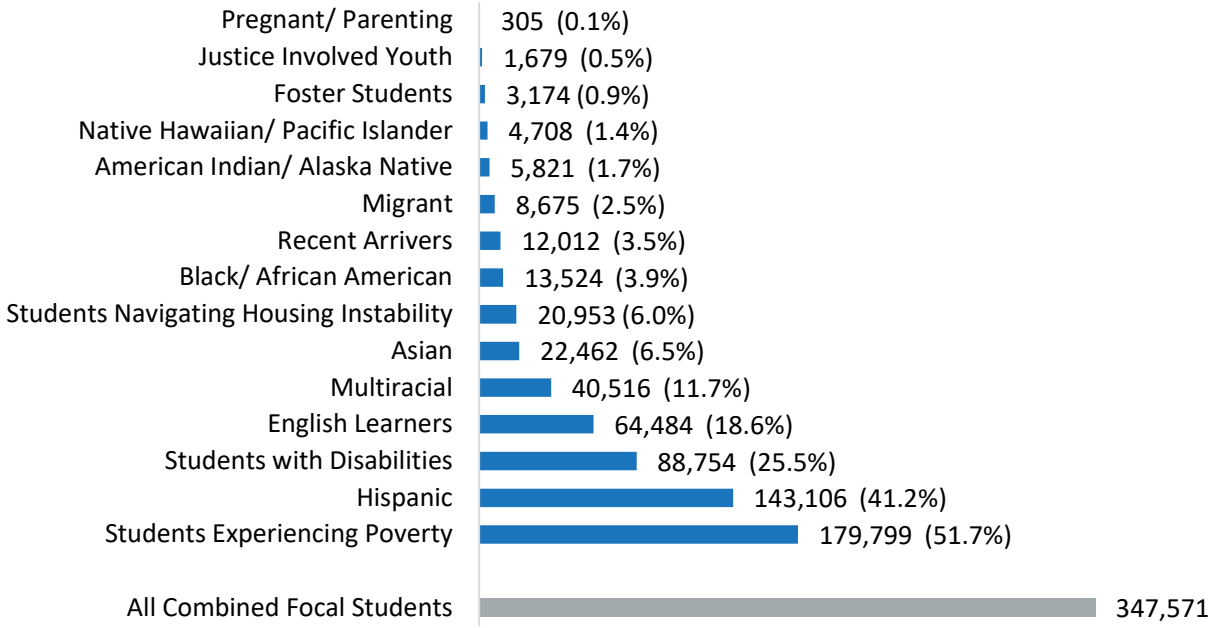
EXHIBIT 14: Percentage Enrollment of Combined Focal Students by Year



Note that enrollment counts reflect the Spring Membership totals, which do not align with the typically used reports published from fall data.[27]

As seen in Exhibit 15 below, the largest focal student group within the Combined Focal Student group is students experiencing poverty with nearly 52 percent of the Combined Focal Students belonging within this group. Following students experiencing poverty in size are Hispanic Students (41.2%), then Students with Disabilities (25.5%). The smallest focal student group is Students who are Pregnant, Parenting, and/or Students who Experience any Pregnancy-related Condition (0.1%).

EXHIBIT 15: Focal Student Group Composition Within the Combined Focal Student Group, 2024-25

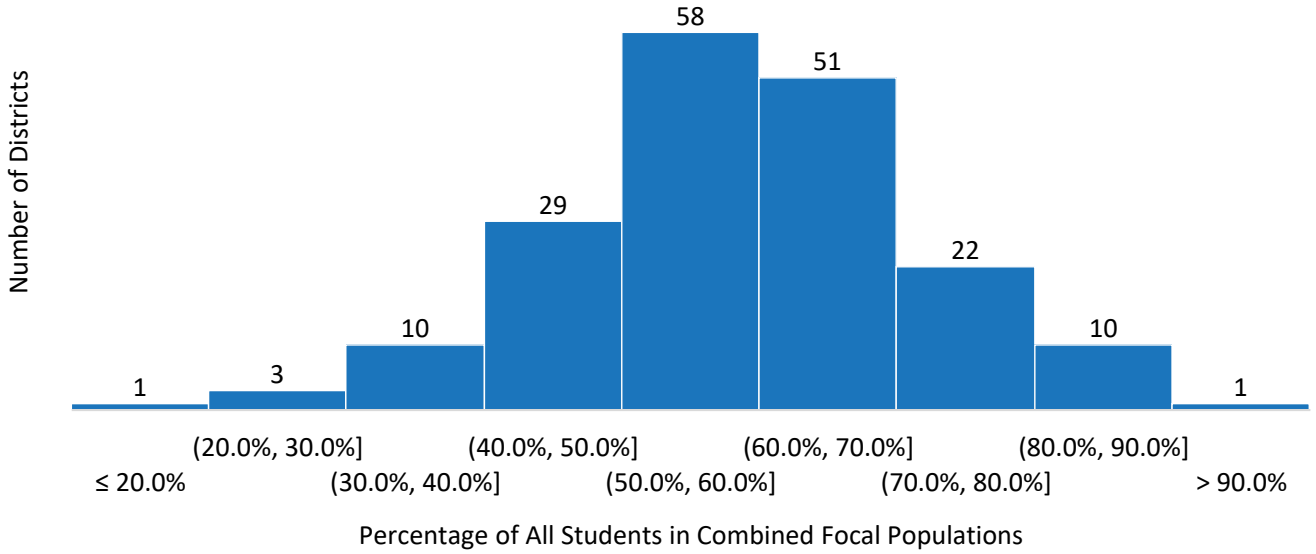


Note: Percentages are compared to the All Combined Focal Students group; the percentages sum to over 100% as students can be in multiple focal student groups. Data Source: Spring Membership

27 Oregon Department of Education: Student Enrollment Reports

Exhibit 16 demonstrates that the majority of school districts have between 50 and 70 percent of their student population identified as a focal group student, with just a handful of districts below 30% or above 90%.

EXHIBIT 16: Distribution of Oregon School Districts by Percentage of Students in the Combined Focal Student Group, 2024-25



Note, the labels along the bottom of this graph are the lower and upper range for that bar (e.g. "30%, 40%" is 30-40%).

Regular Attendance

Regular Attenders is the percentage of students who were present for more than 90 percent of their total enrolled days at that school or district in a school year. Often referred to Chronic Absenteeism, which is the inverse (absent 10% or more), it is important to note that this rate includes both excused and unexcused absences.

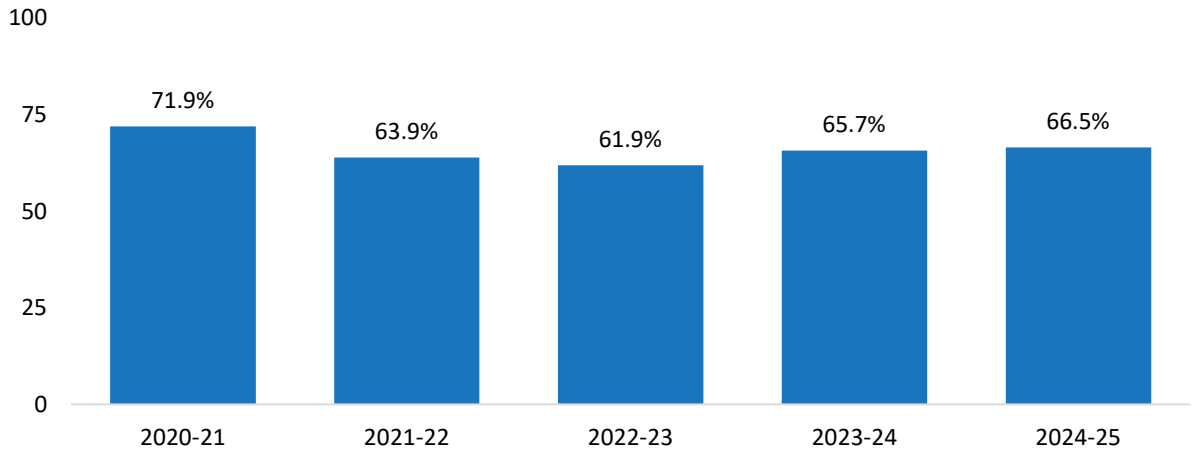
The ODE has historically reported Regular Attender rates once per year at the school and district level on Oregon's Online Report Card[28] and included in both the ODE's federal and state accountability systems. 2026's House Bill 4154[29] requires the ODE to publish Regular Attenders data four times per year, which aligns with the number of times the data are reported to the ODE. Quarterly publications begin with the 2026-27 school year; the official rates are expected to continue to use data reported in the Third Period Cumulative Average Daily Membership collection.

K-12 Regular Attendance

The following figures demonstrate that Regular Attendance in Oregon's public schools has not fully recovered relative to pre-pandemic levels following a sharp decline during the COVID-19 pandemic (see Exhibit 17 below). The following figures also demonstrate that attendance rates are lowest in high school, followed by 8th grade and Kindergarten, and among the student groups who experience significant barriers to their opportunities to learn.

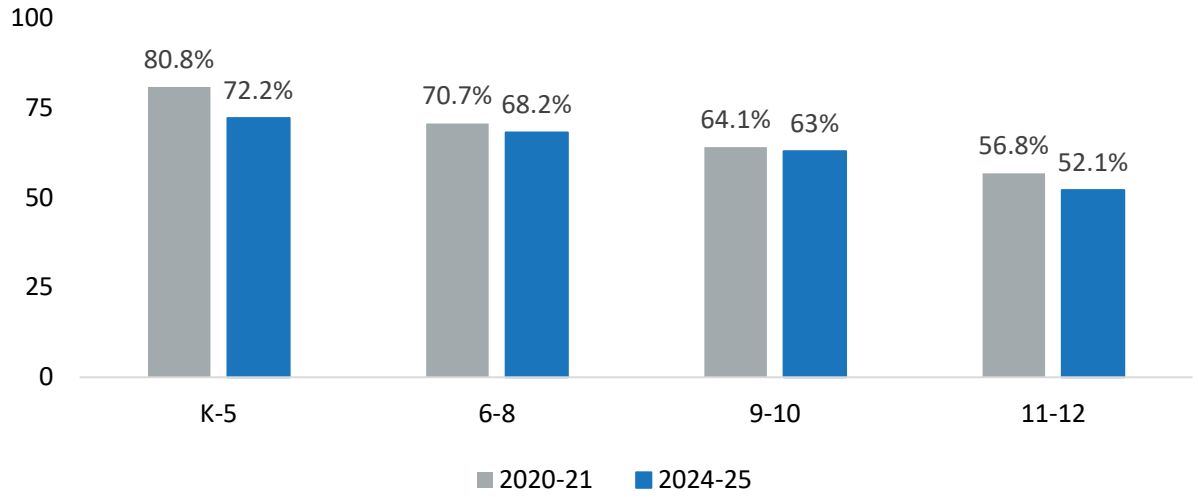
28 Oregon Online Report Card - Oregon Department of Education
29 House Bill 4154

EXHIBIT 17: Percentage of Students that Attend Regularly, 2021-2025



Compared to 2020-21 rates, no grade band has rebounded entirely by 2024-25. The closest rates to 2020-21 are in the 6-8 and 9-10 grade bands.

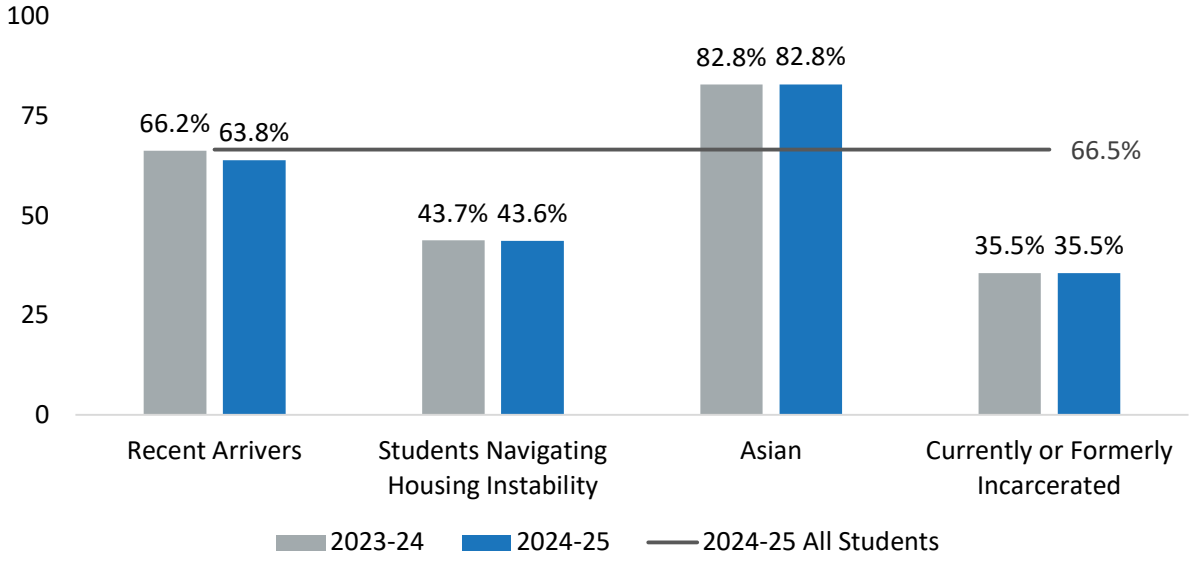
EXHIBIT 18: Percentage of Students Who Attend Regularly by Grade Band, 2020-21 and 2024-25



Regular Attendance in Oregon across the grade levels peaks in the upper elementary school grades, with lower rates at either end of the K-12 continuum. Almost every grade level saw a slight increase in Regular Attender rates from 2023-24 to 2024-25, excepting grades 5 and 12.

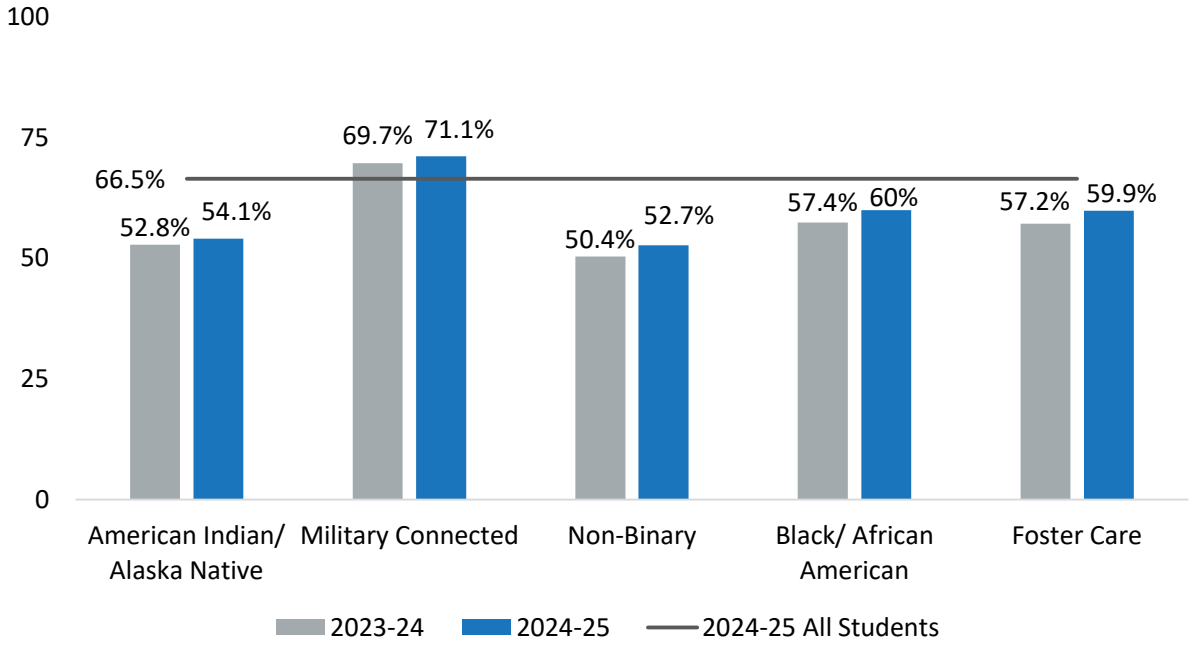
Further reviewing Regular Attendance progress from 2023-24 to 2024-25, very few student groups–only 4 of 23–had decreases or level rates from year to year (see Exhibit 19 below). One notable exception is the Recent Arrivers group, which includes all students not born in the United States or Puerto Rico who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for fewer than 3 years; this group saw a decrease of nearly 2.5 percentage points from 2023-24 to 2024-25.

EXHIBIT 19: Student Groups That Saw No Change or Negative Change in Regular Attender Rates From 2023-24 to 2024-25



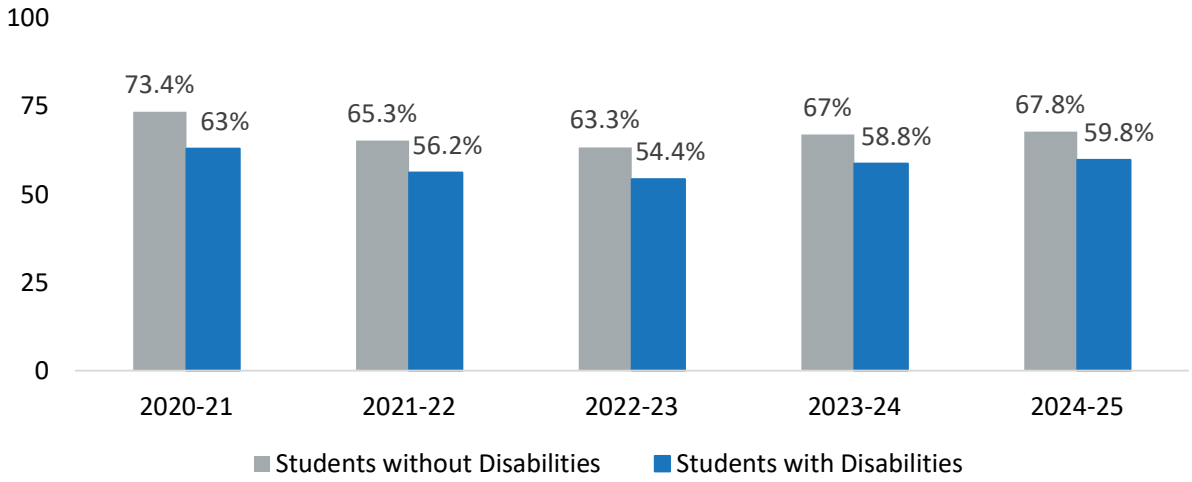
Nineteen of the 23 student groups saw increases in Regular Attender rates from 2023-24 to 2024-25. The greatest increase was 2.7 percentage points for Students Navigating Foster Care, followed by a 2.6 percentage point increase for Black and African American students.

EXHIBIT 20: Top Five Student Groups That Saw Improvement From 2023-24 to 2024-25



As seen in Exhibit 21, Students with Disabilities have also seen steady increases in Regular Attender rates since 2022-23. The increases have been significant enough to start to close the gap with their non-disabled peers, who also saw increases, from a 10.4 percentage point difference in 2020-21 to 8 percentage points in 2024-25.

EXHIBIT 21: Regular Attender Rates by Disability Status, 2020-21 to 2024-25



K-2 Regular Attendance

The 2025 passage of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) signaled increased commitment to a second measure of student attendance: Regular Attendance in Kindergarten through Second Grade. This measure is part of the Performance Growth Target work within the Act's updated state accountability model, and schools and districts set goals and track improvement alongside the K-12 measure. Early grade regular attendance is important for student's literacy and math skills; one study found that only 17% of students chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are reading on grade level after 3rd grade compared to 64% of their regularly attending peers.[30]

Regular Attender rates for grades K through 2 have increased each of the last two years with totals up nearly 10 percentage points in each grade level, following a dip in 2022-23 (see Exhibit 22 below). When looking at student groups, however, large gaps exist between most focal student groups and their peers who are not a member of that focal group in grades K-2 (see Exhibit 24). For instance, the gap between students experiencing and not experiencing poverty is over 22 percentage points; for students navigating housing instability, this gap is 25.6 points. This indicates that while Regular Attender rates are increasing for the K-2 grades, more is needed to support all students within those grades.

30 Attendance in the Early Grades: Why it Matters for Reading

EXHIBIT 22: Percentage of Students That Attend Regularly, K-2, 2022-2025

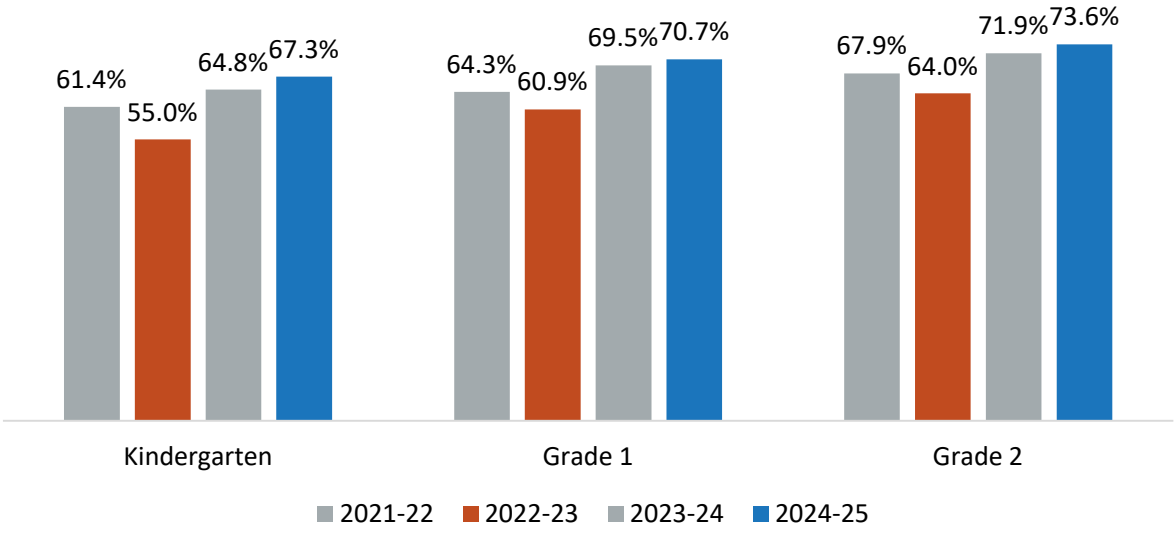


EXHIBIT 23: K-2 Regular Attender Rates by Federally Defined Race and Ethnicity, 2024-25

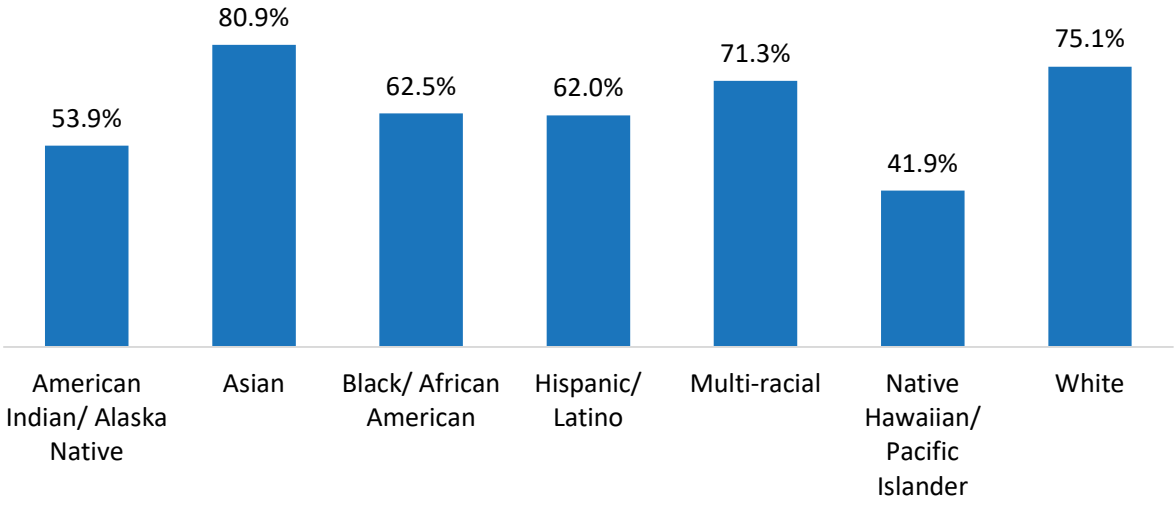
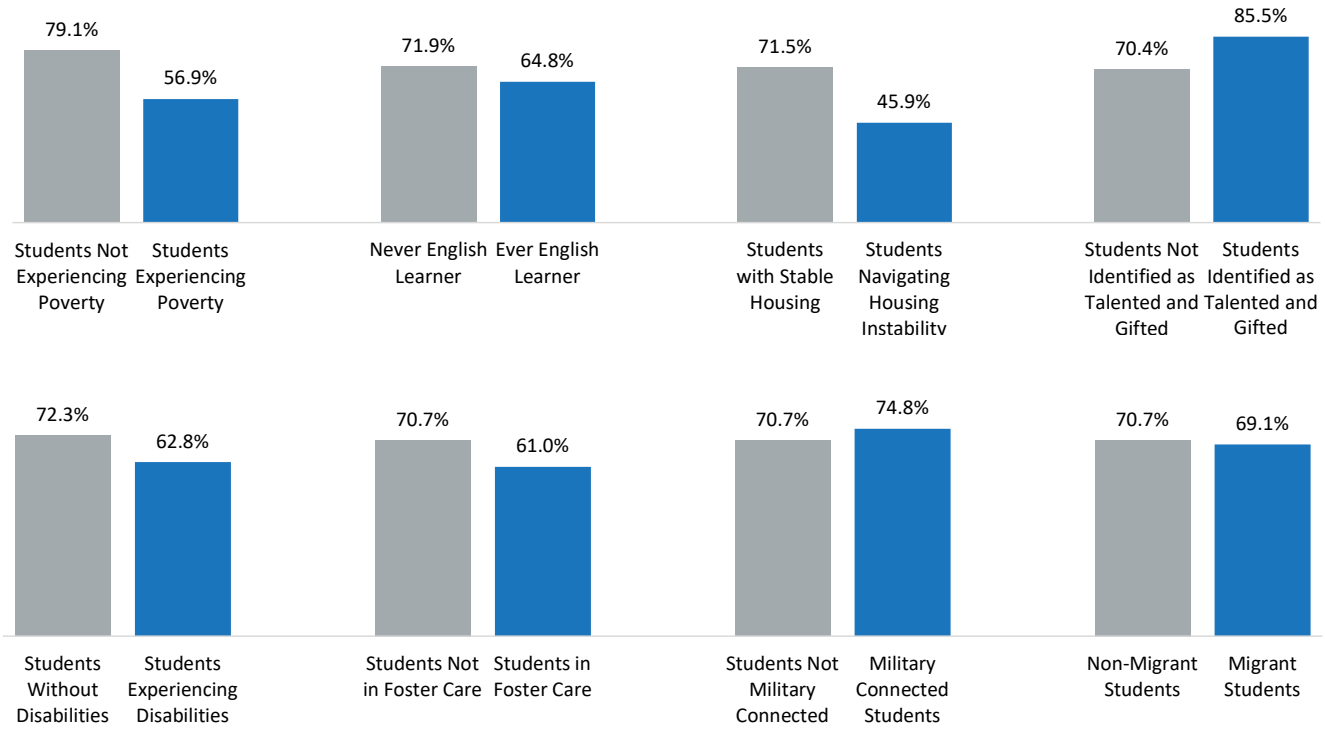


EXHIBIT 24: Percentage of Students Attending Regularly in Grades K-2 by Student Group, 2024-25



Ninth Grade On-Track

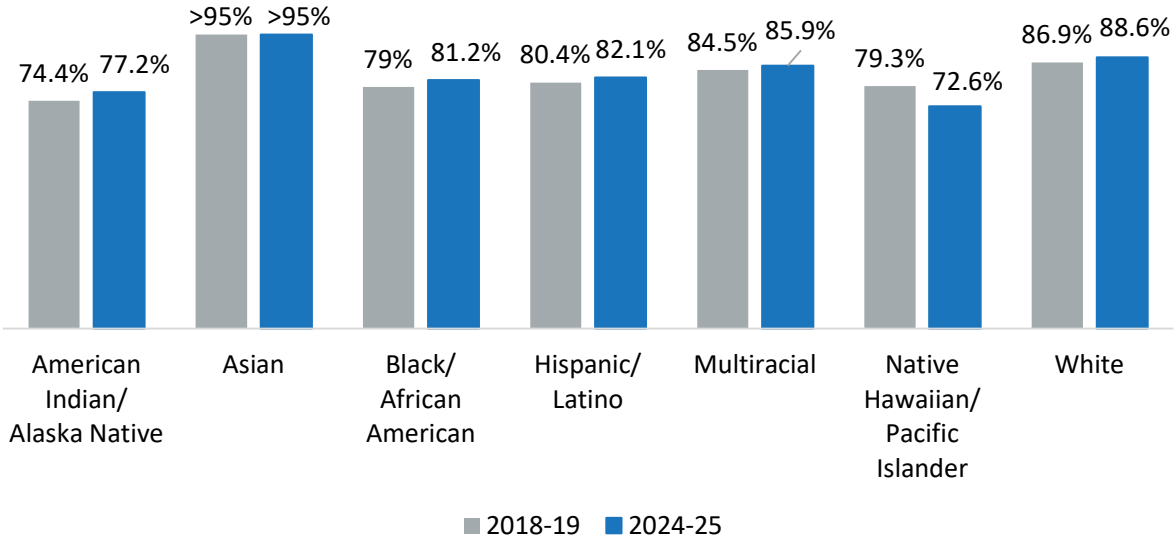
Oregon's 9th Grade On-Track data are a central marker for Oregon students and educators, as the indicator is highly predictive of students graduating on time with their four-year cohort. In Oregon, a student is on track to graduate at the end of their 9th grade year if they have accumulated 6.0 of the required 24.0 credits or one quarter of the district's required credits to graduate. In 2025, 9th Grade On-Track rates were 86.6%, showing steady yearly increases since 2020-21. Most student racial and ethnic groups have now surpassed their pre-pandemic rates, with the strongest improvement seen for American Indian and Alaska Native Students. Unfortunately, Oregon schools have not yet restored 9th Grade On-Track rates for Asian and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students to their pre-pandemic rates.

The 9th Grade On-Track data contrasting pre-pandemic patterns and the most recently available data from 2025 by expanded definition race and ethnicity are provided below in Exhibit 25. Exhibits 26 and 27 present Ninth Grade On-Track data trends for Oregon students by federally defined race and ethnicity and by focal groups for 2019 and 2025, respectively.

EXHIBIT 25: Ninth Grade On-Track Rate by Expanded Race and Ethnicity for 2018-19 and 2024-25

Student Group (Expanded Definition)	2018-19	2024-25	Difference
American Indian/ Alaska Native +	78.1%	80.9%	+2.8
Asian +	>95%	94.4%	–
Black/ African American +	79.1%	80.8%	+1.7
Hispanic/ Latino +	80.4%	82.1%	+1.7
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander +	80.4%	78.8%	-1.6
White +	85.5%	86.7%	+1.2
All Students	85.3%	86.6%	+1.3

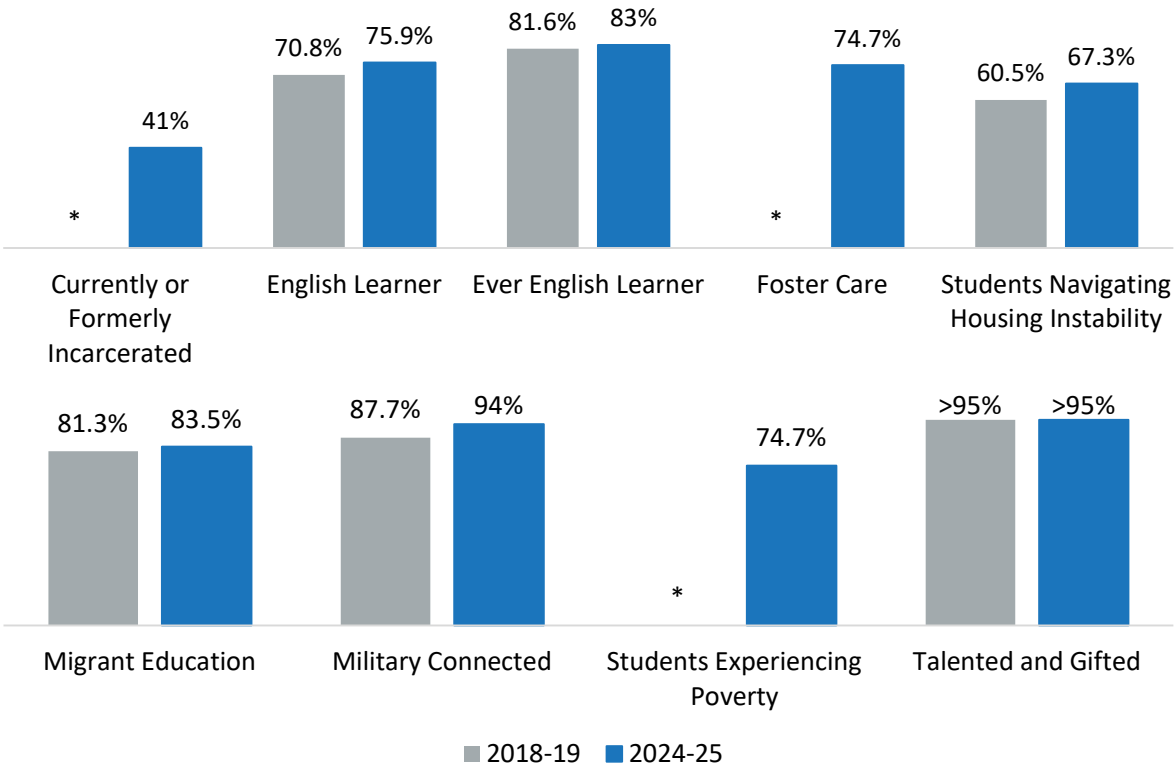
EXHIBIT 26: Ninth Grade On-Track Rates by Federally Defined Race and Ethnicity, 2018-19 and 2024-25



Most focal student groups with 2018-19 comparison data have reached or surpassed their pre-pandemic rates by 2024-25 (see Exhibit 28 below for each group's rates). Although Oregon's education system has historically faced challenges in supporting English Learners and Students with Disabilities to stay on track by the end of ninth grade, both groups reached record-high on-track rates in 2024–25—75.9 percent and 76.8 percent, respectively. The most significant improvement was students in foster care, whose on-track rate increased by 15.3 percentage points. However, the system continued to face its greatest challenge in supporting students navigating housing instability, with only 67.3 percent on track to graduate.

In 2024-25, female students were the highest gender on track to graduate, at 88.0%, followed by male (85.3%) then non-binary (79.3%).

EXHIBIT 27: Ninth Grade On-Track Rates by Student Focal Group, 2018-19 and 2024-25



*Data are not available for this student group for 2018-19.

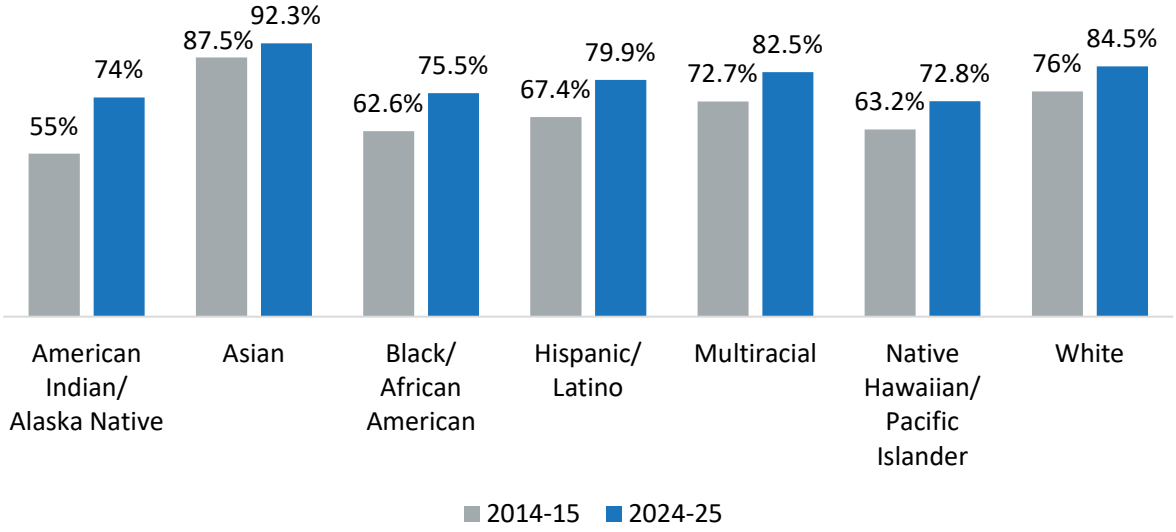
Four-year Cohort Graduation Rates

Cohort graduation rates are calculated using a student's first year of high school as their cohort, or peer group. The cohort is adjusted for students who move into or out of the system, emigrate, or are deceased. The graduation rate is calculated by taking the number of students in the cohort whom Oregon's education system graduates with a regular or modified diploma within four years and dividing that by the total number of students in the cohort.

- Four-Year Cohort Graduation - The percentage of students who earned a regular or modified diploma within four years of entering 9th grade.
- Five-Year Cohort Completion - The percentage of students who earned a regular or modified diploma, GED, extended diploma, or adult high school diploma within five years of entering 9th grade.

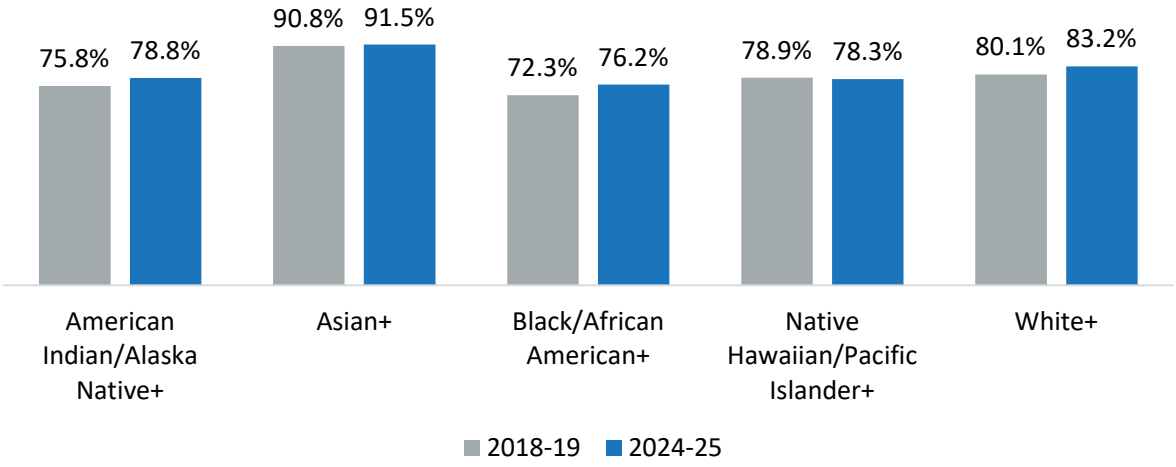
Graduation rates are a critical metric for measuring student success and the state's equity goals. Despite the challenges school communities still confront, in 2025, Oregon's four-year graduation rate was 83.0 percent. This is the highest graduation rate in Oregon's recorded history. In recent years, with a coordinated statewide focus on improving graduation rates through the High School Success initiative and other education initiatives, Oregon has made steady progress both in increasing graduation rates and narrowing inequalities, resulting in graduation rates much higher than the Class of 2015's rate of 73.8 percent.

EXHIBIT 28: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates for Federally Defined Race and Ethnicity, 2015 and 2025



Graduation rates for the Class of 2019 and 2025 are presented in Exhibit 29 below, using the expanded definition racial classifications.[31]

EXHIBIT 29: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Expanded Definition Race, 2019 and 2025



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Oregon's high school graduation rates for all student groups over the past decade had risen impressively. There was a dip in 2021-22, a loss of about a percentage point. The rate recovered fully and exceeded all prior years in 2024-25. Disparities remain, however, in graduation rates for students of color, students experiencing poverty, students who are English learners, and students with disabilities. Research over the past eight years, reflected in the QEC's collection of best practices, points to the implementation of continuous improvement processes, effective instructional practices, and personalized learning as key factors in Oregon's improving graduation rates.

31 See the full list of student groups in the trends report: ODE 2024-25 Cohort Trends Report

A good example of effective instructional practices and personalized learning can be seen in the graduation rates of students who complete state-approved courses in Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs of Study. CTE instruction incorporates standards-based academic content, technical skills, and workplace behaviors necessary for success in the chosen 21st century career path of the student. Among students beginning high school in 2021-22, the four-year graduation rate was 14.1 percentage points higher for CTE concentrators than for all students statewide, with graduation rates over 98 percent.

Outreach is needed to students, youth, parents, and families to build relationships, integrate culturally responsive practices and to provide wrap-around services. These are state investments the QEC would recommend in future biennia.

EXHIBIT 30: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates for Oregon Student Groups, 2023 and 2025

Student Group	Class of 2023	Class of 2025	Difference
Female	83.6%	85%	+1.4
Male	79.4%	81.4%	+2.0
Non-binary	71.8%	73.0%	+1.2
Special Education	68.6%	72.2%	+3.6
English Learners in High School	68.1%	69.8%	+1.7
Students Experiencing Poverty	67.2%	71.3%	+4.1
Talented and Gifted	96.3%	96.9%	+0.6
Migrant	81.6%	82.9%	+1.3
In Foster Care	46.9%	54.4%	+7.5
Military Connected	86.7%	86.9%	+0.2
CTE Participants	88.8%	91.3%	+2.5
CTE Concentrators	95%	97.8%	+2.8
Students Recently Arrived	63.3%	66.1%	+2.8
Students with Experience in Incarceration or Detention	35.8%	42.9%	+7.1

Five-year Cohort Completion Rates

Students sometimes encounter systems that do not make appropriate resources available and life hurdles that make it infeasible to graduate in four years. Districts and schools continue to support these students, and ODE reports their progress as being high school completers; this means that they graduate or earn a qualifying credential[32] in five years. This is another critical metric for measuring student success and the state's equity goals, and how educators do not give up on student learning for those who cannot fit inside the typical box.

In 2025, Oregon's Five-year Cohort Completion rate was 87.4 percent. As with the Four-year Cohort Graduation Rate, Oregon's K-12 education system has seen notable progress in terms of meeting the needs of students who take a little longer to clear the graduation hurdle. One notable exception is Oregon's progress for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students, which continues to be below pre-pandemic levels.

32 Five-Year Completers - The percentage of students who earned a regular or modified diploma, GED, extended diploma, or adult high school diploma within five years of entering 9th grade.

EXHIBIT 31: Five-Year Cohort Completion Rates by Expanded Definition Race and Ethnicity, 2019 and 2025

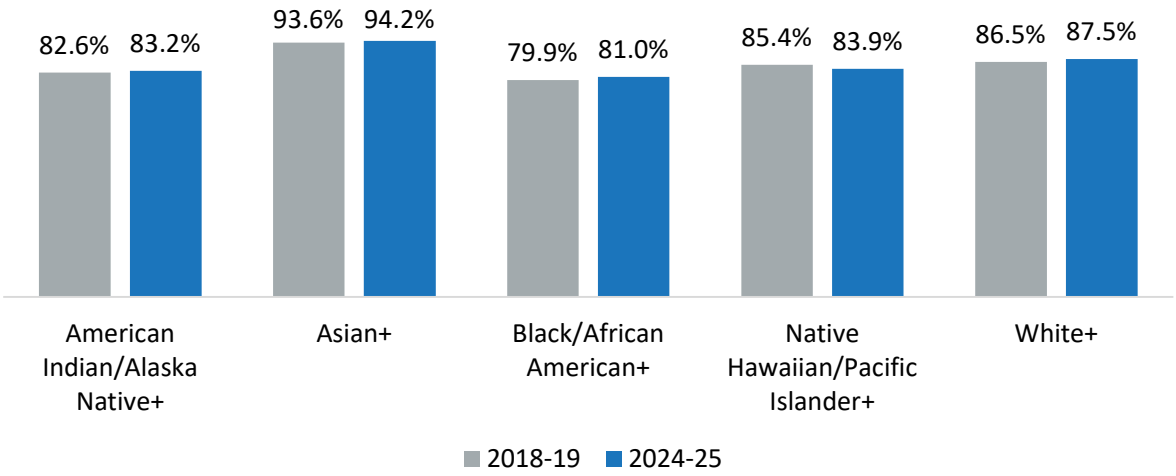


Exhibit 32 below shows that some tremendous gains were seen in Five-year Cohort Completer rates over the past ten years.[33] American Indian and Alaska Native students and Migrant students both saw gains over 12.5 percentage points, while Students Learning English in High School saw over 13 percentage points of increase. As expected, the student groups with the smallest increases were those that were already highly achieving in 2016, Talented and Gifted students and Asian students.

EXHIBIT 32: Five-Year Cohort Completion Rates by Student Group, 2016 and 2025

Student Group	Class of 2016	Class of 2025	Difference
All Students	81.9%	87.4%	+5.5
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	66.7%	79.3%	+12.6
Asian	91.9%	95.1%	+3.2
Black/African American	72.2%	80.5%	+8.3
Hispanic/Latino	76.5%	84.5%	+8
Multiracial	81.3%	86.7%	+5.4
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	73.6%	79.6%	+6.0
White	83.9%	88.7%	+4.8
CTE Concentrators	93.6%	98.7%	+5.1
English Learners in High School	62.9%	76.0%	+13.1
Migrant Students	73.8%	86.5%	+12.7
Special Education	64.9%	76.5%	+11.6
Talented and Gifted	96.8%	98.3%	+1.5

33 See all student groups in the trend report: ODE 2024-25 Cohort Trends Report. Current student groups that didn't have 2016 comparators were not included in this table.

State Summative Tests

Summative Testing Requirements in Oregon

Students enrolled in Oregon public schools are subject to a variety of assessment requirements originating at the federal, state, or local level. At the state level, school districts and public charter schools must administer statewide assessments in math, science, and English (reading and writing). At the federal level, states are required to annually assess their students in math, language arts, and science; the math and reading assessments are given in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in high school; the science assessment must be administered at least once in grades 3 through 5, grades 6 through 9, and in high school.

Federal requirements also include administering an English language proficiency assessment to all English Learner (EL) students to assess these students' English proficiency in the language domains of oral language (listening and speaking), reading, and writing. States must test all students eligible for services to determine their level of English language proficiency until the school district determines that the student is proficient in English.

Oregon complies with the state and federal requirements by administering the Oregon Statewide Assessment System (OSAS) to all students in grades 3-8 & 11; and administering the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) to all students currently classified as English Learners.

Proficiency Overview

In Oregon, proficiency means that students are consistently demonstrating mastery of grade-level expectations that help them be on track to graduate college and career ready, meaning that they should be able to begin college or university coursework without having to take remedial courses. Oregon state summative test results for student groups required for federal reporting in English language arts, mathematics, and science from 2018-19 (pre-pandemic) to spring 2025 are provided in Appendix A. Results for the Oregon Extended Assessment, which is an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, by grade for English language arts, mathematics, and science, from 2023-24 to 2024-25 are also included in Appendix A.

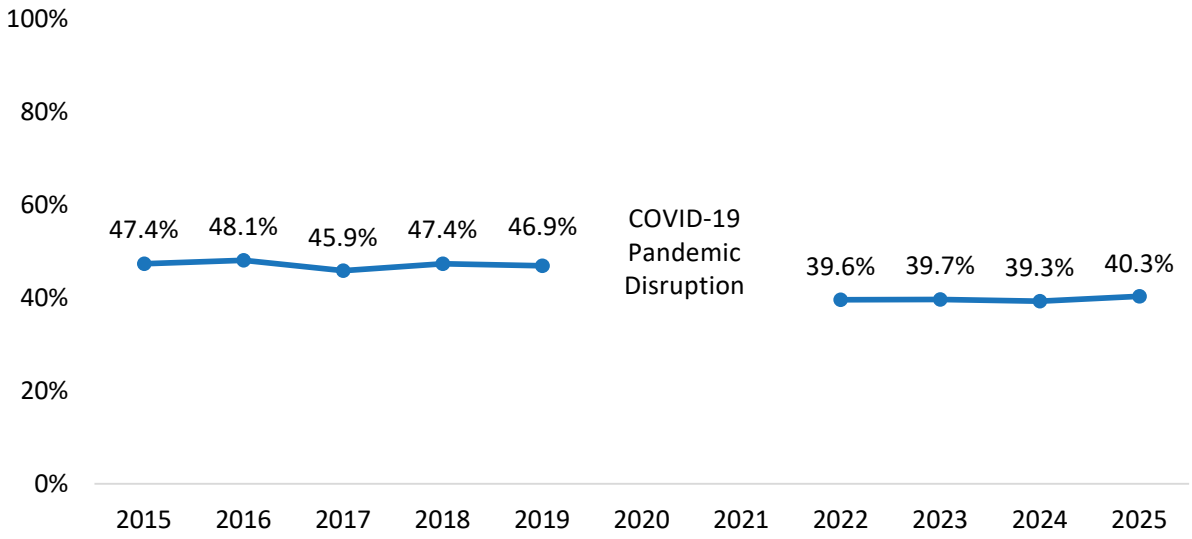
The Education Accountability Act (Senate Bill 141, 2025) includes three statewide summative assessment metrics in the Performance Growth Targets: 3rd Grade Reading or English Language Arts Proficiency, 5th Grade Science Achievement, and 8th Grade Mathematics Proficiency. More detailed information on each is included in the sections below.

Third Grade English Language Arts Proficiency

Third Grade English Language Arts proficiency has been a statewide summative assessment metric for over a decade that ODE and policy makers use to inform decisions about student learning and investments.[34] With the Student Success Act of 2019, it became a "Common Metric" in which school districts set targets for growth. It continues as a Common Metric under the Education Accountability Act. As seen in Exhibit 33 below, the statewide proficiency rates decreased with the COVID-19 pandemic and have not yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

34 2025 Oregon State Test Results Data Visualizations

EXHIBIT 33: OSAS Third Grade English Language Arts Proficiency by Year



Achievement by student group varies quite substantially from the All Students group, as seen in Exhibit 34 below. While federally defined Asian, Multi-Racial, and White students consistently achieve above the All Students group, each of the other student groups need more or different types of support in their early-grade literacy instruction. See the Oregon's Education Improvement Initiatives section later in this report for more information on early literacy investments.

EXHIBIT 34: OSAS Third Grade English Language Arts Proficiency by Student Group, 2023 to 2025

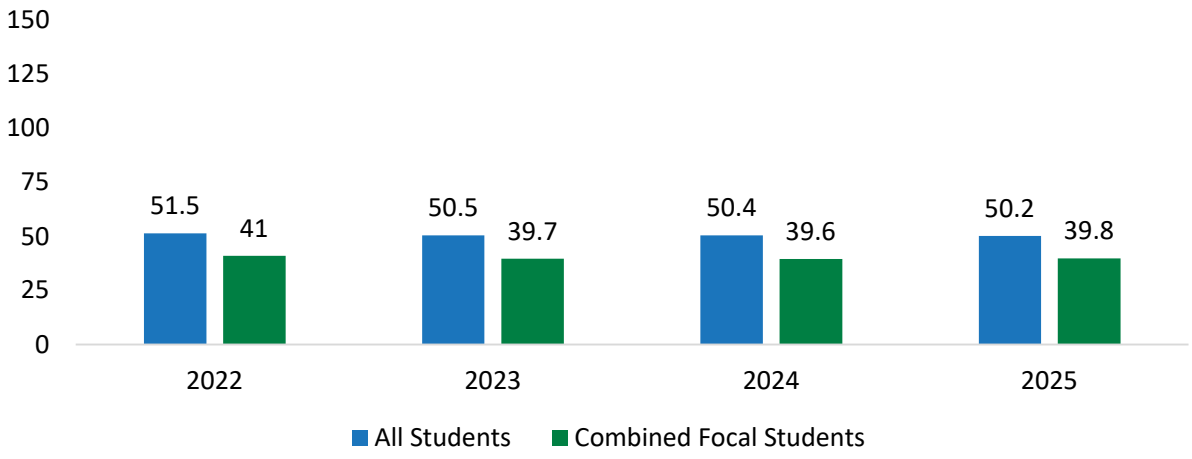
Student Group	2023	2024	2025
All Students	39.7%	39.3%	40.3%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	21.3%	22.1%	31.1%
Asian	58.3%	56.8%	53.3%
Black/ African American	22.1%	23.7%	24.2%
Hispanic/ Latino/a/x	22.4%	22.1%	22.6%
Multi-Racial	46.3%	45.6%	46.1%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	14.8%	19.9%	17.5%
White	46.4%	46.1%	48.1%
English Learners	7.7%	7.2%	6.3%
Students Experiencing Poverty	Not Available	22.4%	23.4%
Students with Disabilities	21.5%	21.1%	20.9%

Fifth Grade Science Achievement Index

In 2026, the State Board of Education adopted the Fifth Grade Science Achievement Index as a "Local Metric" in the accountability framework.[35] School districts and public charter schools can select it from five options to include in their local Performance Growth Targets. The Fifth Grade Science Achievement Index differs from the meets/does not meet proficiency used for 3rd Grade English Language Arts and 8th Grade Mathematics metrics, though all three use OSAS assessments. Instead, the index focuses on the entire distribution of achievement, awarding proficiency levels 2, 3, and 4 weights so that the metric more accurately reflects the levels of achievement.[36] The index score ranges from 0 (all students score at level 1 in the science assessment) to 150 (all students score at level 4 in the science assessment).

Exhibit 36 shows that very little variation has happened for both the All Students group and the Combined Focal Students group over the last four years. The gap size between the All Students and Combined Focal Students groups has been 10-11, staying consistent over the four years.

EXHIBIT 35: Fifth Grade Science Achievement Index by Student Group, 2022 to 2025



The Fifth Grade Science Achievement Index scale is 0-150; see the narrative for an explanation of this index.

Eighth Grade Mathematics Proficiency

As with 3rd Grade English Language Arts Proficiency, 8th Grade Mathematics also saw a steep drop with the COVID-19 Pandemic, and scores have yet to recover. In 2024-25, the rate, 28.9 percent, was still ten percentage points below pre-pandemic 2018-19, at 38.6 percent. There has been improvement seen since 2023, but this is not true for every student group as seen in Exhibit 37 below.

35 See the Education Accountability Act website for more information on the Performance Growth Target Metrics
36 See the EAA Local Metrics Technical Manual for more information: Education Accountability Act Local Metrics Technical Manual

EXHIBIT 36: OSAS Eighth Grade Mathematics Proficiency by Year

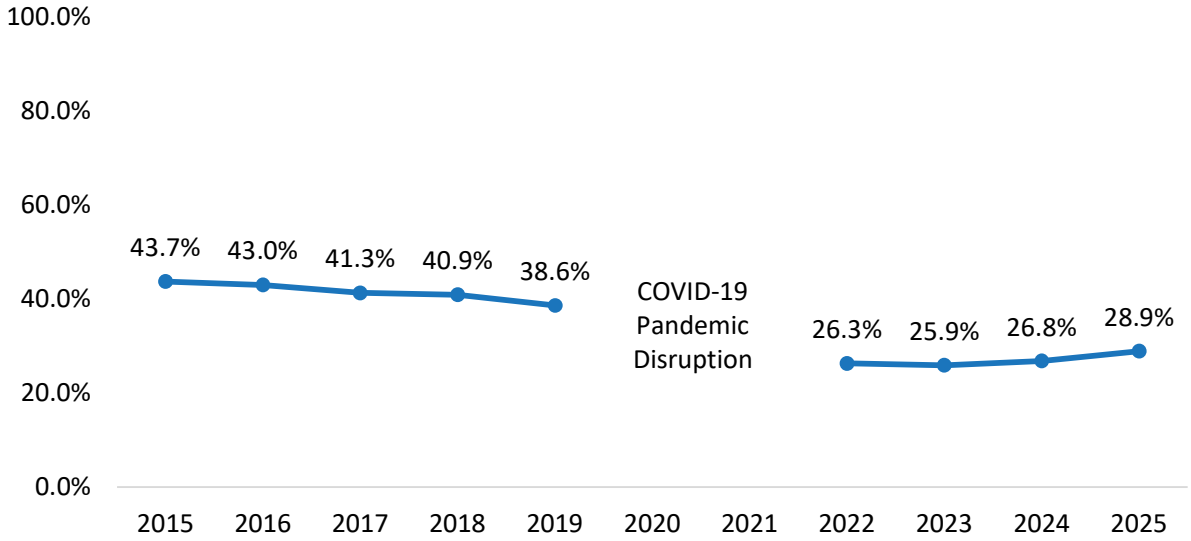


EXHIBIT 37: OSAS Eighth Grade Mathematics Proficiency by Student Group, 2023 to 2025

Student Group	2023	2024	2025
All Students	25.9%	26.8%	28.9%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	11.4%	12.7%	10.9%
Asian	54.3%	55%	56.6%
Black/ African American	9.9%	12.3%	13.8%
Hispanic/ Latino/a/x	12.3%	12.6%	13.9%
Multi-Racial	30.5%	31%	32.8%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	9.9%	7.2%	10.3%
White	30.8%	32%	34.9%
English Learners	<5%	<5%	<5%
Students Experiencing Poverty	Not Available	11.9%	13.5%
Students with Disabilities	8.6%	9.9%	9.5%

A Note on Participation

Participation rates are on the rise for all content areas, grades, and student groups, increasing by 2.7 percent in English language arts (ELA), 3.0 percent in mathematics, and 2.8 percent in science, across all tested grades. That said, statewide participation rates still do not meet federal participation requirements in any content area, nor at any grade level. Oregon's unique opt-out law[37] is cited as a main contributor to low participation rates for the ELA and math assessments. Participation is highest in the early grades and steadily declines toward high school, where the lowest participation rates are experienced. High school participation rates in 2022-23 ranged from 63.1 percent in Science to 70.7 percent in English language arts–well below the required threshold. Complete participation rates by grade and student group for the 2018-19 (pre-pandemic) to spring 2023 time period are provided in Appendix A.

37 ORS 329.479; See the 2026-27 notice and opt out form for more information

Low and uneven test participation adversely impacts the representativeness, comparability, utility, and validity of test data. The impact is largely due to the fact that nonparticipation is not random (which means test nonparticipation correlates with student, family, and community characteristics--disability status, wealth and affluence, geography, religious and political views, etc.). Low and uneven test participation makes it difficult to monitor achievement over time, measure gaps between groups, and determine whether schools and districts are meeting accountability targets.

Class Size

Reducing class size is a big cost driver in education. Research indicates that children in smaller classes are more successful, both academically and otherwise, particularly in elementary grades, and that class size reduction can be an effective strategy for closing racially or socioeconomically-based achievement gaps.[38]

The largest class size study, the Tennessee's Student Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) was a four-year longitudinal study that found smaller class sizes had a positive effect on student learning.[39] The STAR research shows that small classes (15-17 pupils) in kindergarten through third grade (K-3) provide short- and long-term benefits for students, teachers, and society at large.

Although all students benefit, poor, minority, and male students reap extra benefits in terms of improved test scores, school engagement, and reduced grade retention and dropout rates. Oregon educators continue to cite large class size as an impediment to student learning.[40] Class size continues to be a topic of conversation as a potential, yet costly, solution for improving learning for Oregon's students.[41] Research indicates that large reductions in class sizes, especially in the early grades and especially for some focal student groups can make a meaningful long-term difference for students - especially when classes are led by effective educators.[42]

Oregon began collecting class size data in 1997, but the collection has altered over the years to include more detailed data elements. In 2013, the calculation was improved to use teacher staffing numbers in schools rather than the number of adults in the school, the use of which had artificially lowered class size calculations.

Median class sizes remained static until 2020-21, when pandemic-related changes in course scheduling and record keeping in some districts made comparison to prior years difficult. For 2020-21, all class size medians decreased at the state-level contrasted to all previous years. Self-contained classes decreased by 1.5 to 5.5 students per class. Departmentalized classes decreased by 7-9 students per class. These changes were expected due to schools following the Ready Schools, Safe Learners Guidance[43] to schedule smaller class cohorts to prevent COVID-19 transmission through adequate social distancing within enclosed classrooms. Individual schools also showed overly large class sizes and increased medians in some cases. These increases may indicate that the school was offering comprehensive distance learning on the first weekday in May.

Since 2020-21 and the return to largely in-person classes, class size medians have gradually increased. Self-contained classes have increased by 2.0 students on average in kindergarten through sixth grade. Departmentalized classes have increased by 5.7 students on average for all core courses.

Funds available through the Student Success Act may be used to reduce class sizes. For the 2022 report, the QEC changed its class size assumptions in elementary grades to better match the social/emotional and learning needs of students. Kindergarten classes are the only classes in Oregon that meet current QEM class size goals.

38 C.M. Achilles, et al, The STAR Experiment and Related Class-Size Studies. NCPEA Policy Brief. Volume 1, Number 2 , 2008.
39 Achilles, C.M. et al (2012). Class-size Policy: The Star Experiment and Related Class-size Studies. NCPEA Policy Brief, 1.2. 43
40 Tell Survey Results
41 Page 8 of the 2023 Oregon Statewide Educator Survey Report
42 Chingos, M. and Whitehurst, G. (2011). Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy.
43 Ready Schools Safe Learners 2020-21 Guidance

Workforce Diversity

In the 2024-25 school year, Oregon employed 31,342 teachers, of which 14.1 percent were teachers of color (teachers who were identified in state reporting as Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races). In the 2024-25 school year, the proportion of both teachers and students of color increased, with the proportion of students of color increasing at a slightly higher rate compared to prior years.

The benefits of a teacher workforce that mirrors its student demographics are multifold. Studies investigating the impact of racial matching for teachers and students found positive results on racially, ethnically and/or linguistically diverse student test scores and improved perceptions of teachers of color for White students, a key facet of developing anti-racism in today's schools and society.[44] Another longitudinal study provided evidence that Black students taught by a Black teacher at least once between third and fifth grade were less likely to drop out of high school and more likely to aspire to go to college.[45] Most recently, results suggest that Black students are more likely to take advanced coursework if taught by a Black teacher.[46] "National trends show that many educators of color leave much more often and sooner than their White counterparts. Thus, strategies to increase workforce diversity in the teaching profession must address the conditions that diverse educators experience at every step along their career continuum from enrollment in educator preparation to retirement."[47]

The percentage of Oregon's teachers who are racially and ethnically diverse continues to increase, slowly and steadily. As shown in Exhibit 38 below, the gap between teacher and student diversity has been stable since 2018-19, at around 28 percentage points.

There are three times as many racially and ethnically diverse early career teachers (0-3 years) in the Oregon K-12 school system as there were ten years ago, and nearly half (45.6 percent) of all racially and ethnically diverse teachers in the 2023-24 school year were in the first five years of their teaching career.[48]

This means that retention of early career teachers will be critical to making progress on the diversity of Oregon's educator workforce and any efforts to reduce the gap between student and teacher diversity.

44 Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007. How and Why do Teacher Credentials Matter for Student Achievement? | NBER

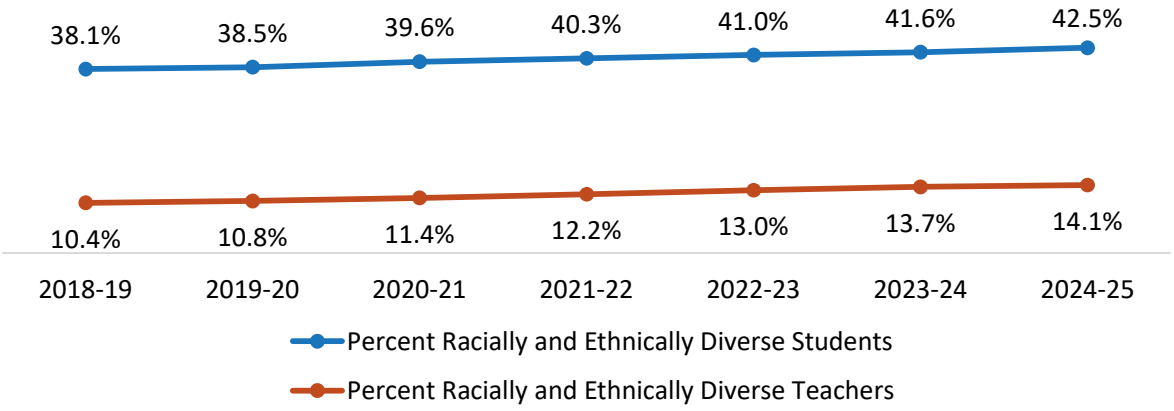
45 Gershenson, et al., 2017. The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers - American Economic Association

46 Hart, 2020. An Honors Teacher Like Me: Effects of Access to Same-Race Teachers on Black Students' Advanced-Track Enrollment and Performance, 2020

47 2022 Oregon Educator Equity Report, page 15

48 2024 Oregon Educator Equity Report, page 6

EXHIBIT 38: Oregon Student and Teacher Racial and Ethnic Diversity Trends



Data Source: Fall Membership and Staff Position Collections

Additional analyses based upon multiple positions within K-12 public education from 2025-26 is conveyed in Exhibit 39 below. It is notable that administrative-level positions, such as Superintendent, are generally less diverse by race/ethnicity compared to support-level positions, such as non-licensed staff. Comparing federally defined race and ethnicity to the expanded definition we see that percentages are much higher for American Indian and Alaska Native+ staff and students, especially non-licensed staff, and the difference between White+ staff and students is significantly smaller.

EXHIBIT 39: Staff and Student Race and Ethnicity by Federal and Expanded Definitions, 2025-26

Demographic Group	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Multi-racial	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	White	American Indian/ Alaska Native+	Asian +	Black/ African American +	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander +	White +
District Administration	1.81%	0.72%	2.53%	6.14%	1.44%	0.00%	87.36%	3.97%	1.44%	2.89%	0.00%	93.14%
Non-Licensed Staff	1.04%	3.09%	4.45%	17.67%	1.91%	0.64%	71.20%	5.18%	4.34%	5.57%	1.43%	87.59%
Other Licensed Staff	0.81%	2.65%	2.56%	14.03%	2.30%	0.44%	77.21%	4.52%	3.93%	3.65%	1.08%	90.39%
School Administration	0.72%	1.96%	2.34%	9.16%	1.81%	0.29%	83.72%	3.34%	3.05%	3.48%	0.81%	92.74%
Special Education Support Staff	0.80%	3.37%	1.83%	12.96%	2.43%	0.39%	78.21%	4.09%	4.44%	2.60%	0.99%	91.33%
Teachers	0.56%	2.31%	0.87%	8.16%	2.10%	0.27%	85.72%	3.00%	3.49%	1.56%	0.70%	94.37%
All Staff	0.79%	2.75%	2.45%	12.87%	2.12%	0.43%	78.59%	4.12%	3.95%	3.36%	1.03%	91.08%
K-12 Students	1.08%	4.09%	2.55%	26.58%	7.62%	0.92%	57.13%	6.94%	7.89%	6.30%	2.51%	87.45%

Federally defined race and ethnicity data are the left, magenta columns while the expanded definition races are on the right, with a + sign in the label. Data Source: Fall Membership and Staff Position Collections.

Educator Workforce Shortage

In addition to educator workforce diversity challenges, Oregon is facing an educator shortage and educator turnover that impacts staff morale and student learning. According to the Educator Advancement Council's 2024 report,[49] "Longitudinal analysis of turnover across educator groups in the Oregon public school system reveals a consistent pattern.[…]Before the COVID-19 pandemic, turnover rates were relatively stable. Educator retention rates were relatively high in 2007 when the broader labor market was good, declined through the onset of the Great Recession and increased in 2011 when school budgets in the state were strained. Even throughout the recessionary period turnover stayed within a range of a few percentage points. However, after a slight decrease in the 2019-20 school year, turnover for all groups surged significantly in the subsequent years during the COVID-19 pandemic. By the 2021-22 school year, turnover reached historic highs for all educators: 23.5 percent for teachers, 27.9 percent for administrators, 32.5 percent for paraprofessionals, and 28.0 percent for support staff." The report highlights the need to invest not just in recruitment and related strategies, but also address workforce conditions in schools for educators of color in order to help nurture and sustain their commitment to the vocation and provide support like mentoring for every new educator.

The Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities at the ODE produced a white paper on best practices to support students with individualized education programs, addressing workforce shortages for special education:[50]

> *As of November 2023, Oregon school districts reported more than 1,000 open education related positions, including teachers, counselors, and support staff. In response to these shortages, districts have increasingly relied on emergency licensure to fill special education positions, with more than 130 educators working under emergency credentials in special education roles.*
>
> *While emergency licensure allows schools to continue providing services, it also reflects the depth of the workforce shortage. Educators working under emergency credentials may require additional training and mentoring to effectively implement specialized instructional practices.*
>
> *Shortages extend beyond special education teachers. Many districts report difficulty recruiting and retaining related service providers and specialized personnel. High need roles include:*
>
> - *School psychologists*
> - *Speech language pathologists*
> - *Occupational therapists*
> - *Physical therapists*
> - *Teachers for students who are visually impaired*
> - *Teachers for students who are deaf or hard of hearing*
> - *Autism and behavior specialists*
> - *Instructional and educational assistants*
>
> *These professionals provide essential services that support student access to instruction, communication development, and social emotional growth. When positions remain vacant or caseloads become excessively large, the ability of schools to deliver timely and comprehensive services may be compromised.*

49 2024 Oregon Educator Equity Report, Page 13

50 Olaloye, R. (2026). Strategic Investment in Special Education: Enhancing Quality, Equity, and Outcomes for All Students. Page 6.

The ODE has also begun gathering data directly from educators, amplifying their concerns and appreciations. In 2025, the pilot year, the Elevating Voices in Education (EVE) workforce survey had 13,726 participants–which represents approximately 16% of Oregon's public K-12 workforce. While not broadly representational, the survey found that Administrators, staff, teachers, and undisclosed professional roles have different perceptions and experiences with respect to their job satisfaction; however, there are commonalities across these professional roles. For instance, the majority of all four professional roles selected not satisfied, a little satisfied, or partially satisfied concerning their workload and opportunities to work from home. On the other hand, the majority of administrators, staff, teachers, and undisclosed professional roles selected mostly satisfied or very satisfied regarding paid leave, work schedule, and their overall experience at work.[51] See the next section with more EVE workforce survey information and findings.

In response to workforce concerns, the 2022 Legislature passed House Bill 4030, the Educator Workforce Bill, that features several short-term policy changes and a $100 million, one-time investment focused on helping to address Oregon's educator workforce shortages. The bill provided for training opportunities, relaxed reciprocity agreements, recruitment and retention grants, and additional support for Teachers Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC). The 2021 Legislature enacted HB 2166, which allows the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to permit accredited educator preparation providers to offer nontraditional pathways to licensure and increases the scholarship amount for diverse teacher candidates from $5,000 to $10,000. In 2023, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 283,[52] which established the EVE workforce survey, a task force on substitute teachers, a task force on educator salaries, ESD superintendent employment protections, and other educator-related actions.

Elevating Voices in Education (EVE) Workforce Survey

The Elevating Voices in Education (EVE) Workforce Survey is a voluntary, anonymous, and confidential annual education workforce survey administered by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and required by Section 4 of Senate Bill (SB) 283 from the 2023 legislative session and subsequently by Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 342.676. The purpose of the EVE Workforce Survey is to (a) collect information about the workplace experiences and perceptions of Oregon's public K-12 education workforce, and (b) make this information available to public K-12 education providers, Oregon State Legislature, state agency partners, education partners, and the public at-large (which also includes Oregon's current and prospective K-12 education workforce).

Unlike previous statewide education workforce surveys in Oregon (e.g., Oregon Statewide Educator Survey [OSES] and Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning [TELL] Survey), the EVE Workforce Survey expands the focus beyond licensed teachers and administrators to all employees of public K-12 education providers including part-time, full-time, and contract licensed and classified staff (e.g., instructional support staff, administrative support staff, substitute teachers, custodial and facilities, nutrition and food services, transportation staff, among many others). Given the broader scope, EVE Workforce Survey represents a unique opportunity to hear the voices of adults who directly and indirectly support the learning and well-being of students. 13,726 administrators, staff, and teachers across Oregon participated in the EVE Workforce Survey in 2025. This represented approximately 15.5 percent of Oregon's public K-12 education workforce in the 2024-25 school year. Although participation was low and uneven across Oregon, ODE views this level of participation as promising and encouraging given that the EVE Workforce Survey was a pilot survey in 2025.

51 Elevating Voices in Education (EVE) Workforce Survey 2025 Legislative Report, Page 11
52 Senate Bill 283

Initial Results

The following are examples of results pertaining to sense of belonging,[53] stress, meaningful work,[54] and job satisfaction. Please note the results are only representative of the administrators, staff, and teachers who had an opportunity to participate in the EVE Workforce Survey.

- Sense of belonging: The majority of administrators, staff, teachers, and undisclosed professional roles selected mostly true or very true with respect to statements representing their connection to their workplace. This suggests a reasonably strong sense of belonging among those individuals who participated in the EVE Workforce Survey.
- Stress: The majority of administrators, staff, teachers, and undisclosed professional roles selected frequently or almost always with respect to how often they experience stress at work. This suggests those individuals who participated in the EVE Workforce Survey experienced considerable stress in schools, districts, and ESDs.
- Meaningful work: The majority of administrators, staff, teachers, and undisclosed professional roles selected mostly true or very true with respect to statements representing how meaningful their work is. This suggests, despite the stress they experienced, those individuals who participated in the EVE Workforce Survey found meaning, value, and fulfillment in their work.
- Job satisfaction: Administrators, staff, teachers, and undisclosed professional roles have different perceptions and experiences with respect to their job satisfaction; however, there are commonalities across these professional roles. For instance, the majority of all four professional roles selected not satisfied, a little satisfied, or partially satisfied concerning their workload and opportunities to work from home. On the other hand, the majority of administrators, staff, teachers, and undisclosed professional roles selected mostly satisfied or very satisfied regarding paid leave, work schedule, and their overall experience at work.

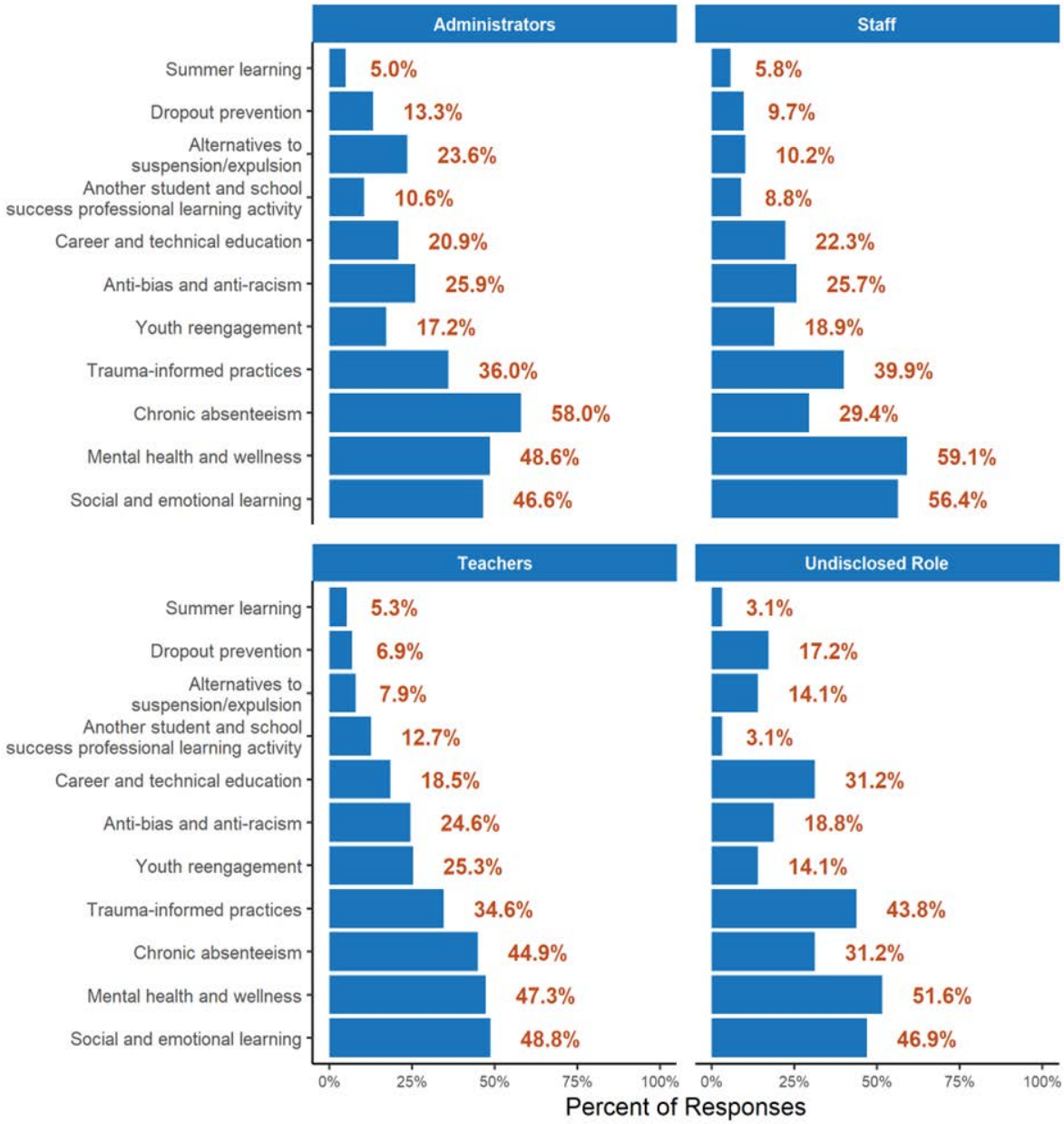
A few of the item responses are featured in Exhibit 40 below. Note that since participation among Oregon education staff was relatively low and uneven, the data are not representative of all Oregon administrators, staff, and teachers. Please see the 2025 EVE Workforce Survey Legislative Report[55] for more information and all survey items.

53 Sense of belonging represents an individual's feeling of identity, value, inclusion, and acceptance as a member of their workplace community.

54 Meaningful work refers to an individual's sense of meaning, fulfillment, and purpose they experience at work

55 Elevating Voices in Education (EVE) Workforce Survey 2025 Legislative Report

EXHIBIT 40: 2025 EVE Survey Responses to the Question "Which of the following professional learning areas related to student and school success are a priority for you right now?"



Student Health Survey (SHS)

The Oregon Health Authority and the ODE partner to administer the Student Health Survey (SHS) annually to 6th, 8th, and 11th graders in Oregon which collects students' experiences about general health and safety, mental and behavioral health, and school climate and culture.[56]

56 Learn more about the Student Health Survey at Oregon SHS Data Portal

Along with the Student Educational Equity Development (SEED) Survey, it is mandated in law that school districts provide all eligible students with an opportunity to participate in the Student Health Survey. The SHS is an anonymous online survey that is currently available in the most commonly used languages in Oregon (i.e., Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Arabic, and English).

The SHS collects students' self-assessment on developmental milestones to help community leaders measure the progress of student communities toward the "Positive Youth Development" (PYD) benchmark. The PYD is an important metric that brings together students' responses to seven questions around interpersonal skills, supportive relationships, meaningful opportunities, and healthy environments. For a student to meet the benchmark, they must respond affirmatively to five of the PYD metric questions. In 2024-25, most 6th, 8th, and 11th graders met the PYD benchmark. However, more than one in four 6th, 8th, and 11th graders did not meet the PYD benchmark.

EXHIBIT 41: Statewide Measure of Youth Development Benchmark, 2024-25

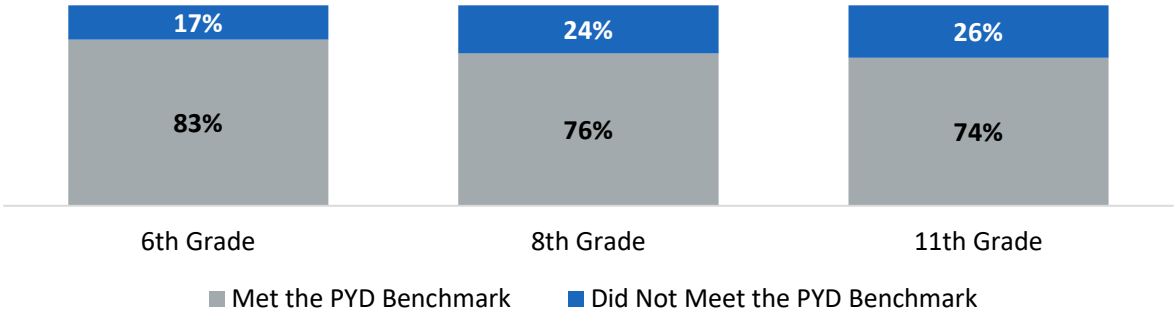


EXHIBIT 42: Combined (All) Student Responses to PYD Questions, 2024-25

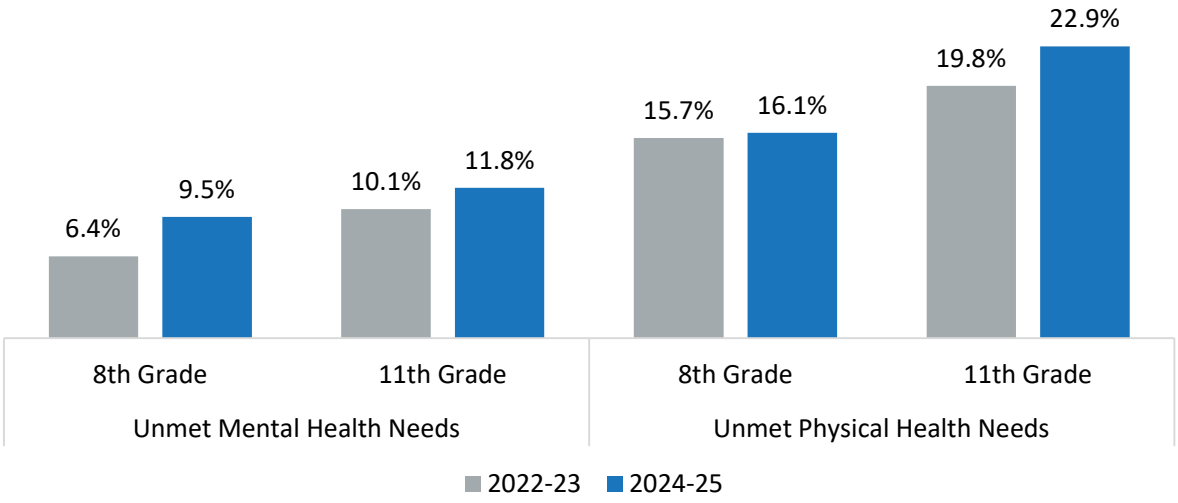
All Grades Combined (6th, 8th, and 11th)	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Would you say that in general your emotional and mental health is…	12%	19%	28%	21%	11%
Would you say that in general your physical health is…	17%	26%	32%	17%	5%

All Grades Combined (6th, 8th, and 11th)	Very Much True	Pretty Much True	A Little True	Not At All True
I can work out my problems.	27%	41%	23%	4%
I can do most things if I try	35%	44%	16%	2%
There is at least one teacher or other adult in my school that really cares about me.	37%	40%	5%	2.5%
There are people in my life who encourage me to do my best.	59%	25%	11%	2%
I believe that I can make a difference in my community.	23%	26%	26%	12%

Variances across grades statewide for each response are negligible.

The SHS also asks students whether they have experienced any mental or physical health care needs that were not met. Unmet health needs can directly affect students' ability to focus, participate, and succeed in school. When students cannot access timely mental or physical health support, challenges such as anxiety, chronic pain, or untreated conditions can escalate and interfere with learning, attendance, and overall wellbeing. In 2024, students in 8th and 11th grades reported higher unmet mental needs and lower unmet physical needs compared to 2022.

EXHIBIT 43: 8th and 11th Grades Reported Unmet Health Needs, 2022-23 and 2024-2025



Applying the SHS

The SHS is a crucial source of student voice that provides essential information about factors that impact learning to school districts, state agencies, and community partners. Districts and communities can use SHS results to monitor student perceptions and experiences, identify disparities, and make informed adjustments that better address the needs and concerns highlighted by students.

In addition to overall trends, SHS data can be examined across a wide range of demographic groups, including grade level, race and ethnicity, disability status, gender identity, and more. The survey also captures key social and economic indicators such as housing stability, food insecurity, and access to basic needs; which help districts understand how factors outside of school shape student wellbeing and engagement. This level of detail allows districts to identify and address inequities with greater precision and to design interventions that reflect the lived experiences of their students.

The Early Learning Transition Check-In

Established in rule by the Oregon State Board of Education,[57] the Early Learning Transition Check-In: A Collaborative Engagement with Community (ELTC) is Oregon's process to reimagine the former Oregon Kindergarten Assessment (OKA) with community.[58] It is a joint effort between Oregon's Department of Education (ODE) and Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC). Both agencies intentionally chose not to reinstate the OKA, instead launching the ELTC to research a reimagined approach. ODE and DELC heard from families and educators that the way the original OKA was implemented was not consistently culturally responsive and, when implemented poorly, was harmful to some children and families, particularly those from communities already feeling marginalization by Oregon's educational system. To redesign the OKA, ODE and DELC held a series of listening sessions with community members and created an advisory board composed of education partners and researchers. Through these engagements, the advisory board

57 See OAR 581-022-2130 to see the rule establishing the ELTC
58 Find more information on the ELTC here: Early Learning Transition: For Families: State of Oregon

recommendation was to prioritize relationship-building with families through strengths-based conversation. Originally known as the Family Interview, this approach was later renamed the Family Conversation to better reflect its purpose of elevating family voice, strengthening educator–family connections, and gathering meaningful information about children's early learning experiences prior to kindergarten. The Family Conversation has been through multiple pilots and continues to evolve as the mechanism to shift practice to a more justice-centered assessment system by changing focus from children being "kindergarten ready" to informing systems so they are "ready for kindergarteners" no matter the experiences they had. In 2024-25, 50 schools across 15 districts piloted the check-in, receiving over 1800 entries as well as surveying educators.

WHAT EDUCATORS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE FAMILY CONVERSATION

"I learned so many details about each student and their home life. When we came to school, I was able to use those as a way to connect with them. It made building relationships easier."

"The information about my students helped me know background situations and gave me a different perspective on their actions or behaviors in class."

Student Educational Equity Development Survey

The Student Educational Equity Development (SEED) Survey is administered annually to 3rd-11th graders in Oregon. The survey centers student voice by asking students to share about their schooling experiences across eight research-informed domains: access to learning resources, sense of belonging, opportunity to learn, self-efficacy, post-graduation planning, extracurricular engagement, career connected learning, and well-rounded education. This information helps to identify levers that education systems can focus their efforts on in order to improve student outcomes. SEED results are meant to be used in tandem with other data to provide a holistic picture of public education systems in Oregon.

By law, all school districts must provide all eligible students with an opportunity to participate in the SEED Survey.[59] The SEED Survey is delivered through Oregon's state Test Delivery System, which allows students all accessibility supports they might need to be able to respond. The SEED Survey is currently available in the most commonly used languages in Oregon (i.e., Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Arabic and English).

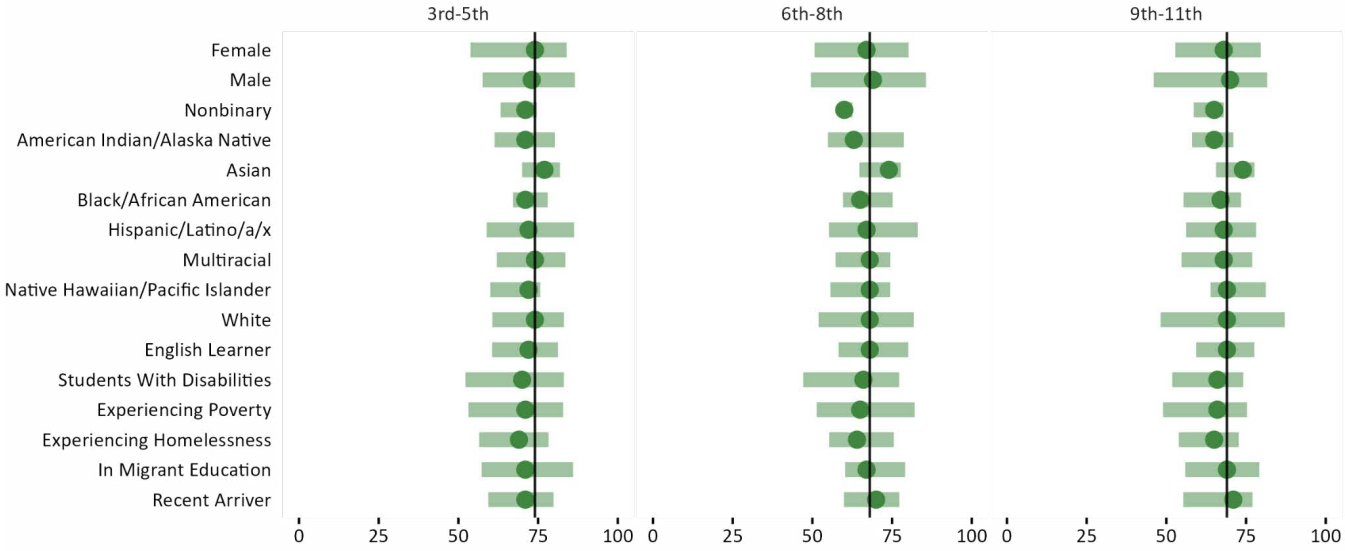
The SEED Survey responses are connected to the students' statewide ID number, which enables the ODE to explore how schooling experiences differ across students and connect to key outcomes, including attendance and summative test scores. The ODE has published several reports and research briefs as of the writing of this QEM Report, a selection of which are listed below.

- 2024-2025 SEED Survey State Report
- Sense of Belonging by Grade Band and Student Group
- Sense of Belonging: Domain Scores and Connection to Outcomes
- Formative Instructional Practices, Self-Efficacy, and Math Achievement in 4th Grade
- Creating Schools Where LGBTQ2SIA+ Students Can Thrive
- Post-Graduation Planning

59 See ORS 329.078 for the law requiring administration of the SEED survey. Districts must make the survey available following SEED Survey Administration Manual guidelines, per OAR 581-022-2100.

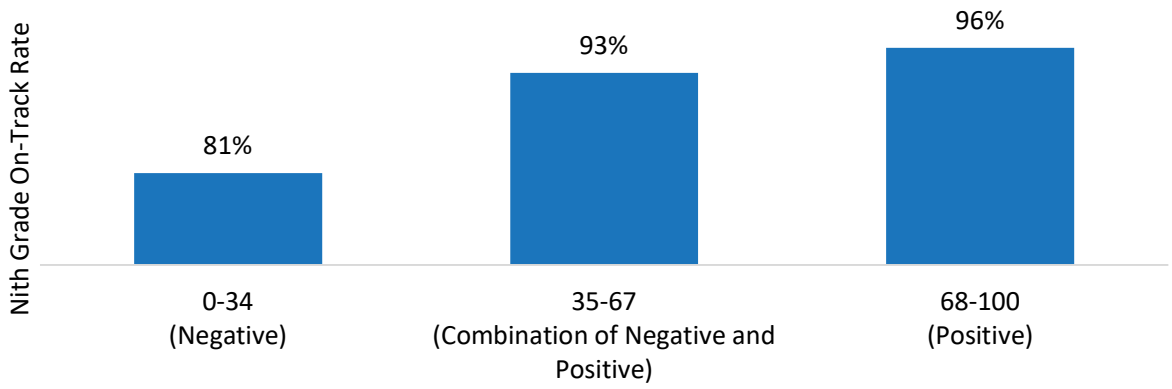
Some highlighted findings for sense of belonging are shown below. Findings utilize domain scores, which have a possible range of 0-100. Scores between 0-34 reflect negative perceptions, those between 35-67 reflect a combination of positive and negative perceptions, and those 68 or higher reflect positive perceptions. Exhibit 44 displays variation in sense of belonging by student group. Exhibit 45 shows the relationship between student sense of belonging and 9th Grade On-Track.

EXHIBIT 44: Sense of Belonging Domain Scores by Student Group, 2024-25Exhibit 45: Low Sense of Belonging is Associated with Lower Ninth Grade On-Track Rates



The dark green circle indicates the state-level score for each group, and the light green box indicates the score range across districts in Oregon with at least 10 responses. The vertical black line indicates the state-level score for all students.

EXHIBIT 45: Low Sense of Belonging is Associated with Lower Ninth Grade On-Track Rates



The SEED Survey data above show small but consistent gaps in sense of belonging among certain student groups, including students navigating housing instability and students experiencing poverty. Additionally, data demonstrate that students who feel a greater sense of belonging at school are also more likely to be on track to graduate by the end of their 9th Grade school year (meaning that they have earned at least 6 course credits).

In addition to these close-ended measures, the SEED Survey also provides students with an opportunity to write about their experiences at school. Some examples of statements that students shared related to their sense of belonging include:

"So far, I have liked my school experience. Whenever I walk into school, I feel safe and I feel like the decisions being made for the students have been made with a better future for us in mind." - Oregon Student, 2024-2025

"There's a handful of Black students [at my school] and I am one of them. I just wish there was more cultural awareness, appreciation, and things of that matter for everyone. I feel very unwelcome sometimes. This would change other students' experience by creating a more inviting environment for all students so everyone can feel like they belong and are safe in school." - Oregon Student, 2024-2025

Applying the SEED Survey

Oregon has a powerful tool for assessing our success in creating supportive learning environments. The SEED Survey should be used by districts to monitor student sense of well-being and learning opportunities in schools and address the gaps students identify. Schools can address factors that contribute to unsupportive learning environments by implementing systems that build student resiliency, recognize student assets, and increase equity of opportunity. The data from the SEED Survey is valuable and should be used to inform those efforts.

The data the SEED survey gives districts is rich information about student experience. The QEC believes that a statewide commitment to having students complete the survey, working with staff and students to review the results and make plans for addressing issues students identify will support improvements in student success, from addressing reasons students feel disconnected from school (and as a result, are at greater risk for non-attendance) to addressing issues that impact staff effectiveness in supporting student achievement on state standards.

The Education Accountability Act

Oregon students and communities deserve excellent schools; schools that are accountable to their student's success. The 2025 Oregon Education Accountability Act (EAA) ensures that state resources and attention are focused on delivering positive learning experiences and strong outcomes for every student, while closing long-standing gaps that disproportionately affect historically underserved communities.

The Education Accountability Act, or Senate Bill 141, was passed by the Oregon legislature in 2025 and is designed to build a stronger, more transparent accountability framework across Oregon's K-12 schools. It builds on a framework of shared responsibility among the Oregon Department of Education, the Legislature, Education Service Districts, Tribes, school districts, and community partners for student outcomes.

The EAA covers a wide range of topics, from school district performance to instructional material review processes to reductions in reporting to the ODE.[60] The ODE has organized implementation of the Act into the following areas of focus:

- **Streamlined Reporting:** The ODE currently administers 126 state and federal programs. As a result, school districts face a large administrative load, including completing reports, answering narrative questions, responding to assurances and more, for each of their grants. The ODE is committed to significantly reducing the total number of pieces of information school districts are asked to submit.
- **District Performance and Continuum of Supports:** The EAA sets new expectations for school districts and for the Oregon Department of Education to measure outcomes and monitor progress in order to improve student outcomes. This will create a transparent, equity-centered system where all Oregon districts have the clarity, tools, and aligned resources needed to continuously improve and meet student success priorities, resulting in measurable, sustained gains in student learning and well-being. More information about this part of implementation is in the next section.
- **Public Transparency:** The Oregon Department of Education is working to expand access to timely, accurate, and actionable information to support shared accountability and informed decision-making across Oregon's education system. The ultimate goal is to foster trust, strengthen engagement, and promote transparency by ensuring that families, educators, and communities have clear, accessible insights into student outcomes, district performance, and the supports and resources available to schools and learners. Key agency actions include publishing an annual performance report that compares district progress against growth targets, enhancing grant budget reporting systems, centralizing existing reports in one easy-to-navigate location, and developing dashboards to make academic and financial data more accessible.
- **Interim Tests:** The EAA includes new requirements related to interim tests in math and English language arts for grades K-8. Under the bill, school districts and charter schools must:
    - Select interim tests from the State Board of Education-adopted list.
    - Administer interim tests in math and language arts three times per year in grades K-8.
    - Review interim test data at least three times per year with administrators from each school and during a public meeting with the superintendent and school board.

    The Oregon State Board of Education has adopted an approved list of interim tests districts and public charters can choose from:

    - iReady (Curriculum Associates)
    - MAP (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)
    - Smarter Balanced (delivered via Cambium)
    - Star (Renaissance)

60 See the full bill text: Senate Bill 141

District Performance and Continuum of Supports

Longitudinal Performance Growth Targets (LPGTs) were established in statute within the Student Investment Account (SIA) portion of the Student Success Act of 2019.[61] The EAA builds on these metrics and targets and expands their use beyond the SIA grants. Under EAA, these are now called Performance Growth Targets (PGTs) to differentiate from the prior targets.

District and Charter School Performance Growth Targets

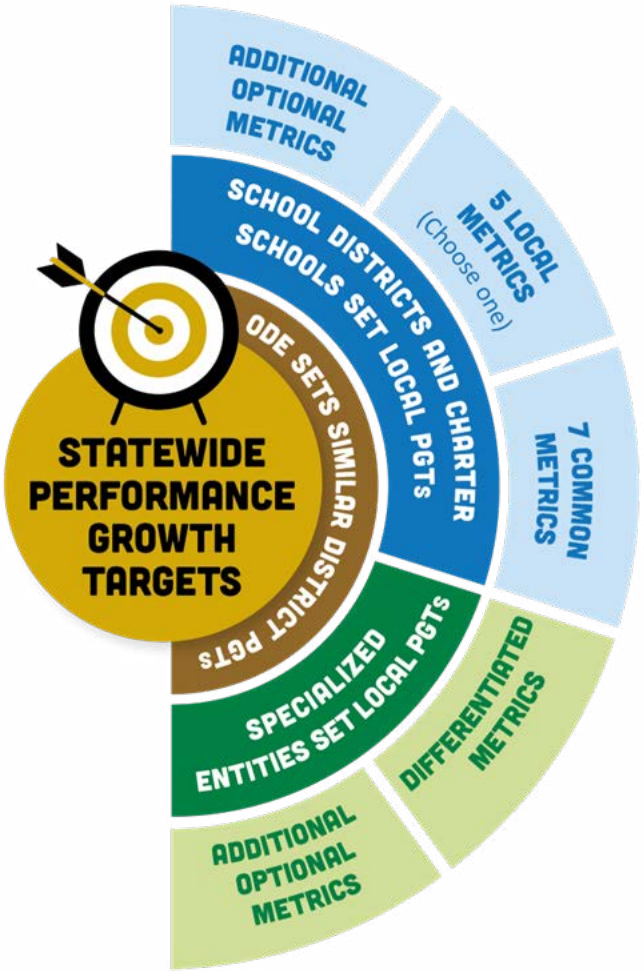
To measure the increase in academic achievement for students as well as the reduction in academic disparities for focal student groups, school districts and charter schools set four years of targets, beginning with the 2026-27 school year.

There are seven common metrics that make up the PGTs for school districts and charter schools:

1. K-12 Regular Attender rate;
2. 3rd Grade English Language Arts Proficiency rate;
3. 9th Grade On-Track to Graduate rate;
4. 4-Year Cohort Graduation rate;
5. 5 Year-Cohort Completion rate;
6. K-2 Regular Attender rate; and
7. 8th Grade Mathematics Proficiency rate.

School districts and charter schools also select and set targets for one from the following State Board of Education adopted list of five Local Metrics:

1. 5th Grade Science Achievement;
2. Academic Growth;
3. Career and Workforce Readiness;
4. Multilingual Proficiency; and
5. Postsecondary Readiness.



Alternative-setting, specialized entity institutions are also required to develop PGTs; their metrics vary based on the student populations and goals of those schools and programs. The Specialized Entity institutions include:

- Education Service Districts that have enrolled students for specialized services
- Approved Recovery Schools
- The Youth Corrections Education Program
- The Juvenile Detention Education Program
- The Oregon School for the Deaf
- Eligible day treatment programs and eligible residential treatment programs for education services to children who are in treatment programs as described in ORS 343.961, also referred to as Long Term Care and Treatment programs (LTCTs)

All institutions also have the ability to set Optional Metric targets, also named in statute, to show a fuller picture of

61 Learn more about the Student Success Act here: Oregon Department of Education: What You Need to Know About the Student Success Act

education in their schools—these metrics could be additional academic measures such as course pass rates, or they could include non-instructional measures such as school climate or student mental health and well-being.

Institutions set two types of targets for each metric: a Baseline target (includes all students) and a Gap-Closing target (includes all focal group students). This ensures that effort is focused on improvement for all students while closing existing gaps in student outcomes for the focal groups.[62]

Similar District Clusters and Targets

The EAA indicates that school districts and charter schools should use similar district clusters, developed by the ODE, to guide or inform the development of their PGTs. School districts and charter schools were grouped together based on common underlying similarities–size, location, and demographics.[63] This allows districts and charter schools to have comparators, who they can reach out to as peers in the work of improvement.

Within the EAA, the ODE has also been tasked with creating targets for each cluster. While districts and charter schools are not required to meet the similar district targets within a certain amount of time, they are expected to make substantial progress toward them over the four years.

Statewide Performance Growth Targets

State-level targets for the 7 Common Metrics and 5 Local Metrics are also required under EAA for the State Board of Education to adopt. These targets reflect what the ODE and State Board of Education believes is steady, meaningful progress year over year–a path to becoming a top-performing state in education.

The State Board of Education adopted statewide targets for the 7 Common Metrics for the 2029-30 school year are:

- Regular Attender rate: 78.3%
- 3rd Grade English Language Arts Proficiency rate: 52.6%
- 9th Grade On-Track to Graduate rate: 94.9%
- 4-Year Cohort Graduation rate: 92.3%
- 5 Year-Cohort Completion rate: 95.4%
- K-2 Regular Attender rate: 82.0%
- 8th Grade Mathematics Proficiency rate: 52.0%

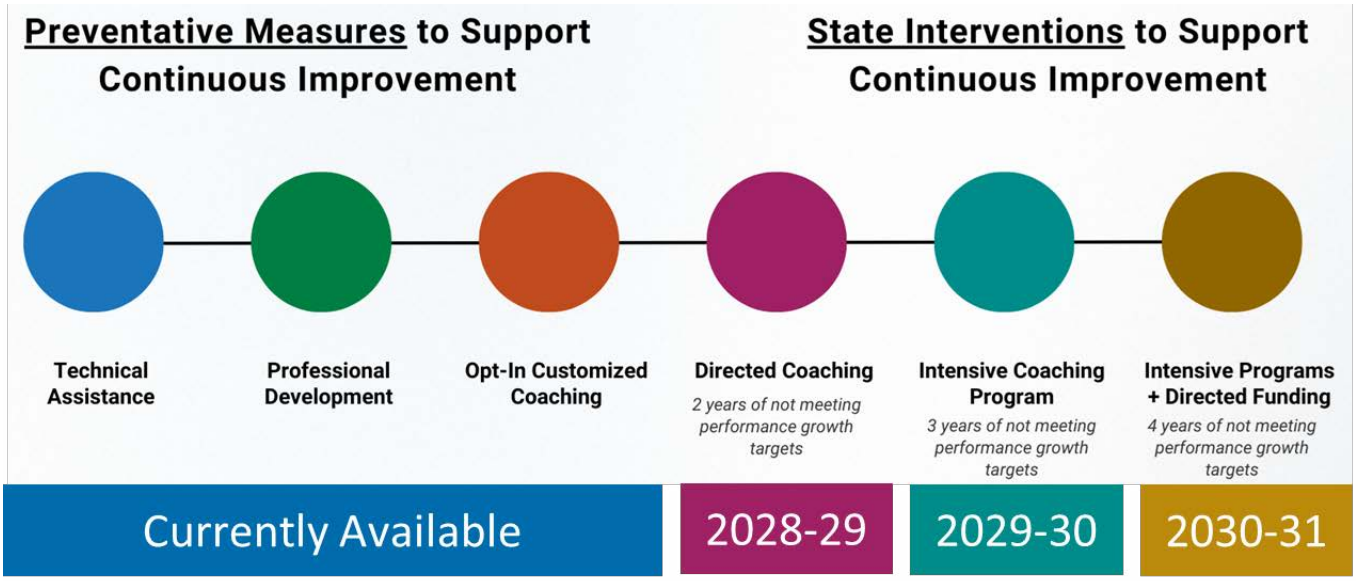
State level targets for the Local Metrics have yet to be adopted by the State Board of Education as these are new metrics under development.

62 Focal groups include: Migratory Students; Emerging Bilingual students; American Indian/Alaska Native students; Asian students; Black/African American students; Hispanic or Latino/a/e students; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students; Multiracial students; Students Experiencing Poverty; Students Recently Arrived; Justice Involved Students; Students who are Pregnant, Parenting, and/or Students who Experience any Pregnancy-related Condition; Students with Disabilities; Foster Students; and Students Navigating Housing Instability.

63 See the grouping here: Similar District and Charter with 2024-25 Variable Data

Supporting Improvement

The goal under the Education Accountability Act is to improve outcomes for students, and close gaps in outcomes for focal student groups. The PGTs developed by institutions demonstrate their commitment to this aim and the EAA describes interventions by the ODE should they not meet those targets within the described time frame. Seen in the graphic below, the ODE has developed a continuum of support–from technical assistance to intensive coaching and directed funding.

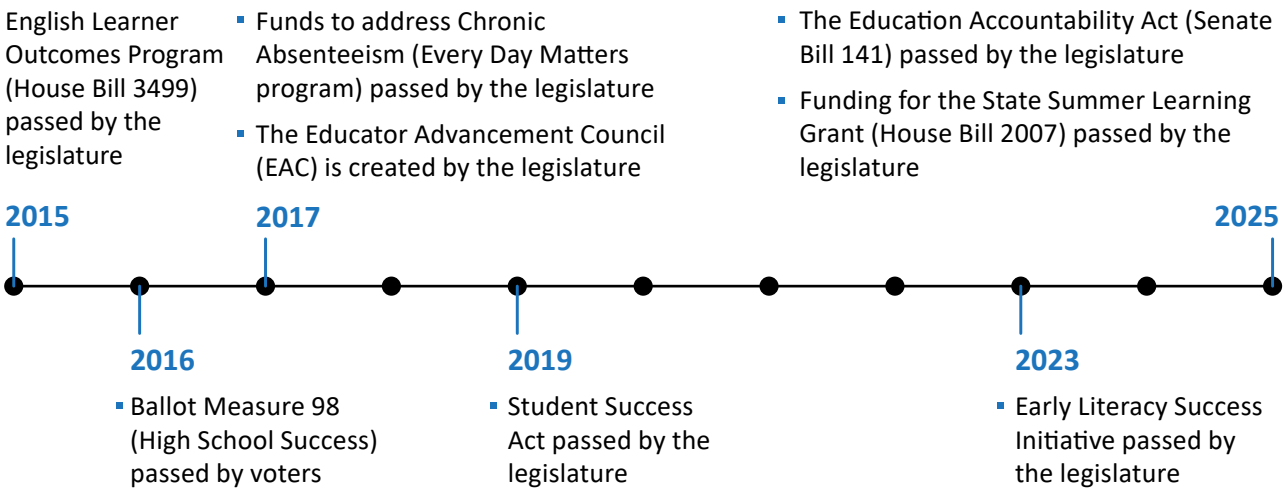


Potential Impacts on the Use of State School Funds

The Education Accountability Act's Performance Growth Targets are not only goals for improvement, they are expectations that carry potentially significant changes to use of district and charter school State School Funds. If a district or charter school does not meet targets for four or more years, ODE may direct the use of up to 25% of the institution's State School Funds and Student Investment Account (SIA) grant funds. This does not reduce the amount of those funds but may impact the way they are used.

Oregon's Education Improvement Initiatives

Education has been a key priority in Oregon for many years. Both voter-led and legislatively created initiatives have been consistently funded to support students and generate improvements. Over the past decade, the following large-scale initiatives have been founded:



Each initiative supports specific programs or student groups in Oregon's educational environment. This may look like specific dollar amounts to each school district for each student enrolled, partnerships through grants with community-based organizations providing services, or formula grants to eligible high schools to build on their existing supports for student graduation and career readiness. Spending for each grant must align with allowable use requirements and be reported to the legislature through reporting to the ODE or Educator Advancement Council (EAC).

The Student Success Act

During the 2019 legislative session, Oregon's leaders made a real commitment to our children, our educators, our schools and our state with the passage of the Student Success Act (SSA). The Student Success Act, funded by the passage of the 2019 Corporate Activities Act, is expected to invest over $2 billion in Oregon education every two years; that's over $1 billion investment in early learning and K-12 education each year. Of those funds, approximately $700 million goes into the State School Fund and the remaining is distributed into three accounts: the Early Learning Account, the Student Investment Account and the Statewide Education Initiatives Account.[64] Together, all three accounts make up the "Fund for Student Success."

At the heart of the SSA is a commitment to improving access and opportunities for students, with a focus on those students who have been historically underserved in the education system.

64 See the program funding breakdown for the 2023-25 biennium here: 2023-2025 Student Succes Act Program Funding

Early Learning Account

The Early Learning Account makes up at least 20% of the Fund for Student Success and is further broken down into nine separate programs to support the Department of Early Learning and Care's pre-kindergarten work and Early Intervention/ Early Childhood Special Education at ODE.[65] Grant distribution amounts vary by program, as do the eligible recipients. The priority areas are support for culturally diverse programs and organizations, pre-K teaching, relief nurseries, parenting education, healthy families, professional development, and early intervention/early childhood special education.

Student Investment Account

The Student Investment Account (SIA), by statute, must account for at least half of the Fund for Student Success– approximately $1.1 billion per biennium. These dollars are distributed to school districts, eligible charter schools, and juvenile detention and youth corrections education programs through non-competitive grants. Funding is determined through a formula using student counts.[66] Funds must be used to support one of the following allowable use areas:

- Increasing instructional time;
- Addressing student health and safety;
- Reducing class size;
- Expanding availability of and student participation in well-rounded learning experiences;
- Ongoing community engagement.[67]

Statewide Education Initiatives Account

The Statewide Education Initiatives Account (SEIA) is up to 30% of the Fund for Student Success and contains funding for over 25 separate programs. The programs are aimed at supporting focal student groups, Education Service Districts, Early Literacy, High School Success, Early Indicator and Intervention Systems, Recovery Schools, Wildfire Recovery, and more. Each program has its own distribution model, eligibility, and fund amount.

Early Literacy

Improving student literacy is a building block of successful education. In May 2023, the ODE released Oregon's Early Literacy Framework: A Strong Foundation for Readers and Writers (K-5),[68] and Governor Kotek issued Executive Order 23-12[69] related to strengthening educator preparation for literacy instruction. In June 2023, the Oregon Legislature passed the Early Literacy Success Initiative, a comprehensive investment in early childhood, schools, districts, communities, and Oregon's sovereign Tribes to uplift literacy statewide. This vision has expanded during the 2023-2025 biennium to include a focus on adolescent literacy and professional learning resources connected to high-quality literacy implementation across Pre-K 12 grade bands. ODE also secured the federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant, which provides additional grant funding from 2025-2029, and additional state funding for targeted high-dosage tutoring in schools farthest from literacy proficiency was made available to selected grantees in the 2025-2027 biennium as one time funding. Together, the Literacy Frameworks, the executive order, and these funding opportunities have built a vision with coordinated capacity and dedicated funding for strengthening literacy instruction in classrooms and communities across Oregon.

65 Department of Early Learning and Care: Programs & Services

66 See the Additional Information and Resources column for funding amounts here: ODE Office of Education Innovation and Improvement

67 See the Integrated Guidance's Appendix H for more information on allowable uses: Aligning for Student Success: Integrated Guidance 2025-27

68 See the Early Literacy Framework here: Oregon's Early Literacy Framework: A Strong Foundation for Readers and Writers (K-5)

69 Executive Order 23-12

Oregon's Literacy Frameworks

Oregon's Early Literacy Framework,[70] published in May 2023, highlights the best practices to promote literacy development in early grades. Across the PK-5 continuum, literacy instruction must systematically build students' foundational skills alongside the application of meaning-making skills and knowledge. Best practices in literacy instruction include a focus on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, oral language, and writing. In early literacy, foundational skills specifically refer to the tightly interrelated but discrete sub-skills (e.g., phonics, phonological awareness, concepts of print, fluency) specific to each language. They are the smaller, interconnected pieces that allow a child's brain to break the alphabetic code in order to read fluently and make meaning of words on the page. Foundational skills in the teaching of literacy are essential. Once students receive instruction in particular skills based on a learning progression, they will progress more quickly when provided with opportunities to apply those skills in the context of connected text and authentic reading and writing. Students need explicit and systematic instruction with frequent opportunities to respond and interact with each other and with text.

In February 2025, ODE released Oregon's Adolescent Literacy Framework,[71] which builds upon the Early Literacy Framework by extending research-aligned practices to support students in grades 6 through 12. The Adolescent Literacy Framework emphasizes the continued development of advanced language, literacy, and disciplinary literacy skills necessary for success across content areas. It includes guidance for supporting students who enter middle or high school not yet reading fluently or comprehending text at expected levels, while also addressing adolescents' evolving cognitive, academic, social, and cultural needs. The framework highlights the importance of integrating reading, writing, speaking, and thinking within and across disciplines to support meaningful engagement with complex texts.

In connection with both the Early Literacy and Adolescent Literacy Frameworks, ODE developed Oregon's Instructional Frameworks website to support statewide implementation.[72] The website provides aligned, research-based resources designed for classroom educators across disciplines, as well as for instructional coaches and administrators. These resources are intended to support coherent instructional practices, professional learning, and systems-level implementation of high-quality literacy instruction across the PK–12 continuum.

Early Literacy Success Initiative

The Early Literacy Success Initiative is being implemented by ODE and the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC). The purpose of the Early Literacy Success Initiative includes reducing literacy academic disparities for focal student groups through, "research-aligned literacy strategies." These include strategies that are culturally responsive and based on long-term research derived from the science of reading and writing including foundational skills as described above.

The programs that comprise Oregon's Early Literacy Success Initiative are the:

- **Early Literacy Success School District Grants** — non-competitive, application-based, annual grant-in-aid to school districts and eligible public charter schools that support comprehensive early literacy efforts in elementary grades pre-K through grade 3, including professional development, implementation of high-quality instructional materials, high dosage tutoring, extended learning, and the hiring of literacy coaching and interventionists. The legislature allocated $90 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $93 million for the 2025-27 biennium
- **Early Literacy Success Tribal Grants** — non-competitive grants supporting federally recognized Tribal Nations in Oregon in developing and expanding culturally and linguistically responsive early literacy and Tribal language revitalization efforts for children in the early elementary grades through community-informed programming,

70 See Oregon's Early Literacy Framework here: Oregon's Early Literacy Framework
71 See the Adolescent Literacy Framework here: Oregon's Adolescent Literacy Framework
72 Instructional Frameworks website: Oregon Instructional Frameworks

professional learning, coaching, and capacity building that support literacy development, family engagement, and Tribal language continuity. The Legislature allocated $2 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $2.08 million for the 2025-27 biennium.

- **Early Literacy Success Community Grants** — competitive grants to community-based organizations to expand culturally and linguistically responsive literacy programs for children in early elementary grades by encouraging family and caregiver engagement and providing research-aligned professional training and coaching for direct service staff in early literacy, develop and implement programs that engage parents and children in early elementary grades, and provide high-dosage tutoring programs. The Legislature allocated $8 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $8.3 million 2025-27 biennium.
- **Birth through Five Literacy Plan** — grants distributed through DELC to expand culturally specific early literacy programs for children from birth through five years of age, promote the capacity of programs that engage families in early literacy, and support language revitalization efforts for tribal nations. The Birth Through Five Literacy Plan[73] shares more about the plan through a comprehensive, equitable framework for improving early literacy outcomes for Oregon's youngest children. The Legislature allocated $9.6 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $10 million 2025-27 biennium.

After two full years of implementation, the Early Literacy Success Initiative is supporting Oregon's progress toward more comprehensive, coherent, and evidence-based systems of literacy instruction. The initiative is contributing to strengthened statewide capacity and more aligned practices across districts, schools, and community partners. Early indicators from participating grantees show positive trends in student outcomes, including improvements in Grade 3 English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency. Statewide results from the 2024–25 school year indicate an overall increase in 3rd grade proficiency rates.

High School Success or Measure 98

Oregon's High School Success program is built upon the best practices identified by state and national research. High School Success is a fund initiated by the 2016 ballot Measure 98. The High School Success program is designed to help improve student progress toward graduation beginning with Grade 9, increase the graduation rates of high schools, and improve high school graduates' readiness for college and career.

Funding is provided to establish or expand programs in three specific areas:

- Dropout Prevention;
- Career & Technical Education; and
- College-Level Education Opportunities.

All High School Success recipients must meet eligibility requirements in order to receive and spend funds. These eligibility requirements are a set of practices each recipient must have in place in the following areas: Teacher Collaboration Time around Data, Practices to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism, Equitable Assignment to Advanced Courses, Systems Ensuring On-time Graduation. Research suggests that having these structures in place helps increase graduation rates and ensures that high school graduates are ready for their next step. Allowing for time for teachers to look at specific student data, and using that data to inform decisions, increases the chances that a student will be on-track to graduate on time by the end of Grade 9. The implementation of High School Success (HSS) grant funding tells a story of collective commitment–one where local schools and communities partner–working together to create a more equitable, well-rounded, and engaging education system.

73 See the Birth Through Five Literacy Plan report here: Birth through Five Literacy Plan

SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT IS MAKING A GOOD IDEA GREAT

The Springfield School District (SPFD) experienced important gains in 9th Grade On-Track during the 2022-23 school year, increasing by 5.7 percent compared to 2021-22. The district's rate was also above pre-pandemic levels (+1.6 percent). District administration and staff attributed some of their success to leveraging local context and data. At COSA's[74] Seaside Conference in June of 2024, SPFD staff detailed their expanded definition of 9th Grade On-Track; expanding on the ODE definition to one that effectively surfaces more struggling students for support, earlier, including a review of middle school data by their transition team. The district has developed a comprehensive early warning system that includes the specific credits that students have earned, as well as course grades. This leverages the understanding that not all credits are as critical as others in graduation conversations. Their more sensitive on-track criteria led them to develop timely interventions, which has yielded promising initial outcomes and encouraged them to plan for future improvements.

Impacts of High School Success

The High School Success (HSS) program is generating impacts that are important and as-intended. Stand for Children conducted a comprehensive analysis of the impacts of HSS in April 2024.[75] They found the following six key findings:

- The most significant single-year improvement (+3.27 percentage point growth) and the best-ever recorded high school graduation rate in Oregon (82.63 percent) occurred in 2019-20—the first year of full funding for HSS.
- During the first three years of HSS funding, the graduation rate for Hispanic/Latino students grew at a faster pace than the "All Students" rate.
- The graduation rate for low-income students had grown at an average annual rate of +2.93 percentage points prior to HSS. Implementing the initiative accelerated growth for low-income students, with a +3.4 percentage point average annual growth rate between 2017-18 and 2019-20.
- Since full HSS funding, Hispanic/Latino students graduate at a rate just 2.7 percentage points behind the all-student rate (compared to a 7.03-point opportunity gap in 2013-14).
- In the four years prior to implementation of HSS (2013-14 through 2016-17), the average annual statewide dropout rate was 4 percent. Over the first four years of HSS funding (2017-18 through 2020-21), the average annual statewide dropout rate decreased to 2.75 percent.
- 76.47 percent of students in the 2022-23 graduating cohort were classified as CTE participants, a substantial increase compared to a 60.6 percent rate in 2015-16.

Career and Technical Education Success

Data from the ODE Graduation Rates Report[76] shows that students who are CTE concentrators graduated from Oregon's K-12 education systems at 97.8 percent in the 2024-25 school year (in contrast to the statewide graduation rate of 83 percent for this cohort). As conveyed in the Oregon 2024-28 CTE State Plan,[77] career connected learning (CCL) and career and technical education (CTE) are central in addressing the gaps between education and workforce, as well as disrupting barriers towards a smooth transition between school and work. CCL and CTE programs build capacity in communities, helping ensure that all Oregon students have an opportunity to enroll in postsecondary institutions and gain meaningful employment. In addition, students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds who are CTE completers experienced tremendous success. All of these student groups in the 2021-22 High School Cohort, from those who are federally identified as American Indian/Alaska Native, to Hispanic/Latino, to African American/ Black, graduated at rates higher than the state average. Expansion of CTE programs is clearly an area that is worthy of further conversation in Oregon.

74 COSA is the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators
75 Stand for Children's 2024 Measure 98 Report is found here: MEASURE 98: High School Success
76 2024-25 graduation trends: ODE 2024-25 Cohort Trends
77 Find the CTE state plan here: 2024-28 Oregon's CTE State Plan

Programs to Support Regular School Attendance

Regular attendance is one of key factors in determining student success. Data collected over the decades by numerous sources, including the National Center for Education Statistics and the Education Commission of the States consistently show that students who are present and engaged in school have greater opportunity to succeed. Students who are chronically absent – defined in Oregon as missing 10 percent or more days in a school year – are at greater risk for not developing foundational skills and are more likely to drop out of high school.

School attendance barriers are deeply rooted in systemic inequalities. Factors such as racism, poverty, disability, school climate, housing instability, punitive discipline practices, lack of access to care, and other systemic issues drive chronic absenteeism. Attendance challenges operate across multiple levels, including the individual, family, school, community, and broader societal systems. Traditional approaches to supporting school attendance often over-focus on child or family deficits, while ignoring the broader inequalities that shape school experiences.

All of the ODE's work addresses root causes of chronic absenteeism. While there are specific programs with dedicated funds to address attendance supports, such as the Tribal Attendance Promising Practices program and ODE's Integrated Programs,[78] attendance is embedded across the agency from transportation to child nutrition to school counseling. Tackling the root causes of chronic absenteeism involves the whole education system. Partnerships between school districts, students and families, community-based organizations, and ESDs are key to developing systems that center students' sense of self, belonging, and well-being both within schools and the larger community.

In Oregon, the regular attender rates for 2024-25 increased for most student groups. However, the gaps continue to widen between the Regular Attender rates for individual student groups with significant differences for students navigating housing instability, students experiencing poverty, and students who identify as non-binary. The gaps highlight the systemic inequities faced by focal student groups.

The QEM includes staffing for school counselors, at the ratio recommended by the National School Counseling Association, and the addition of a family resource center staff at all grade levels. These elements of the Model can help meet the best practice recommendations to reduce chronic absenteeism.

Tribal Attendance Promising Practices

Administered by the Oregon Department of Education, the Tribal Attendance Promising Practices (TAPP) program seeks to address the root causes of chronic absenteeism of American Indian/Alaska Native plus (AI/AN+) students. In the 22-23 school year, nearly half of students identified as American Indian/Alaska Native were chronically absent. Through the $1.9 million funding provided by TAPP each year, ten school districts closely partner with one or more tribal partners to co-create a balanced approach to addressing the root causes of chronic absenteeism. Districts are required to staff a full-time Family Advocate position with local ties to deliver tiered support to AI/AN+ students. The Family Advocates maintain relationships with families to be able to remove barriers and deliver personalized interventions to students. They also work intentionally with district leaders and representatives of the nine federally recognized tribes to help ensure school systems are culturally responsive to AI/AN+ youth.

Root causes identified have been physical and mental health conditions, a lack of belonging, connection, and relationships between the schools and family, housing instability, and lack of access to transportation, especially in rural areas. Simply put, students with health challenges and those struggling with relational disconnection, compounds a student's lack of engagement with school, causing them to miss school more often.

Expansion of the TAPP program to further support AI/AN+ students is recommended by the ODE; more information can be found in the best practices section of this report.

78 The Integrated Programs include Student Investment Account, High School Success, Career & Technical Education, Early Indicator & Intervention Systems, Early Literacy Success School District Grants, Every Day Matters, Federal School Improvement for Comprehensive/ Targeted Supports, Career Connected Learning, Continuous Improvement Planning.

Every Day Matters

One of Oregon's attendance initiatives is a program called Every Day Matters (EDM), which seeks to expand systemic understanding and support to address attendance barriers and the root causes of chronic absenteeism. EDM elevates partnerships and root cause understanding through multiple routes:

- EDM provides funding to all 19 Education Service Districts (ESDs) to provide a continuum of supports for school districts and charter schools, specifically focusing on student attendance, belonging, and engagement. The Every Day Matters team provides technical assistance to attendance-specific staff at each ESD. The EDM team also participates in the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts (OAESD) Attendance Collaborative, to share guidance and resources and align efforts regionally.
- The Integrated Community Partnership grant (ICPG) was initiated in the 2023-25 biennium and extends through the 25-27 biennium. The 16 recipients include nine community-based organizations, two culturally specific organizations, four ESDs, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Grantees serve a geographically diverse area of the state including rural communities and underserved communities with large focal student group populations. The ICPG focuses on community-centered approaches to addressing the root causes of chronic absenteeism.[79] These grants seek to improve attendance by building trust and partnership between families, communities, districts, and ESDs to collectively address the barriers to student belonging, engagement, and attendance in school. Grantees meet regularly with the Every Day Matters team through a community of practice, office hours, and site visits.
- The Every Day Matters team hosts an Attendance Learning Series for school, district and ESD staff to build shared understanding, strengthen local strategies, and create a learning network for those working to improve attendance outcomes.
- The 2025 Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 3199 and Senate Bill (SB) 315 to further attendance initiative work. HB 3199 directs the Legislative Policy and Research Office to conduct a study on statewide attendance initiatives and submit a report to the Legislature and directs the ODE to convene an Attendance Advisory Committee to review best practices to support regular attendance. SB 315 directs the ODE to recommend a common coding system for student absences, as well as to recommend school district responses to student absences that exceed 10 days.
- The EDM team facilitates the Attendance Advisory Committee, which is comprised of representatives from various partner organizations named in the legislation. The EDM team also facilitates an internal ODE workgroup to deepen alignment on attendance bodies of work across the agency.

79 See the Community Partnership Grants website for more information Community Partnership Grants: Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism: State of Oregon

Early Indicator and Intervention Systems

The Early Warning System program (EWS) was established by the 2019 Student Success Act to support robust student success systems. Early Indicator and Intervention Systems (EIIS) is the name of the initiative that supports the improvement of student success systems through non-competitive grants and professional learning.

A student success system is a unified system that integrates and increases the capacity of existing student support efforts, including early warning, on-track, and multi-tiered support systems, in order to effectively support students through their K-12 experience to graduation and preparation for life beyond high school. EIIS centers student and family voices and strengths to increase opportunities for all students, especially those who have been marginalized by the educational system. Investment in EIIS includes data software, staff time, and resources to engage with data practices and continuous improvement, resources to maintain data collection and analysis, staff time and professional learning to effectively engage students, families, and community partners in the system. The strength-based, student-centered, holistic, equity-centered approach of EIIS leads to the dismantling of inequitable practices and structures to ensure students have the support needed to thrive.

Non-Competitive Grants

All districts, charter schools, Oregon School for the Deaf (OSD), Long Term Care and Treatment Educational Programs (LTCT), Youth Correctional Educational Programs (YCEP), and Juvenile Detention Educational Programs (JDEP) are eligible applicants to receive grant funds. EIIS grant recipients primarily invest funds in data dashboard system software purchases and subscriptions, which provide essential data analysis tools and intervention tracking. These systems coordinate data from interim assessments, on-track to graduate, early literacy progress monitoring, and other data sources to support schools to proactively keep all students on track for success.

EIIS grant recipients can spend funds in six allowable use categories:

- System software purchases and subscriptions
- Staffing to facilitate the implementation and improvement of the system and to facilitate corrective action; maintain the system
- Data analysis and research
- Training for staff to maintain and use the system with fidelity
- Student, family, staff, and community engagement
- Tribal government consultation

Technical Assistance and Professional Learning

In addition to the grant-in-aid, the legislature appropriates funds to the ODE to provide technical assistance and professional learning across the state to enhance EIIS programs. Educational entities have access to online learning modules on the EIIS elements and practices, and a robust toolkit of resources for teams within a school or district. Schools, districts and Education Service Districts (ESDs) can also receive Customized Coaching and Professional Learning (CCPL) through approved vendors with expertise in student success systems, equity-centered data practices, student engagement practices, and more. Beginning in June 2026, ESD and district teams will participate in a state-wide networked improvement community to collaboratively problem-solve and implement continuous improvement cycles on foundational practices within their student success systems.

Spotlight: Oregon Recovery Schools

What is a Recovery High School?

Oregon recovery high schools provide students the choice to enroll in and experience a specialized public high school education, tailored to support recovery from substance use and co-occurring mental health needs. Recovery schools deliver high-quality education that leads to an Oregon high school diploma, while offering a structured, recovery-oriented environment that prioritizes student wellbeing, engagement, and long-term success. There are currently three recovery high schools operating in Oregon: Harmony Academy in Lake Oswego (opened in 2019), Rivercrest Academy in Portland (opened in 2023), and Discovery Academy in Salem (opened in 2025).

How Recovery High Schools Differ from Traditional High Schools

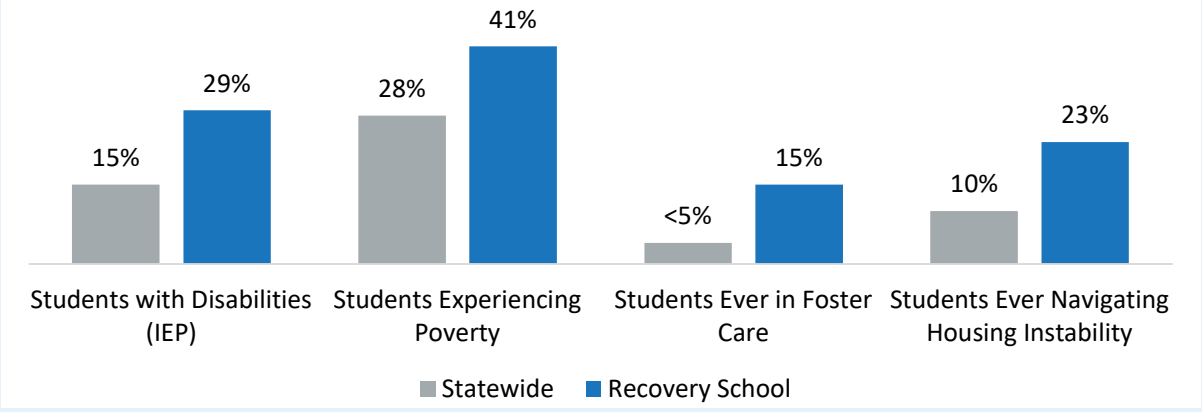
Recovery high schools combine education with integrated recovery support services, addressing students' academic and health needs. Key distinctions include:

- **Substance-free, stigma-free environment** that supports recovery and student safety
- **Smaller class sizes with higher staff-to-student ratios** that foster relationship building and individualized educational support
- **Integrated academics and recovery support** delivered within the school day
- **Credit recovery opportunities for students** reengaging in their education
- **On-site access to recovery mentors and mental health professionals**
- **Peer community of students in recovery**, fostering mutual support and accountability
- **Personalized recovery planning** to help students meet their goals
- **Connections to community-based services and support networks** to sustain long-term recovery and lead healthy, fulfilling lives beyond high school.

Who Attends Recovery High Schools?

Recovery high schools in Oregon served 131 students across the 2023–24 and 2024–25 school years. All students voluntarily enroll and identify as people interested in a life of active recovery from substance use, making this a uniquely self-selected population with specific academic and behavioral health needs. Students enrolled in recovery high schools experience significantly higher rates of educational and socioeconomic challenges than their peers statewide, underscoring the importance of integrated academic, recovery, and mental health supports to improve student outcomes.

EXHIBIT 46: Recovery School Enrollment Compared to Statewide



Recovery High Schools Statute

Oregon statute formally recognizes recovery high schools as public schools designed to serve students recovering from substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health needs. Under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 336.680, these schools are authorized by the Oregon Department of Education to deliver a standard high school diploma while integrating recovery support into the educational setting. Statute outlines core expectations, including providing a holistic approach to educational services for grades 9-12 and health care services related to recovery from substance use disorder, integrating recovery-focused programming into the school day to support student wellbeing and academic success.

This statutory framework was established through House Bill 2767 in 2023, reflecting a growing recognition by the Oregon Legislature that traditional school models often do not meet the needs of students in recovery. The law created a formal statewide definition, structure, and funding pathway for recovery high schools, allowing for more consistent implementation and oversight.

Recovery High School Funding Model

HB 2767 (2023) established recovery school funding from the Statewide Education Initiatives Account (SEIA) and State School Fund (SSF). Approved recovery schools are intended to receive base funding from the SSF based on ADMw, with additional SEIA funds supplementing this amount to cover the full costs of educating students. Because recovery schools are small schools and comprehensive high schools that also provide recovery support services, the supplemental SEIA funding is necessary to cover operational costs associated with recovery and behavioral health support.

Recovery school allocations are based on a formula that multiplies the ADMw of the school by the district rate. It then supplements funding from the SEIA account to reach the minimum and maximum funding levels, with the minimum base funding level set at $800,000 for the 2024-2025 school year. The Oregon State Legislature placed a limitation on the total State School Funding (SSF) amount allocated to Approved Recovery Schools. Recovery school funding allocations have been capped for the 2025-27 biennium based on the SSF limitations. Because of this limitation, Approved Recovery Schools are only receiving .67 of a 1.0 weight through the State School Fund (SSF). This means that the SEIA account, which is supposed to supplement the SSF in order to provide funding for actual costs of operating an Approved Recovery School is currently supplanting funding limitations that the SSF is supposed to fund.

Each year the Oregon Department of Education determines recovery school allocations based on a combination of factors, including: prior year ADMw, expected growth, and actual costs of building operations, staff salaries and associated payroll costs.

Other funding sources through foundation grants, Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and Medicaid Administrative Claims help cover costs beyond what the ODE is allocated to support recovery schools. HB 2767 (2023) requires ODE to collaborate with other state agencies to fund recovery schools. OHA has provided multi-year grant funds to Harmony Academy. OHA is also collaborating with ODE and The Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission (ADPC) to distribute a smaller amount of block grant funding to all recovery schools in the 2026-2027 school year. This effort is being carried out in partnership with youth substance use treatment providers to offset some service costs. Rivercrest Academy and Discovery Academy are able reimburse limited expenses through Medicaid Administrative Claims; however, none of the schools can currently bill Medicaid for substance use treatment services. ODE will continue working with OHA, ADPC, and community-based treatment providers to develop a sustainable, long-term funding model for recovery

EXHIBIT 47: 2024-25 Total Expenditures by Individual Recovery High School

Recovery School	ODE Funding	Other Funding	Total Cost
Harmony Academy	$995,854.60	$1,355,564.13	$2,351,418.73
Rivercrest Academy	$1,226,024.87	$180,732.59	$1,406,757.46
Discovery Academy	$952,042.26	$100,000	$1,052,042.26
TOTAL	**$3,173,921.73**	**$1,636,296.72**	**$4,810,218.45**

State Summer Learning Grant: Advancing Academic Growth, Belonging, and Opportunity

Oregon's State Summer Learning Grant reflects decades of research and statewide learning showing that high-quality summer learning programs meaningfully support student achievement and wellbeing.[80] With the adoption of HB 2007, Oregon centered literacy as the foundation of summer learning, making a targeted investment to strengthen skills, deepen engagement, and accelerate learning for students who need it most.

The State Summer Learning Grants are designed to advance academic learning, youth development, and equitable access through comprehensive, well-rounded summer programs.

All funded programs are required to provide structured, evidence-based literacy instruction aligned to Oregon standards, with particular attention to students who are not yet proficient in English Language Arts. Beyond dedicated literacy blocks, programs intentionally integrate literacy skills across enrichment experiences; such as arts, science, outdoor learning, and project-based activities, making literacy meaningful, applied, and connected to students' interests and lived experiences.

In addition to academic growth, the grants emphasize youth development and wellbeing. High-quality summer programs blend rigorous learning with hands-on, inquiry-based experiences; caring relationships with adults; and opportunities for leadership, collaboration, and social-emotional learning. Programs are designed to cultivate belonging, joy, and confidence while supporting students' mental, emotional, physical, and social wellbeing.

Equity and partnership are central to the program's design. Grant-funded programs are expected to engage in culturally and linguistically responsive outreach and programming, partner with families, and collaborate with community-based organizations to reflect local strengths and expand access to enriching opportunities. Programs serve a consistent cohort of students in a comprehensive summer experience of at least 80 hours and measure and report student growth to support continuous improvement.

State Summer Learning Grants are awarded through a competitive, multi-year process and support programming across the summers of 2026–2028, subject to continued legislative funding. Eligible recipients include school districts, public charter schools, Education Service Districts (ESDs), Tribal Nations, and consortia of these entities. Grant funds may be used for staffing, instructional materials, enrichment partnerships, professional learning, and essential program operations such as transportation ensuring communities can design coordinated, high-quality summer learning experiences that meet local needs.

The English Learner Outcomes Program

In 2015, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 3499, a landmark law that established new requirements to improve outcomes for students designated as English learners statewide. The legislation called for: [81]

1. An annual report on the progress of English learners and how state funds are used to support them;
2. A statewide plan to support English learners;
3. An English Learner Advisory Group to inform policy and practice;
4. The identification of districts that are not adequately meeting the needs of English learners and require targeted assistance.

The English Learner Outcomes Program (ELOP) is a district accountability initiative designed to ensure that districts are effectively serving students designated as English learners.

80 See the report for supporting research: The Research is Clear: Summer and Afterschool Learning Work

81 See the website for more information on each of these components: The English Learner Outcomes Program

The Oregon Department of Education identifies districts in need of support and partners with them for a four-year period. During this time, ODE provides:

- Comprehensive needs assessment process, with support from ODE
- Improvement planning and monitoring, using state and local data
- Technical assistance from ODE Education Program Specialists
- Fiscal oversight and support for improvement plan activities
- Professional development and learning in the form of a Community of Practice.

If a district does not show progress toward improvement benchmarks during this period, it enters directed funding status. In this phase, ODE sets specific requirements for how state funds for English learners must be used. Districts may remain in directed funding status for up to three years. To ensure equitable access to resources, districts with fewer than 20 students are served through our Education Service Districts (ESD) program.[82]

To date, three cohorts of districts have been identified: in 2016-17 (40 districts), in 2020-21 (15 districts), and 2024-25 (11 districts). Each cohort spends four years in the program.

Additionally, 3 districts from cohort 1 entered directed funding status for 3 years (2021-2024). Currently, 11 districts have been identified for directed funding status and are in the process of beginning their 1-3 year participation, which will begin in the 2026-27 school year.

Educator Supports: Educator Advancement Council Partnerships and Programs

Since 2017, the Educator Advancement Council (EAC) has operated as a coalition of state agencies, educators, leaders, and community partners who work to align, coordinate, and improve a statewide professional learning and educator support system.[83] The EAC coordinates the distribution of grant-in-aid dollars from the Educator Advancement Fund (ORS 342.953) through the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). The EAC also collaborates with ODE and Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) to implement programs funded by the Statewide Education Initiatives Account (ORS 327.254). Together, these programs aim to support Oregon's educators at all stages of their careers and ensure preK-12 students have access to high-quality, well-supported and culturally responsive educators.

The Legislature allocated $88.4 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $63.5 million for the 2025-27 biennium to grant programs and technical assistance coordinated by the EAC. In the 2025-27 biennium, grant funds support eight initiatives and more than forty grantee education organizations, including state agencies, Tribes, post-secondary institutions, and school and education service districts.

Regional Educator Networks

In 2019, the EAC created Regional Educator Networks (RENs) to elevate educator voice in ensuring that every educator in Oregon has access to relevant, high-quality professional learning opportunities.[84] RENs are educator-led networks housed at ten of the state's education service districts that coordinate resources across districts in order to serve educators more efficiently than districts working in isolation. The Legislature allocated $42.9 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $39.4 million for the 2025-27 biennium.

82 See the ESD program website here: English Learner Outcomes Program and Education Service District Partnership

83 Learn more about the EAC at their website: Educator Advancement Council

84 Learn more about RENs here: Regional Educator Networks

State grant funding is awarded to each REN based on a formula, supporting equitable access to resources across the state's rural and urban communities. Each REN is guided by a Coordinating Body made up of PK-12 educators and partners representing higher education, Tribes, early learning providers, and community organizations. REN Coordinating Bodies collect input from educators and partners in the region to identify funding priorities, focusing on professional learning models that:

- Promote leadership and shared responsibility among educators;
- Expand access to high-quality professional learning;
- Strengthen proven practices that improve student achievement;
- Support educators at every stage of their careers; and
- Increase opportunities for leadership and career advancement.

RENs help educators—teachers, administrators, and classified staff—collaboratively design, lead, and improve professional learning projects that respond to the unique needs of their students and communities. Because educators in each region have diverse needs and strengths, projects often look very different from one region to another. In the 2025-27 biennium, RENs are funding more than 90 professional learning projects. Examples include:

- **Northwest REN:** Mentors across the region receive ongoing professional learning to support their ability to provide mentees with responsive, differentiated support.
- **Central Oregon REN:** Educators engage in professional learning sessions and coaching focused on the Oregon Transformative Emotional Learning Standards to develop tools and strategies to enhance self-regulation, coregulation, and classroom climate.
- **Western REN:** Special education teachers and paraprofessionals strengthen their skills in Universal Design for Learning strategies through an ongoing Community of Practice.
- **Oregon Trail REN:** Graduate level courses equip teachers and administrators with training in Science of Reading strategies.
- **Columbia REN:** Ongoing training and collaborative practice enable educators to effectively implement Tribal History/ Shared History lesson plans.
- **Eastern Oregon REN:** Educators teaching in one-room school houses engage with peers in Rural Collaboratives to enhance and align mathematics instruction to improve student outcomes.

Grow Your Own Partnerships

Since 2020, Oregon has invested in Grow Your Own (GYO) programs, sparking new career pathway partnerships and expansion of long-standing programs for aspiring educators in Oregon.[85] This investment has supported thousands of individual candidates and fostered stronger collaboration between K-12 schools and post-secondary programs to strengthen educator recruitment and retention. These partnerships aim to remove barriers for people who want to become educators, especially those with strong ties to their local communities. GYO programs support a wide range of participants interested in entering or advancing in education careers, including high school students, college students, career changers, and school staff. The Legislature allocated $17.1 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $13.3 million for the 2025-27 biennium.

While GYO partnerships across the state vary in their approach to recruitment, development, and retention, common strategies across the current 36 grantees include:

- **Local Recruitment:** Recruit from local candidate pools, such as high school students, classified and certified staff, emergency/restricted or substitute teachers, and volunteers who already live or work within a school community.

85 Learn more about GYO programs here: Grow Your Own Grant Initiative

- **Inclusive, Wrap-around Support:** Provide holistic, tailored assistance to participants from diverse backgrounds, career stages, and professional aspirations to mitigate academic, career, personal, or financial barriers.
- **Accessible Pathways:** Partner with educator preparation programs to offer multiple, articulated, and alternative pathways into education careers.
- **Comprehensive Assistance:** Offer pathway navigation, financial support, employment-related benefits (e.g., job guarantees, paid release time), and other resources aligned with participants' career goals.
- **Targeted Workforce Development:** Recruit and develop individuals to meet specific local workforce needs, such as bilingual education, special education, and other high need specializations.

Agency Partnerships for Equitable Educator Pathways

Section 48 of the Student Success Act (HB 3427), passed in 2019, called on the state's education agencies to develop a plan to "provide an effective combination of programs and initiatives for the professional development of educators from kindergarten through grade 12" to be funded by the Statewide Education Initiatives Account (ORS 327.254) and to support the state in meeting the Educator Equity Act goal (ORS 342.437). Since 2020, the EAC collaborates with state agency partners on initiatives supporting the following strategic goals:

- Expand access to resources for aspiring educator candidates through scholarships, professional networking and career support, and relevant learning opportunities.
- Connect post-secondary and K-12 institutions to expand culturally responsive educator preparation and support.
- Align educator preparation and professional learning to ensure that educators experience a seamless system of support – from educator preparation, novice teacher support, and educator professional growth to career advancement and retention.

In the 2025-27 biennium, the state funded four initiatives in support of these goals:

- **Oregon Teacher Scholars Program:**[86] The Legislature created the Oregon Teacher Scholars Program (OTSP) in 2017 to reduce financial barriers for eligible educator candidates pursuing an education degree at Oregon programs (ORS 348.295). In partnership with the EAC, the program is administered by the Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). The Legislature allocated $5.0 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $5.2 million for the 2025-27 biennium.
- **Public Educator Preparation Equity Plan Grants:** Since 2016, Oregon's six public educator preparation programs have submitted biennial institutional plans to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to improve the recruitment, retention, and graduation of diverse educators (ORS 342.447; ORS 342.448). Since 2020, funding for the Educator Equity Plans supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based strategies that improve outcomes for diverse educator candidates. The Legislature allocated $1.1 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $1.1 million for the 2025-27 biennium.
- **Oregon Administrator Scholars Program:** The Oregon Administrator Scholars Program (OASP) was established in 2021 at the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, providing scholarships up to $12,000 per academic year, for a maximum of two years, for eligible administrator candidates accepted and enrolled in an approved administrator program. The Legislature allocated $2.6 million for the 2023-25 biennium and was defunded by the Legislature in 2025, though one-time funds of $669,104 were allocated to 71 candidates in the 2025-26 academic year to complete their programs.
- **Oregon Licensure Expense Reimbursement Program:**[87] The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) estimates that licensure-related costs for new teachers total approximately $700. To mitigate financial burden and encourage multilingual individuals to become educators, the Oregon Licensure Expense Reimbursement (OLER)

86 Learn more about the OTSP here: Oregon Teacher Scholars Program Grant

87 Learn more about the Licensure Expense Reimbursement program here: Oregon Licensure Expense Reimbursement

program at TSPC provides financial assistance to linguistically diverse educators for expenses related to the cost of becoming licensed. The Legislature allocated $1.1 million for the 2023-25 biennium and $1.1 million for the 2025-27 biennium.

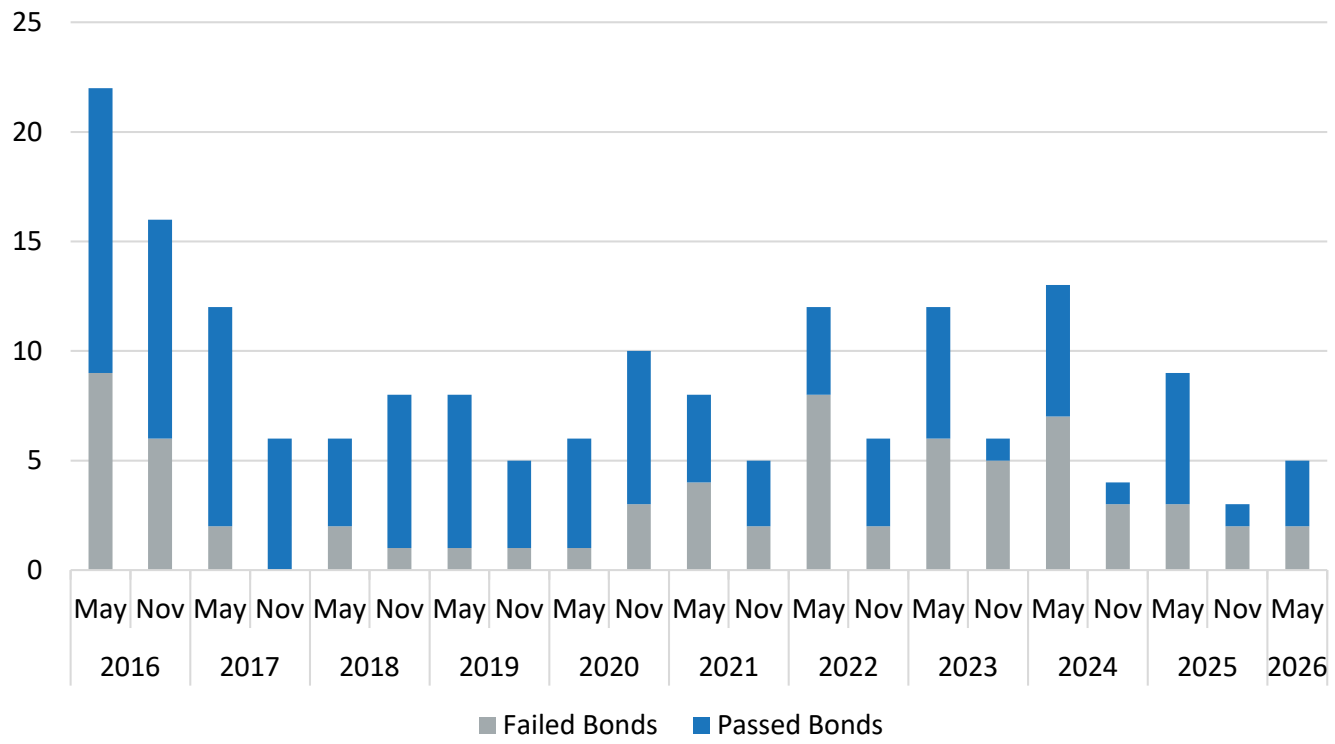
Funding School Facilities

The 2014 Task Force on School Capital Improvement Planning found that the condition of Oregon's K-12 schools, "reflects a national pattern of under-investment: crumbling buildings, obsolete systems, and deteriorating site conditions. Oregon's school facilities are falling into obsolescence and failing to provide our children with environments for achievement and success."[88]

The 2015 Legislature created the Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching (OSCIM) Program. This state program was designed to provide an incentive so that districts would pass a local bond to fund school construction. The challenge has been that even with the incentive districts still are unable to pass local bonds.

The biggest challenge for the OSCIM Program is the limitation that it is an incentive-based program. Unless a district can pass a bond, they are unable to claim the up to $12.4 million in grants available to the district. This means that the OSCIM Program and districts are unable to claim millions in state funds set aside for the program. Since the start of the program, districts, because they can't pass bonds, have been unable to claim $35 million in state funds. These are funds that are not rolled forward to the next biennium. Additionally, as shown below, many districts even with a commitment are still unable to pass a bond. While these funds are disbursed to other districts and ultimately spent, the districts that originally qualified for the funds could not use them.

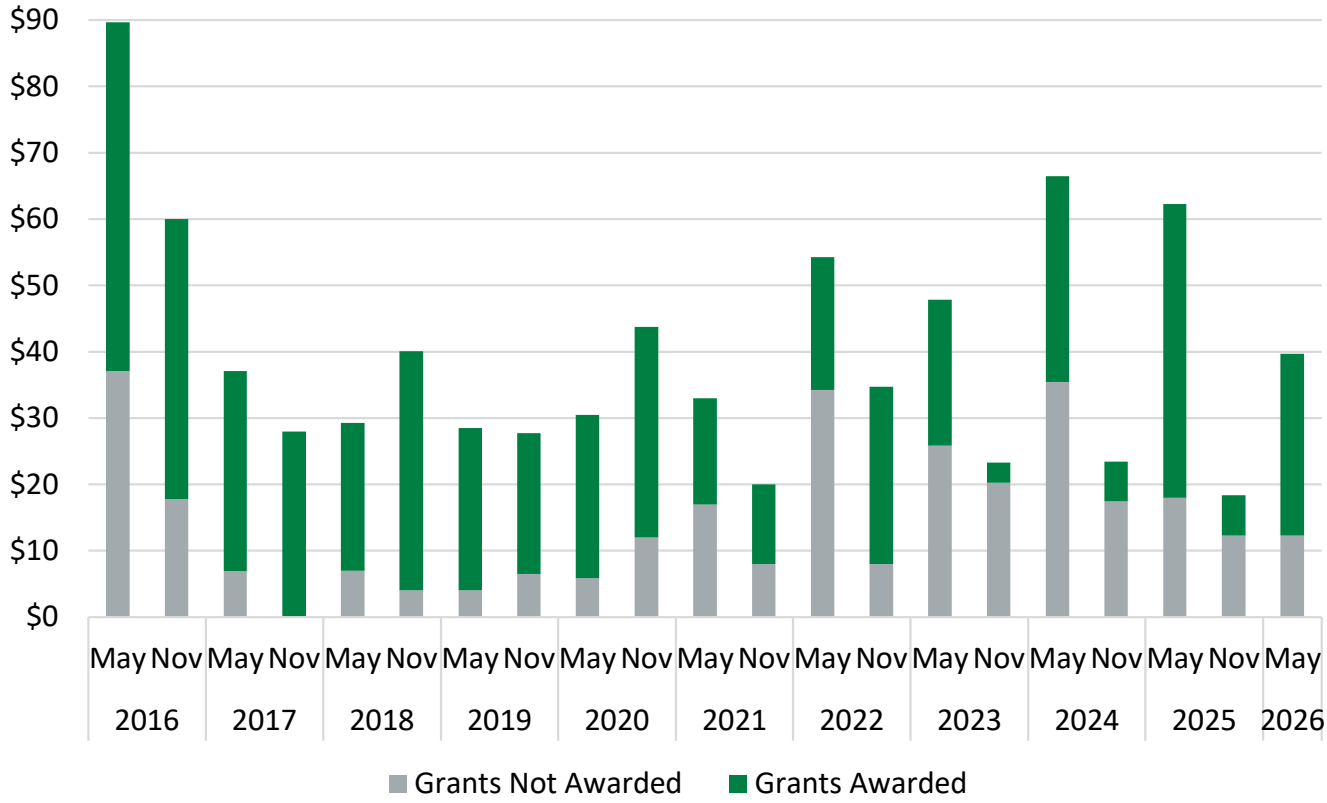
EXHIBIT 48: Number of Passed and Failed OSCIM Bonds, 2016-2026



88 See the task force report here: Final Report Task Force on School Capital Improvement Planning October 2014

The OSCIM Program has had success in getting districts to pass bonds that do not normally pass a bond. As an incentive it continues to work well. However, because of structural, political and other challenges, many other districts are still unable to pass a bond even with an OSCIM Program commitment of funds. This means many districts are still falling behind in providing healthy and safe facilities for their students.

EXHIBIT 49: Amount of OSCIM Bond Dollars Awarded or Redistributed, 2016-2026 (in Millions)



A new development for the state is the ongoing statewide facility assessment program.[89] For the first time in Oregon's history, the state will know with a high degree of certainty the level of deferred maintenance in school facilities across the state. This program assesses every school facility in the state to determine the current status of deferred maintenance across the state. The initial assessment is scheduled to be complete with data available in the first quarter of 2027.

89 Learn more about the statewide facility assessment program here: Statewide School Facilities Assessment

Best Practices: Research-Informed Approaches Set in Oregon

Although the term best practices is used throughout this report to align with the legislative mandate, it should not be interpreted to mean that every practice has been fully validated in every Oregon context or for every student group. Rather, the practices included in this report are supported by research as effective approaches for improving educational outcomes. Their successful implementation depends on local context, and districts and schools may need to adapt these practices to meet the needs of their students and communities.

In many cases, these practices may be more accurately described as promising practices—research-informed approaches that have demonstrated positive results but should be thoughtfully implemented and refined through continuous improvement.

It is the responsibility of the QEC to use best practices to inform the Quality Education Model. To this end, the QEC seeks input from subject matter experts and educators to understand Oregon's current context, the views of educators, and what research demonstrates as key investments to make when creating this report. For this 2026 report, the QEC hosted subject matter experts to present at commission meetings followed up by writing papers of the presented content; the QEC also sent out a survey to Oregon education partners for feedback. These two approaches informed the best practice section, which was ultimately framed using the recently adopted Priorities for Student Success.

Oregon's Priorities for Student Success

The Oregon Department of Education supported the development of a new accountability system following passage of House Bill 2656 (2023). This bill called for a new Accountability Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for improvement. Within this, shared values and the Five Priorities for Student Success were created.[90] The Priorities for Student Success set the stage for all students to thrive within Oregon's reciprocal accountability system. Together, the priorities take into consideration all aspects of a student's educational experience by focusing on systems and the humans at the center of those systems. Nested under each of the Priorities for Student Success are levers which provide critical actions within each of the Priorities for Student Success. System health measurements are data that can be used to determine the health of the education system at different levels. The five priorities are:

90 See *A Renewed Vision for Oregon's Accountability System*, January 2025, for more information.

PRIORITIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Oregon achieves . . . together!

PRIORITIES	LEVERS	SYSTEM HEALTH MEASUREMENTS
HIGH-QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR ALL STUDENTS	Research-Based, Well-Rounded Learning Experiences Learning Experiences that Result in Growth Toward and Beyond Proficiency Youth Empowerment and Preparation	• Scholars regularly attend school, read at grade level, are on track to graduate at the end of ninth grade, and achieve high school graduation. • Scholars are engaging with reading, writing, math, science, and social study at grade level (in their native language and English). • Scholars are college and career ready and feel empowered and prepared for life beyond school.
ALIGNED AND FOCUSED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS	Data-Driven Decision Making Pre-K and Post-Secondary Alignment	• Continuous improvement efforts are focused on student needs and aligned with strong instructional practices. • Multiple forms of data are used to drive decision making processes. • There is strong alignment across Pre-K and post-secondary education.
ENGAGED PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES	Honoring the Lived Experiences of All Communities Ongoing Community Engagement Committed Partnerships	• Ongoing and meaningful collaboration occurs with Tribal partners. • Community engagement practices are leveraged using intentional processes • Experiences of scholars are centered through regular use/consultation of Student Success Plans.
SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS	Safety Belonging Mental Health Needs	• Scholars feel safe within their classrooms and schools. • Scholars feel a sense of belonging within their classrooms and schools. • Scholars' mental health needs are met in accordance with Oregon's Integrated Model of Mental Health.
COMMITTED AND SUPPORTED STAFF	Staff Recruitment, Support, and Retainment Knowledge and Capacity Building Collaborative Partnerships	• Staff feel supported and valued beginning with the recruitment process. • Staff participate in consistent job-embedded professional learning and coaching. • State and regional partnerships between Pre-K-12, higher education, and workforce create inclusive working conditions for all staff. • Leaders set measurable goals and provide pathways and support to all staff to reach goals.

The QEC Best Practices White Papers

The Quality Education Commission (QEC) invited education experts at the Oregon Department of Education and the Educator Advancement Council to present[91] on best practices in 2024 and 2025. The presentation topics ranged from supporting specific student groups (American Indian and Alaska Native Students, Multilingual Learners, Talented and Gifted, Students with Individualized Education Programs) to high quality and culturally responsive instructional materials and formative assessments to educator workforce well-being and recruitment and retention. The presentations were highly informative of Oregon's current context, what research identifies as best practices, and the steps that Oregon needs to take to embed the best practices–at both the local and state level.

Subject matter experts within ODE and the EAC adapted their presentation into a Best Practices White Paper and ODE staff generated this synthesis from those papers.[92] While the presentations, and therefore the papers, are not comprehensive of all education topics and best practices, they form a strong basis for supporting Oregon's educational system to achieve its goals.93

The white papers cover best practices in the following areas:

- American Indian and Alaska Native Students
- Culturally Responsive Curricula
- Educator Recruitment and Retention
- Educator Workforce Well-Being and Belonging
- Formative Assessment
- High Quality Instructional Materials
- High School Success and Every Day Matters Programs
- Multilingual Learners
- Safe and Inclusive Schools
- Student Belonging, Wellness, and Well-Being
- Students with Individualized Education Programs
- Talented and Gifted Eligible Students

Methods and Organization

Staff reviewed each completed paper's executive summary to develop an initial set of themes across papers and develop theme definitions. Further refinement aligned best practices to the five Priorities for Student Success described in the preceding section of this report:

- High-Quality Learning Experiences for All Students
- Aligned and Focused Educational Systems
- Engaged Partners and Communities
- Safe and Inclusive Schools
- Committed and Supported Staff

91 See the recorded best practices presentations within the meetings here: Quality Education Commission Agendas and Meeting Notes
92 All content, unless otherwise cited, can be found in the published white papers and is not individually cited in this synthesis.
93 The legislatively founded education goals are found in ORS 329.007, 329.015, 329.025, 329.045, and 329.065

The Priorities for Student Success are interconnected–for example, supporting staff should have positive impacts for safe and inclusive schools while engaging partners and communities leads to an aligned and focused educational system. It's difficult to categorize the rich content of the best practices white papers into single priorities; therefore, papers appear within each priority as necessary. Review of the standalone white papers is recommended to gather the full context of the practices and understand how they're currently being utilized in Oregon.

In the following sections, the best practices are organized into the Priorities for Student Success. When context is particularly valuable or one paper highlights several practices, it is given a standalone subsection, otherwise practices are organized under a central theme.

Best Practices to Support High-Quality Learning Experiences for All Students

Instructional materials and practices, the core of learning in school, covers a wide range of content–from the course materials like video clips a teacher shows to the approaches educators use in assessing student understanding. Educators navigate a lot in their day; many of the best practices in this section consider how to intertwine strategies so that materials and support build on each other. This reinforces understanding for students and creates coherent flow in a class or day.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE, HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (HQIM)

Research is clear that instructional materials are one of the most cost-effective levers for improving student outcomes. It's crucial for the selection and implementation of high quality and culturally responsive curriculum to consider accessibility, student data privacy, cultural responsiveness in digital materials, and centering linguistic strengths through technology, recognizing that modern basal programs increasingly include digital components, including artificial intelligence.

The following policy-aligned recommendations are pertinent for Oregon:

- Embed cultural responsiveness, including representation, multiple perspectives, Transformative SEL principles, and attention to dual language needs, as integral components of existing ODE adoption criteria rather than supplemental considerations.
- Pair every adoption with curriculum-based professional learning and instructional coaching focused on the actual materials teachers use, with attention to dosage, coach preparation, and quality monitoring.
- Systematically include student and family voice as implementation feedback, particularly from historically marginalized communities, treating this input as a continuous improvement tool rather than a compliance exercise.
- Adopt a learning-oriented measurement approach that tracks student outcomes, implementation fidelity, professional learning quality, representation audits, and student and family experience across adoption cycles.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment happens within the flow of teaching and learning, using classroom activities that can be applied formatively to directly support student growth. Decades of research have found that quality formative assessment has the largest positive impact of any instructional strategy on student learning and achievement that has been documented.

Best practices in formative assessment include:

- Aligning formative assessments with High Quality Instructional Materials using clear frameworks with connection to standards and instruction.
- Using the four dimensions of formative assessment practice: Clarify learning goals and criteria for success, Elicit evidence of student learning, Interpret evidence to determine next steps, and Act by providing feedback and adjusting instruction.

- Providing educators time for collaboration to review evidence and plan next steps together and professional learning communities to build expertise across schools and districts; utilizing coaches and leaders who model and sustain strong formative assessment practices.

AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS

Best practices for supporting American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students in their high-quality learning experiences include:

- Investment in culturally affirming and inclusive curriculum and practices and in the educators responsible for delivering them enhances student engagement, fosters a stronger sense of belonging, and builds school communities rooted in mutual respect and equity–helping improve student academic outcomes.
- Use culturally appropriate frameworks, tools, and practices responsive to their specific needs to support Native youth mental health and well-being.
- Supporting the Tribal History, Shared History (THSH) curriculum bolsters achievement for both AI/AN+ and all students.
- Working with local tribes to promote tribal languages is a key goal to support AI/AN students. Support teacher training, curriculum development, language documentation and uses in technology.

MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

A lack of understanding among educators and administrators about the unique needs of multilingual learners can lead to ineffective instructional practices and a failure to recognize students' linguistic and cultural assets. Systems, Instruction, and Assessment Improvement implementation strategies include:

- Provide targeted support: Offer specialized support for newcomers, students with interrupted education, and long-term English learners.
- Provide professional development for teachers on effective strategies for teaching multilingual learners: This could include training on sheltered instruction, differentiated instruction, and culturally responsive teaching.
- Implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for multilingual learners: This system can provide targeted interventions and support based on students' individual needs.
- Use a variety of assessment tools to measure students' progress: This could include formative assessments, summative assessments, and language proficiency assessments.
- Ensure that multilingual learners have access to rigorous coursework and enrichment opportunities: This could include offering advanced placement courses, dual enrollment programs, and extracurricular activities.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Improving outcomes for students with disabilities requires instructional systems that expand access to grade level curriculum while remaining feasible for districts to implement within existing staffing and resource constraints. Three approaches provide the strongest opportunity for statewide scaling while minimizing additional burden for local education agencies:

- Inclusive co-teaching structures,
- High quality instructional materials designed with Universal Design for Learning principles, and
- High leverage instructional practices.

High quality instructional materials provide the foundation for rigorous, accessible curriculum. Co-teaching structures allow educators to deliver that instruction collaboratively within inclusive classrooms. High leverage practices guide how educators provide explicit instruction, assessment, and feedback to support student learning.

TALENTED AND GIFTED STUDENTS

Implementing a suite of high-leverage instructional strategies allows educators to provide the specialized support required for advanced learners while simultaneously elevating the quality of instruction for all students. Research shows that the following practices are key to effectively supporting the diverse needs of TAG learners:

- Curriculum Compacting: Streamlining the curriculum for students who have already mastered certain concepts, allowing them to move on to more rigorous activities.
- Tiered lessons: A differentiation strategy where all students work toward the same essential learning goal but the pathway to that goal is customized.
- Differentiation/Depth/Complexity: Teachers use tools like Depth and Complexity focusing on patterns, ethics, or multiple perspectives to add rigor to existing lessons.
- Acceleration: Providing students with the "four key resources:" grade-level (or above) content, strong instruction, deep engagement, and high expectations.
- Best Practices to Support Aligned and Focused Educational Systems

A number of the best practices white papers describe the importance of collecting and using real-time and aggregate data to inform decisions, from the student and classroom level to systemic whole school and district support.

- **American Indian and Alaska Native Students:** Reliable data are essential to uphold treaty responsibilities, fund targeted programs, and monitor AI/AN student outcomes. The inconsistent and unique identification of AI/AN individuals has led to major challenges in accurately representing them in student data. It is crucial to the support of AI/AN+ students to correctly identify them, publish reports using an expanded definition of race and ethnicity, and review data by student groups critically to identify and address disproportionality in TAG, special education, and modified diplomas.
- **Talented and Gifted (TAG) Students:** Educators should receive professional development to identify students; using local norms and non-verbal assessments helps staff recognize "hidden" giftedness in students who may be English Learners or from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Universal screenings, which evaluate all students, can support equitable identification as well; data from a variety of sources support that evaluation.
- **Students with Disabilities:** A best practice for students with disabilities is the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) as a framework for promoting positive school climate and consistent behavioral expectations across learning environments. This framework focuses on teaching behavioral expectations, reinforcing positive behaviors, and using data to guide decision making. Schools implementing these practices establish clear expectations for student behavior, provide consistent reinforcement for positive actions, and analyze behavioral data to identify areas where additional support may be needed.
- **Early Indicator and Intervention Systems (EIIS)** or Early Warning Systems support the review of data by flagging students at risk for chronic absenteeism or dropping out. Individuals and data teams at the school level then review the data and discuss a plan to support the student.
- **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) approach solutions with a tiered (triangle-shaped) approach:** a whole school or whole district base support is applied to address the need for all (e.g. a district-wide campaign to highlight the importance of regular attendance takes place); above that are strategies that apply to a smaller group of students with more support needed (e.g. tutoring takes place to support students with their math skills); and at the top are actions for individual students in need of greater resources (e.g. bussing for a student navigating housing instability). The tiered approach requires use of data along the way–from identifying areas and students with need to, again, watching for impacts of the interventions. This hones the actions to those that are known to work for that student, group, or school.

- **Culturally Responsive, High Quality Instructional Materials:** A key part of implementation of Culturally Responsive, High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) is measuring for improvement, and looking for opportunities to support implementation when data point to lags in performance. Districts should monitor grade-level access and achievement growth for all students, disaggregated by student group (including by race/ethnicity, language status, disability status, and economic background). In addition to student progress, schools should track rates of teacher modification and supplementation through surveys, classroom observations, or analysis of lesson plans. High modification rates may signal the need for additional professional learning, insufficient materials-student fit, or gaps in the scope and sequence that require supplemental resources.
- **Educator Workforce Well-Being and Belonging:** The use of data, particularly educator voice, is important when attempting to evaluate progress toward a more supported workforce. The Elevating Voices in Education (EVE) workforce survey, described earlier in this report, can support the evaluation of a statewide approach to improving conditions for educators–such as an Educator Workforce Well-being Task Force. At the local level, districts and regions should be reviewing these same types of data to support educator wellness, well-being, and retention–looking for places to improve the system of support for their context.
- **Safe and Inclusive Schools and Student Belonging, Wellness, and Well-Being:** Interconnected and similar to educator well-being data, best practices to support safe and inclusive schools also rely on data at the student group level to analyze and plan action regarding equity and foundational student supports. Using data from surveys, referrals, assessments, or empathy interviews to monitor school climate, student behavior, and the effectiveness of interventions can help schools to make informed decisions and continuously improve their practices. School and district teams monitoring disproportionality in behavior data can make informed decisions regarding students' experiences and necessary systemic changes to increase opportunity and access to universal support and tiered interventions.

Best Practices to Engage Partners and Communities

Local context and community goals have long been important factors in decisions about how schools select curriculum, program offerings, and capital/building improvements. For example, expanding the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program of study offerings has been driven by regional industry, available jobs and expanding markets, as well as family and student interest. The passage of the Student Success Act in 2019 expanded expectations around student, family, and community engagement, with more frequent two way conversations taking place.[94] However, education research indicates that intentional family engagement is important at a variety of levels, and needs to center voices that were historically left out of the conversation, typically due to holding multiple jobs, needing childcare support, interpretation services, transportation, or feeling like their voice wasn't taken seriously when they were able to weigh in.[95] Sustained and authentic engagement with families and community members builds trust and improves school climate and culture.

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Strong partnerships between schools, families, community organizations, mental health providers, and law enforcements are essential for addressing school safety and inclusion comprehensively. These partnerships can provide access to the additional resources, expertise, and support that schools often struggle with. However, sometimes there is a lack of trust between communities and the school. Through restorative justice practices, the wider school community can also have input, voice, and opportunity to shape the way schools interact with families and communities–ideally healing past harm. This, in turn, creates the conditions for authentic family and community engagement.

94 What You Need to Know About the Student Success Act
95 Appendix A: Community Engagement Toolkit

ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT BELONGING, WELLNESS, AND WELL-BEING

A central strategy to intentionally strengthen belonging, wellness, and well-being is creating structured engagement venues to elevate student and family voice. Feedback loops that inform policy, practice, and service design increase trust and relevance, which are strongly associated with improved attendance.

Community conversations and partnerships also support improved attendance work through proactive interventions at the community level, addressing barriers and enhancing the systems that support youth and their families.

AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

An important and legislatively backed commitment to American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN+) students and communities is the engagement required under Title VI Indian Education between school districts and local federally recognized tribes. Similarly, engagement supporting the development and implementation of Tribal History Shared History curriculum is required. However, despite these requirements, reduced trust is experienced by Native communities and families–and this impacts student social-emotional well-being, engagement, and outcomes. School districts should focus on sustained, authentic Tribal engagement that builds trust and leads to partnerships, reciprocal learning, and shared learning goals.

MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

Multilingual learners (ML) can feel disconnection between their school and their home and communities due to language barriers and a lack of community engagement with the school staff. Districts should:

- Create welcoming spaces for families in schools. This could include family resource centers or designated areas where families can connect with each other and school staff.
- Utilize technology for communication, employing translation tools on websites and on communication platforms to ensure information is accessible to all families. Translation and interpretation services should always be available and of a high quality to allow authentic engagement with students and families in decision-making.
- Establish a multilingual family advisory council to provide input on district policies and programs and serve as a communication bridge between the district and multilingual communities. This bridging creates a welcoming environment for both students and families, which, when coupled with high quality instruction and culturally competent staff, support MLs to succeed in both their language development and educational outcomes.

Best Practices to Build Safe and Inclusive Schools

Research shows that for students to succeed in their academic endeavors, they need to feel safe, fed, and supported. Best practices to create a safe and inclusive school were central in several of the white papers, as this work lays the foundation for learning.

STUDENT BELONGING, WELLNESS, AND WELL-BEING

Challenges in ensuring student safety and inclusion are manyfold and range from threats of violence to impacts from external factors such as poverty. School violence, bullying, and cyberbullying create a climate of fear and anxiety, disrupting the learning process and impacting student well-being. Disparities and inequities impact the school climate for students of color, students who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+, students living with disabilities, and students navigating housing instability–often facing disproportionate rates of bullying, harassment, and disciplinary action.

Best practices to improve school climate to support belonging and wellness are:

- Teaching online safety, including keeping personal information private and bullying and harassment prevention.
- Utilizing multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS), which create a baseline culture of support for all students (tier 1), fewer instances of higher resource support (tiers 2 and 3) occur.
- Implementing Transformative Social Emotional Learning (TSEL) standards and practices, schools can create safe school and classroom environments for every student to thrive.
- Celebrating cultural events.
- Providing resources in multiple languages.
- Hiring and retaining diverse staff that reflects the student population.
- Ongoing professional development for staff on cultural competency, culturally responsive teaching, and implicit bias.
- Adopting restorative justice practices, trauma-informed practices, and universal design for learning.
- Ongoing professional development for existing staff on suicide prevention, curriculum use, and support for students.
- Mental health screenings, counseling services, and partnerships with community mental health providers.
- Support novice educators by using Regional Educator Networks for mentoring as they get their bearings as a tool to retain staff and build lasting relationships with students.

AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS

Historical events ranging from disease introduction, genocidal policies, cultural erasure and the forced removal of children to American Indian boarding schools have had lasting impacts on individuals and communities and have been detrimental to relationships between students and families with the education system. Best practices to strengthen school climate for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students, given this history, include:

- Investment in culturally affirming and inclusive practices and in the educators responsible for delivering them to increase belonging and engagement and student outcomes.
- Support for Tribal language, which respects the sovereignty of Native communities, and strengthens cultural identity, belonging, resilience, and academic success.
- Effective implementation of Tribal History Shared History.
- Sustained relationships with local Tribes.
- Increase access to materials about Native people.
- Accurately identify AI/AN students and address disparities in resource allocation and student data.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE, HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULUM

Culturally responsive instructional materials are those that support and affirm student identities, integrate multiple perspectives, and advance rigorous learning for all students. A student and family's identity and culture being present in instructional materials increases the student's sense of belonging, engagement with the materials, and social-emotional well-being–which all result in greater outcomes for the student. This is equally important for students with disabilities, as culturally responsive materials provide authentic representation and high-quality materials include scaffolds that enable students with disabilities to participate in general education settings while representing disability as part of human diversity.

Best practices to support inclusivity through curriculum include:

- Piloting materials with diverse groups of students and families before full adoption, ensuring that feedback reflects the range of backgrounds, languages, and experiences present in the district's student population.
- Engage families to codesign instructional material selection feedback mechanisms to include impacts to students.
- Adopt instructional materials and programs that affirm student identities, provide opportunities for collaborative learning, offer student agency and choice, and integrate multiple perspectives as these support educational rigor and social-emotional development.
- Professionally develop educators in use of the curriculum at regular intervals so that additional resources from the vendor and collaboration with other educators support implementation of newly created culturally responsive resources, and deepens teacher's understanding of the materials which better supports differentiation for students.

Best Practices for Committed and Supported Staff

Both support for educator development and support for educator well-being have arisen as important best practices for Oregon's educational system; educators need to be supported as individuals to prevent burnout and thrive, and educators need to be continuously invested in professionally to evolve with the significant changes to instructional materials and research-aligned initiatives.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Investing in educator's professional development is always important as standards, resources, instructional materials, and teaching methods are constantly changing. Additionally, supporting educators new to the field and new to a location or subject is crucial for giving them the tools they need to navigate the context and support students at all levels. Mentors, professional development, and grade level professional learning communities all support educator retention and well-being.

Best practices to support educator professional development, training, and classroom support include:

- Cultivating internal expertise by providing staff with specialization training, using a "train the trainer" model to provide multi-layered professional learning for all instructional staff to ensure every educator has access to training in social-emotional learning (SEL), differentiation & curriculum compacting, equitable TAG identification, and developing individual student plans.
- Training in culturally responsive, high quality instructional materials to intentionally build educator capacity, align support structures, and gradually strengthen practice across classrooms. Professional learning helps educators understand how materials can be adapted to meet diverse student needs while keeping students engaged with grade-level learning correlates with more positive perceptions of materials and stronger implementation.
- Prioritizing curriculum-embedded coaching helps teachers internalize lessons, adapt materials responsively, and strengthen pedagogical practices aligned to the adopted program.

- Training in culturally responsive teaching and linguistically tailored instruction, including effective strategies for teaching multilingual learners such as sheltered instruction, differentiated instruction, and culturally responsive teaching.
- Support in implementing the Tribal History, Shared History curriculum through professional development and coaching.
- Utilizing Regional Educator Networks (REN) to support staff development along the continuum of their career, including mentors, professional learning communities, role-specific training, collaborative learning structures, and leadership opportunities.
- Providing tools and time for data review, discussion, and collaboration–understanding and implementing interventions for students experiencing barriers to attendance and learning.

EDUCATOR WELL-BEING

The health and stability of the educator workforce are inseparable from students' academic and social emotional success. The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated this interconnection, revealing the extent to which teacher well-being and student outcomes rise and fall together. Educators bring their whole selves into classrooms where students arrive with various social, emotional, and academic needs. This ecosystem offers a framework for understanding the systemic, collective, and individual elements of workforce well-being and belonging work.

Best practices to support educator well-being include:

- A coordinated collaborative set of efforts to address high levels of stress, fatigue, and burnout such as fostering a workplace where open communication is honored, work-life balance is promoted, mental health supports are available to educators and professional development includes opportunities to learn about emotional resilience, stress management, co-regulation and trauma informed strategies
- Competitive compensation for school staff, class size/case load that allows for individual attention, on-site student support including student mental health, and access to a family liaison, social worker or attendance monitor are important for supporting educator's well-being.
- Fully staffing schools both supports students and prevents burnout as workforce shortages increase educator workload–further leading to high turnover among special educators and educators overall.

Future Considerations for QEM Inputs

Each presentation and corresponding white paper to the QEC discussed both the local practices that schools and districts can implement as well as regional or state level practices and policies that would further support local efforts. Many of the best practices rely on continuation of current grant-in-aid funding such as the High School Success program and the Student Investment Account program; however, some practices recommend establishing or expanding funding for specific supports. A sample of those include:

- Allocate adequate and sustained funding for programs and services that support multilingual learners, including interpretation and translation services, professional development, and dual language programs.
- Support the development of Talented and Gifted (TAG) students by addressing specialized staffing shortages through funding, either at the state or district-level, for teachers to obtain a certified TAG specialization
- Fully funding Oregon's School Safety and Prevention Specialists ensures support within the School Safety and Prevention System and provides assistance and training to all schools, districts, private/alternative schools, and any non-profit that supports youth-centered activities for public school students.
- Allocate adequate and sustained funding for programs and services that support American Indian and Alaska Native students and their communities. This includes funding for curricula, educator professional development and hires, tribal consultation and partnerships.

- Address workforce shortages for special education support positions; investments in educator preparation, recruitment, and retention initiatives will help ensure that districts have access to the specialized professionals needed to support students with disabilities.

While the Quality Education Model was not changed in 2026 to include these recommendations, the QEC is reviewing the practices for alignment with the current Quality Education Model (QEM) and potential changes in future iterations.

White Paper Synthesis Summary and Conclusion

Although not encompassing all promising or best practices due to the nature of the original QEC presentation structure, some general findings at the school and district level apply across the Priorities for Student Success in this report:

Create a safe and welcoming environment for students, families, and staff

- Keep student and staff well-being at the forefront of interaction and planning.
- Engage with families on an authentic and ongoing basis. Create opportunities that meet the families where they're at–with interpretation services, childcare, meals, and variation of times. Partner with Tribes and community groups as thought partners and shared problem-solvers.
- Understand the students' perspective through empathy interviews and climate surveys; quickly and consistently address bullying; make sure all students have an authentic connection with an adult at school.
- Utilize the expertise in the buildings–engage staff at all levels for feedback and shared decision-making.
- Support educators with mentors, professional development, and networks.
- Focus on strategies to fill vacancies in critical shortage areas, ensuring that staff can devote their time to their expertise and role; create Grow Your Own pathways to invest in local community members–particularly Tribal language teachers and multilingual educators.

Ensure high quality, culturally responsive curriculum is the center of instruction

- Invest in high quality, culturally responsive instructional materials that represent and draw in the experiences of students.
- Utilize formative assessments aligned to the instructional materials in the classroom to meet students where they're at, engage students, and increase commitments to learning through shared goals and evaluations.
- Embed Transformative Social-Emotional Learning throughout a student's day.

The QEC best practices white papers explore specific and systemic practices to support Oregon students–from creating goals with individual students to addressing statewide workforce shortages. Each white paper describes the conditions that currently exist and offers a straightforward approach to improvement in Oregon.

Education Support Professional of the Year, Erica Carrillo

On Wednesday, May 20, 2026, Oregon Department of Education Director Dr. Charlene Williams joined Oregon Lottery leaders, North Wasco County School District Superintendent Dr. Carolyn Bernal, and The Dalles Middle School Principal Sherri Kilgore and Vice Principal Shudhi Datta in honoring Erica Carrillo as Oregon's 2026 Education Support Professional of the Year. Carrillo is the Bilingual Family Liaison at The Dalles Middle School.

"Education support professionals like Ms. Erica Carrillo are at the heart of strong schools and strong communities," Governor Tina Kotek said. "Through her leadership, compassion, and commitment to students and families, she has helped ensure that every family feels welcomed, connected, and empowered to participate in their child's education. Ms. Carillo's work reminds us that creating belonging in our schools can change the trajectory of students' lives."

"Ms. Carrillo exemplifies what it means to remove barriers so students and families can thrive," said Dr. Williams. "Whether she is helping families navigate school systems, connecting students to basic needs, translating critical information, or creating opportunities for families to engage with their school community, Ms. Carrillo approaches every part of her work with care, creativity, and deep dedication. Her impact extends far beyond The Dalles Middle School; she represents the vital role education support professionals play in building trust, strengthening partnerships, and helping every student feel seen and supported."

Best Practices Survey

The Quality Education Model (QEM) is predicated on the principle that adequate funding must be paired with evidence-based implementation to improve student outcomes. Following the methodology established in the 2024 QEM Report, the 2026 Best Practices Survey serves as an exploratory audit of how these strategies are perceived and operationalized at the school building level. By soliciting qualitative and survey feedback on specific instructional and structural strategies, this effort provides directional insights into whether funded practices are understood and functional in district operations.

Survey Methodology and Respondent Distribution

The 2026 survey captured feedback from 200 self-selected respondents across Oregon's educational community. To capture insights through both a professional and lived-experience lens, the survey targeted two primary groups:

- **Educators and Administrators (n = 182):** Principals, staff, and instructional leaders providing professional perspectives on systemic utility, operational barriers, and local practices.
- **Non-Educator Stakeholders (n = 18):** Parents, students, school board members, and community members evaluating their awareness and the visible impact of these practices.

Methodological Note: The 2026 survey utilized an open-access convenience sample. Because participation was voluntary, the findings represent the perspectives of those who responded rather than a statistically representative cross-section of all Oregon schools, educators, or community members. Findings, particularly among small sub-groups, should be interpreted as qualitative signals and directional indicators rather than generalizable statewide metrics.

Comparative Response Frameworks

A defining characteristic of the 2026 data is the use of tailored response scales. This allows the Commission to triangulate "Best Practices" by comparing professional implementation against community awareness:

Educator Response Options	Non-Educator Response Options
I don't know enough about this.	I don't know about this.
This is being implemented in my district.	This is happening in my school/district.
This practice is effective.	This is helpful/effective.
Other (Qualitative)	Other (Qualitative)

Detailed data visualizations and numerical breakdowns for each best practice question area can be found in Appendix D: 2026 Best Practices Survey Results.

Quantitative Analysis

The 2026 responses illustrate a significant disconnect between the perceived effectiveness of a practice and its actual presence in Oregon schools. A core trend emerged across all surveyed categories: efficacy consistently outpaces implementation and the strategies identified as effective align with those in the Best Practices White Papers.

1. **Regular Attendance & Chronic Absenteeism**

   Aligning with the 2024 QEM Report's emphasis on regular attendance as a primary leading indicator of graduation success, practices such as "Access to a family liaison" and "Multidisciplinary teams with protected time" were rated as the most effective strategies. However, this domain showed the widest disparity in implementation. Respondents frequently noted that while attendance teams exist, they often lack the operational authority or the protected time to act quickly. The data suggests that without dedicated worktime for these roles, attendance interventions remain reactive rather than preventative.

2. **Recruitment and Retention of Staff**

   The survey results indicate that strategies such as "Mentorship programs for new educators" and "Competitive local housing or cost-of-living stipends" are viewed as highly effective for stabilizing the workforce. Yet, implementation figures for these initiatives remain low, particularly in rural districts. A significant knowledge barrier exists in this domain; a high number of respondents selected "I don't know enough about this" regarding district-level recruitment pipelines and retention packages. This suggests that new staff support systems are often managed as high-level administrative functions and are not clearly communicated to building-level staff or the broader community, potentially hindering the effectiveness of the onboarding process.

3. **Multilingual Learner Success**

   For multilingual learner success, "Dual-language immersion" and "Sheltered instruction" were identified as top-tier effective practices. However, the quantitative data shows a resource-knowledge overlap: many educators recognize the efficacy of these programs but report that they are not being implemented due to a lack of bilingual certified staff. The high frequency of "I don't know enough" responses from non-educator stakeholders suggests that families of multilingual learners may not be fully aware of the specialized supports available to their students, pointing to a transparency gap in English Language Development programming.

4. **Foundational Skills Development (Literacy & Numeracy)**

   The implementation of evidence-based Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions (such as small-group coaching) was rated as nearly universal in perceived effectiveness. However, the numerical distribution shows that full implementation is hampered by a knowledge gap. Specifically, the transition to "Science of Reading" standards shows a high rate of "This is being implemented" but a higher-than-expected rate of "I don't know enough about this" from veteran staff, suggesting that while the policy is in place, the deep pedagogical shift is still a work in progress.

5. **On-Time High School Graduation**

   "Credit recovery programs" and "9th-Grade Success Teams" continue to be the gold standard for on-time graduation according to the 2026 figures. The data shows relatively high implementation rates in this domain compared to others, likely due to years of focused state investment. However, the qualitative "Other" data reveals that these programs are often stretched thin, with high caseloads for counselors and graduation coaches. Stakeholders (parents/students) reported high awareness of these programs but expressed concern regarding the depth of support provided to students at risk of dropping out.

6. **Student Learning Environment (Climate & Safety)**

   Practices centered on "Restorative Justice" and "Trauma-Informed Care" received some of the highest efficacy ratings in the 2026 survey. Interestingly, this domain also saw the highest volume of "Other" responses. While educators often marked these as being implemented, stakeholders frequently selected "I don't see this happening in my school." This suggests a significant perception gap. Schools may be utilizing restorative frameworks internally, but the impact on the overall school climate is not yet visible or felt by the broader community.

Qualitative Insights

The qualitative "Other" responses provided by participants offer a real-world audit of the QEM's assumptions. While the quantitative data provides the scale of the problem, the qualitative entries explain the cause.

- Role-Specific Dependencies: Several respondents noted that the success of attendance and literacy interventions is often tied to a single individual (e.g., "Dependent on DHS Liaison availability"). This indicates a lack of systemic redundancy; if one specialized staff member leaves, the "Best Practice" effectively ceases to exist in that district.

- Partial vs. Full Implementation: Qualitative comments highlighted that implementation is a spectrum. Many districts reported practices as "Being Implemented," but clarified that they were only in a pilot phase or restricted to specific grade levels, particularly in middle-to-high school transition supports.
- Competing Mandates: Write-in responses frequently cited "staffing shortages" and "time poverty" as the primary reasons why effective practices are not being implemented. Educators are aware of what works, but the operational reality of the current school year often forces a retreat to "triage" rather than "best practice."

From Funding Existence to Funding Excellence

The frequency of "I don't know enough about this" across both staff and community respondents serves as a key indicator that funding models must account for institutional infrastructure alongside headcount. The Quality Education Model (QEM) is not merely a list of staff positions; it represents an integrated ecosystem requiring specialized training, dedicated collaborative time, and robust communication structures to function as intended.

Achieving Oregon's educational goals requires legislative appropriations aligned with QEM parameters, combined with systemic state and district support for implementation through strategic staffing, professional learning, and continuous improvement.

- Strategic Recommendations for the 2027–29 Biennium

To bridge the divide between perceived efficacy and actual implementation, the Commission recommends a shift in how "Best Practices" are funded and measured:

- Prioritize Protected Time: The data regarding Chronic Absenteeism and High School Graduation indicates that "Teams" only work when they have the operational authority and scheduled time to act. Future appropriations must specifically account for the FTE required to provide this non-instructional, yet vital, collaborative time that currently exists in the Fully Implemented QEM.
- Invest in Systemic Redundancy: As noted in the qualitative findings, many "Best Practices" are currently dependent on single individuals. Sustainable implementation requires a transition from "expert-dependent" models to "system-wide" competency through broader professional development.
- Enhance Community Transparency: The "Perception Gap" between staff and stakeholders suggests that districts must improve how they communicate the availability and impact of student supports. Funding for community engagement and family liaisons should be viewed as a core component of the instructional model, not an optional add-on.

Best Practices Conclusion

It's clear that educators and families in Oregon care deeply about their students' well-being and learning and have identified practices that are research-backed and largely accepted as viable approaches to improving student support and outcomes. Where there is room for improvement is effective implementation with sustained focus. Oftentimes, deep professional development of adopted curriculum and differentiated application in classrooms is lacking due to frequent curriculum turnover and an overwhelming amount of content to cover in educator training opportunities.

The best practices described in the white papers are robust and research backed. The Best Practices Survey shows that many practices are on educator's radars and are being adopted in local schools. However, while best practices often improve outcomes for multiple student groups or across multiple goals, they may be presented as disconnected strategies. One crucial step in the process of implementation for districts and schools is the weaving of work so that educators across grades and subjects are working together with a shared vision and set of tools–seeing clear connections between, to name a few, formative assessments, differentiated instruction, social-emotional learning, and school climate. Supporting educators and developing a culture where staff, students, and families are engaged is the foundation for teaching and learning. From this foundation, deep professional development and clearly-aligned student goals can take root at the classroom level.

The Quality Education Model

One of the responsibilities of the Quality Education Commission as established in statute[96] in 2001 is to determine the amount of money sufficient to meet the educational goals for Oregon's K-12 public education system for each biennium (2 year funding cycle).[97] To carry out that responsibility, the Commission adopted and has continuously enhanced the Quality Education Model (QEM) to be a research-based tool to evaluate best educational practices and the costs of implementing those practices.

Article VIII, Section 8 of the Oregon Constitution establishes that the Legislative Assembly shall appropriate in each biennium a sum of money sufficient to ensure that the state's system of public education meets the quality goals established by law.

It further requires the Legislature to publish a report that either demonstrates that the appropriation is sufficient, or identifies the reasons for the insufficiency, its extent, and its impact on the ability of the state's system of public education to meet those goals.

The QEM is a professional judgment model, enhanced by a more detailed "Costing Model" component that takes advantage of detailed financial and other data collected by the Oregon Department of Education over the past 25 years. The model uses the professional judgment of the Commission, informed by research and relevant evidence, regarding the system of best practices necessary to implement in order to achieve the Quality Education goals of the state, the level of inputs and resources necessary to implement those best practices in schools, and statistical analysis of the costs of those inputs and resources and other sources of funding to estimate the level of fiscal support required to implement those best educational practices in schools for the upcoming biennium.

The cost estimates are used to determine an adequate level of funding needed each biennium to achieve the state's quality education goals. The Commission provides two cost estimates:

- **QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding:** Estimates the costs to maintain the same level of resources and implements the same level of service in schools as the previous biennium.
- Historical funding below this level of funding has led to cuts in the level and quality of educational services schools are able to deliver in the next biennium and lower the beginning current service level in the next round of budget forecasting.
- **Full Implementation of the QEM:** Estimates the costs to maintain the same level of service in schools as the previous biennium plus the additional resources necessary for schools to implement the educational best practices recommended by the Commission and improve the outcomes of the system to advance the achievement of the quality education goals.

The QEM associates state funding with performance of the K-12 educational system; however, local school districts have the ability to determine the educational best practices they implement and then how they use their funds. The model assumes that if the state made sustained investments to fully fund K-12 education at the level recommended by the Commission and local school districts implemented the recommended educational best practices, 90 percent of students would graduate from high school within four years of ninth grade enrollment.

It is important to understand that statistical models cannot perfectly capture all the factors associated with expected outcomes. For the QEM, this means that the cost estimates do not represent the exact amount of money needed to

96 ORS 327.497 (4)

97 The state's educational goals are found in ORS 329.015, ORS 329.025, ORS 329.045, and ORS 329.065

achieve exact educational outcomes. Instead, the model provides a reasonable framework based on data, research, professional judgment, and public values, for estimating an adequate level of funding to achieve the state's quality education goals.

Model Description

The model developed in 1999 uses three prototype schools as a basis for generalizing the costs to operate schools statewide. The prototypes represent typical characteristics and resources of an elementary school, middle school, and high school in Oregon. The prototypes do not represent any actual schools but are composites representing an average school for its category. A research synthesis conducted by Education Northwest indicates that an effective size for elementary schools is between 300-400 students and that middle schools that are effective range from 400-800 students.[98] The ideal high school is between 600-900 students.[99] The prototype schools are informed by related research.

PROTOTYPE SCHOOLS[100]

Elementary School: 360 Students

- All-day kindergarten
- Class size average of 20
- 1 librarian per school
- 1 school nurse per school
- 1 PE and music specialist per school
- 1 Family Resource staffer per school
- Computers for students & staff

Middle School: 500 Students

- Class size average of 17.7
- 1.5 additional teachers for math, English, and science
- Alternative programs for special needs and students whom the system places at risk
- Volunteer coordinator and community outreach worker
- One counselor for every 250 students
- Adequate campus security
- 1 school nurse per school
- 1 librarian per school
- Computers for students & staff
- 1 Family Resource staffer per school

High School: 1,000 Students

- Class size average of 20.7
- 3.0 additional teachers for math, English, and science
- Alternative programs
- Volunteer coordinator and community outreach worker
- One counselor for every 250 students
- Adequate campus security
- School-to-work coordinator
- 1 school nurse
- 1 librarian per school
- 1 Family Resource staffer per school
- Computers for students & staff

98 Cotton, K. (1996). School Size, School Climate, and Student Performance

99 Lee, V., Smith, J. (1997). High School Size: Which Works Best and for Whom?

100 The QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding model uses the actual staffing ratios from the base year for schools in the approximate size of the prototype schools. The Full QEM, shown here, uses the Commission's research-informed recommended ratios.

The characteristics and resources defining each prototype school include operational costs, quality indicators, and best practices determined by the Commission using a combination of approaches:

- **Professional Judgment:** With this approach, the Commission leverages current research and evidence of best practices, as well as the expertise of its own members and input from other local education experts, to define the resources schools need to achieve the quality education goals.
- **Research:** With this approach, the Commission reviews research that demonstrates effective educational practices, identifies the resources needed to implement those practices, and determines costs for those resources.
- **Statistical Analysis:** With this approach, the Commission analyzes administrative data to identify the actual historical site-based and per-pupil expenditures of schools, districts and educational service districts within the State of Oregon as well as staffing levels and other characteristics of the categorical expenditures in order to estimate the per-pupil costs of instruction in efficiently-scaled elementary, middle and high schools within the State of Oregon.
- **Public Values:** With this approach, the Commission developed and administered a survey seeking input from educators, education leaders, students, families, and community members about educational best practices.

Operational costs include teachers, administrators, support staff, supplies, and utilities. Quality indicators fall into four broad categories: school-level, teacher-related, classroom-focused, and student-centered factors. Best practices are strategies and programs that effectively promote high levels of student achievement.[101] In all, the model is complex and includes nearly 500 factors or "inputs" that are used to estimate educational costs.

The QEC reports these findings to the Legislature and Governor every two years. The model is updated and enhanced to incorporate current effective practices and evaluate education policy proposals with each report. The Oregon Department of Education supports the QEC by providing data and administrative staff to support QEM improvements and the development of this biannual report.

Model Strengths

The Quality Education Model (QEM) leverages detailed financial and administrative data from the Oregon Department of Education to ground its cost estimates in state-specific economic realities. Since its adoption in 1999, the Commission has maintained the underlying framework of the QEM while systematically refining it each biennium to incorporate current research, data, and best practices. As formally recognized in the 2025 AIR evaluation,[102] the QEM demonstrates specific strengths in the following areas:

- **Resource Identification and Pricing:** The Commission is effective at identifying the types and quantities of resources needed and utilizes Oregon-specific data for pricing, ensuring cost estimates are grounded in the state's economic realities.
- **Responsiveness to Evolving Needs:** The model's periodic updates to resource assumptions demonstrate a commitment to adapting to changing educational needs and best practices.
- **Use of Supplemental Data:** The integration of research reviews, best practices surveys, and statistical analysis provides beneficial context to support the professional judgment process.

Furthermore, the inclusion of detailed workbook documentation (Appendix C) has significantly increased transparency, allowing for a more thorough third-party evaluation of the QEM's calculations.

101 See the best practices section of this report for more information on best and promising practices identified in research.
102 American Institutes for Research Review and Evaluation of the Efficacy and Methodology of the Quality Education Model

The model is primarily driven by the professional judgment of the Commission regarding the resources required above and beyond the Current Service Level (CSL) expenditures to continue making progress towards the state's quality education goals. While the Commission considers various outcome metrics to inform these deliberations, these outputs do not serve as formal conditional inputs within the model's mathematical framework. Instead, they provide critical context that informs the Commission's expert assessment regarding best practices and the resources necessary to implement them.

To help illustrate the strengths of the QEM's cost estimations and the associated recommendations for adequate funding, the Commission utilizes regression analyses that confirm a statistically significant relationship between per-pupil expenditures and performance trends over time. The exhibits on the following pages show these analyses with the 4-Year Cohort Graduation rate and the 5-Year Cohort Completer rate as predicted outcomes:

- **Exhibit 52 (4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Forecasts):** Shows that if funding had reached Full QEM levels for Oregon students' entire K-12 experience since 2012–13, the state would be positioned to attain a 90 percent graduation rate by 2027–28.
- **Exhibit 54 (5-Year Cohort Completer Rate Forecasts):** Shows that if funding had reached Full QEM levels for Oregon students' entire K-12 experience since 2012–13, the state would be positioned to attain a 90 percent 5-Year Cohort Completer rate by 2027–28.

These analyses provide further evidence of the validity of the QEM's adequacy recommendations by illustrating the long-term impact of investing at the identified adequacy funding levels.

EXHIBIT 50: Graduation and Completion Growth Rates Under Funding Models

4-Year Graduation Rate Growth Rate Assumption	Estimated 90% Graduation Rate Year
Current long-run growth predicted graduation rate	2030-31
Current CSL funded predicted graduation rate	2028-29
90% QEM target funded predicted graduation rate	2027-28

5-Year Completer Rate Growth Rate Assumption	Estimated 90% Completer Rate Year
Current long-run growth predicted completer rate	2033-34
Current CSL funded predicted completer rate	2030-31
90% QEM target funded predicted completer rate	2027-28

EXHIBIT 51: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate by State School Fund Funding per ADMw, 2013-14 to 2024-25

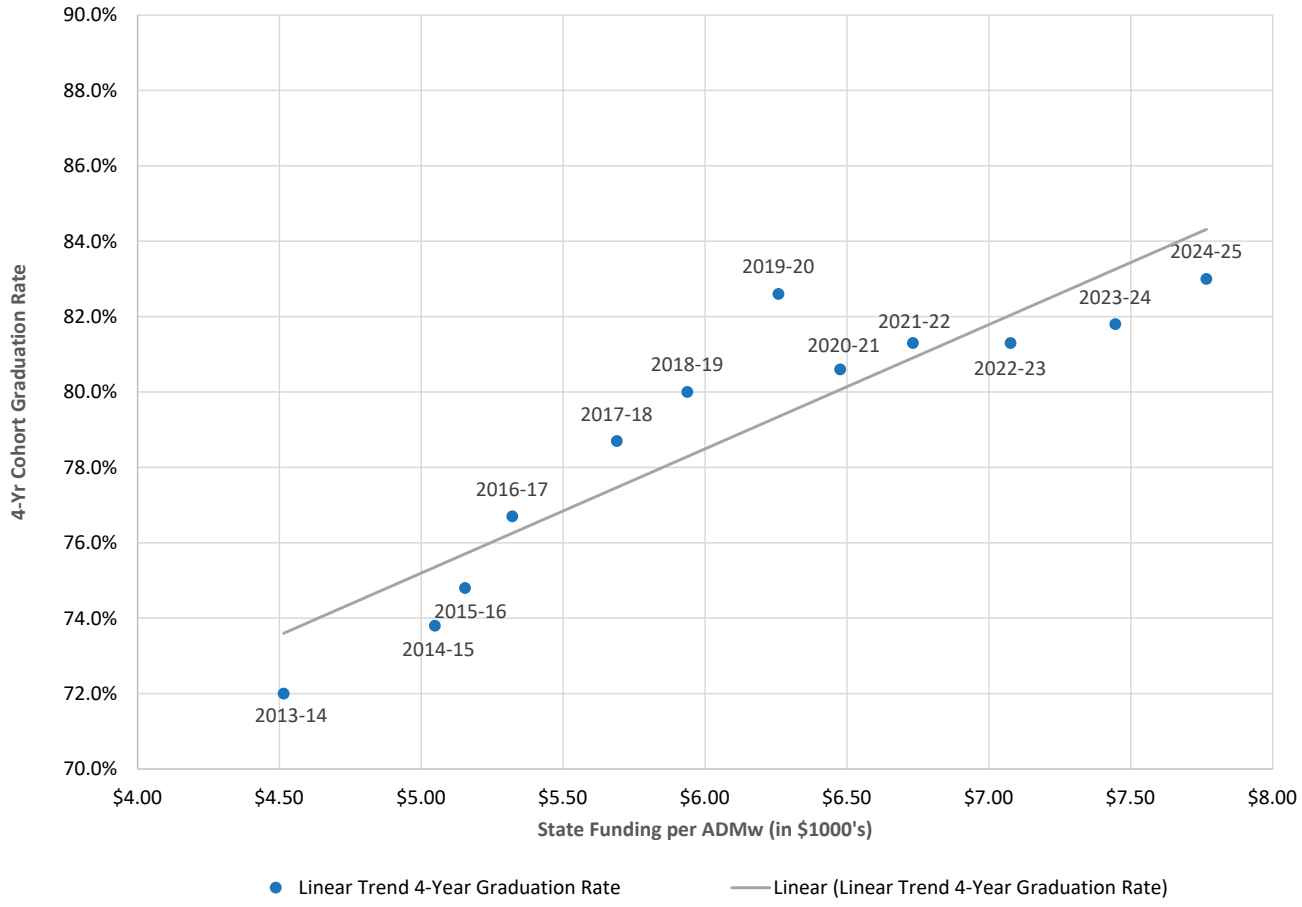


EXHIBIT 52: Predicted Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates

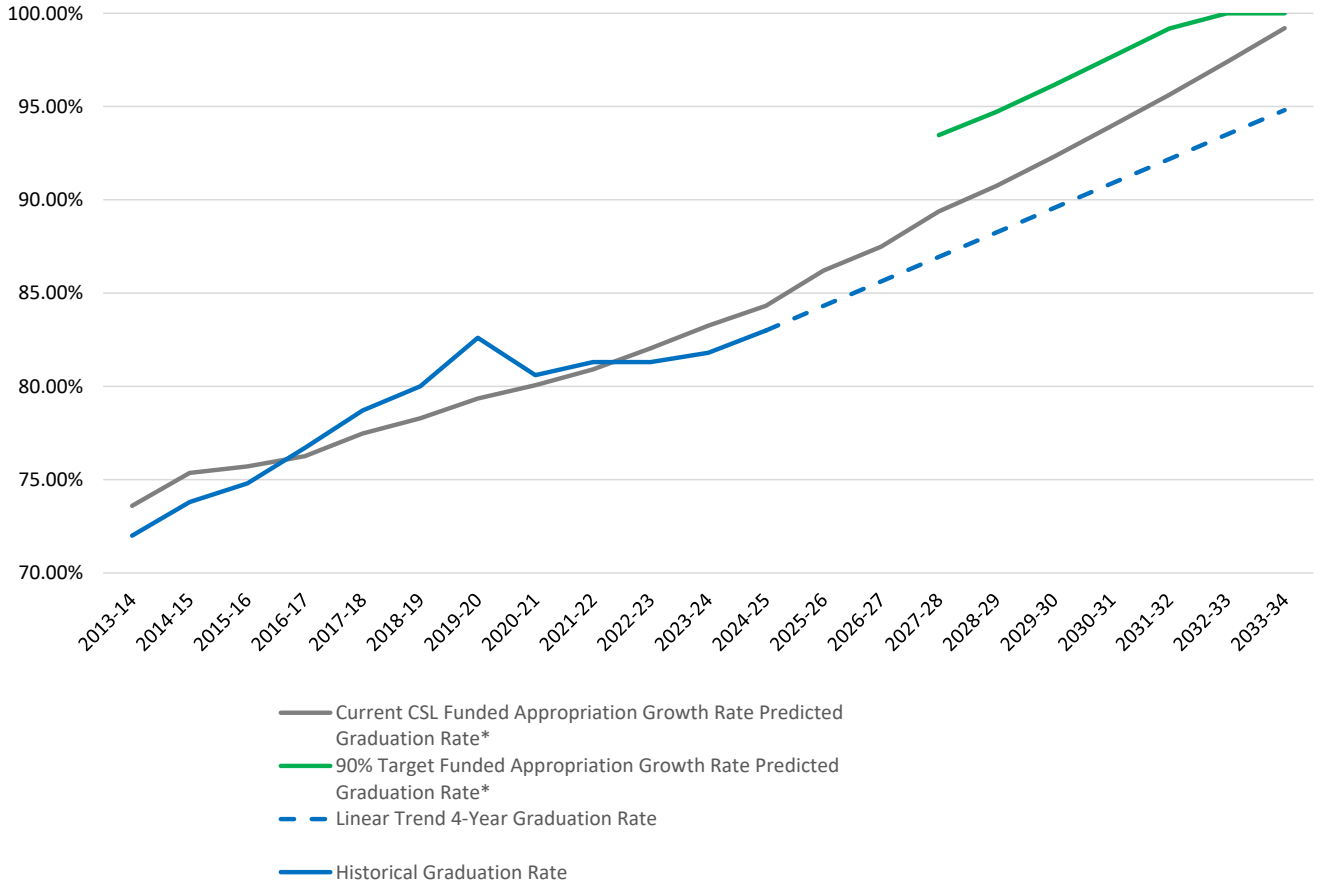


EXHIBIT 53: Five-Year Completer Rate by State School Fund Funding per ADMw, 2013-14 to 2024-25

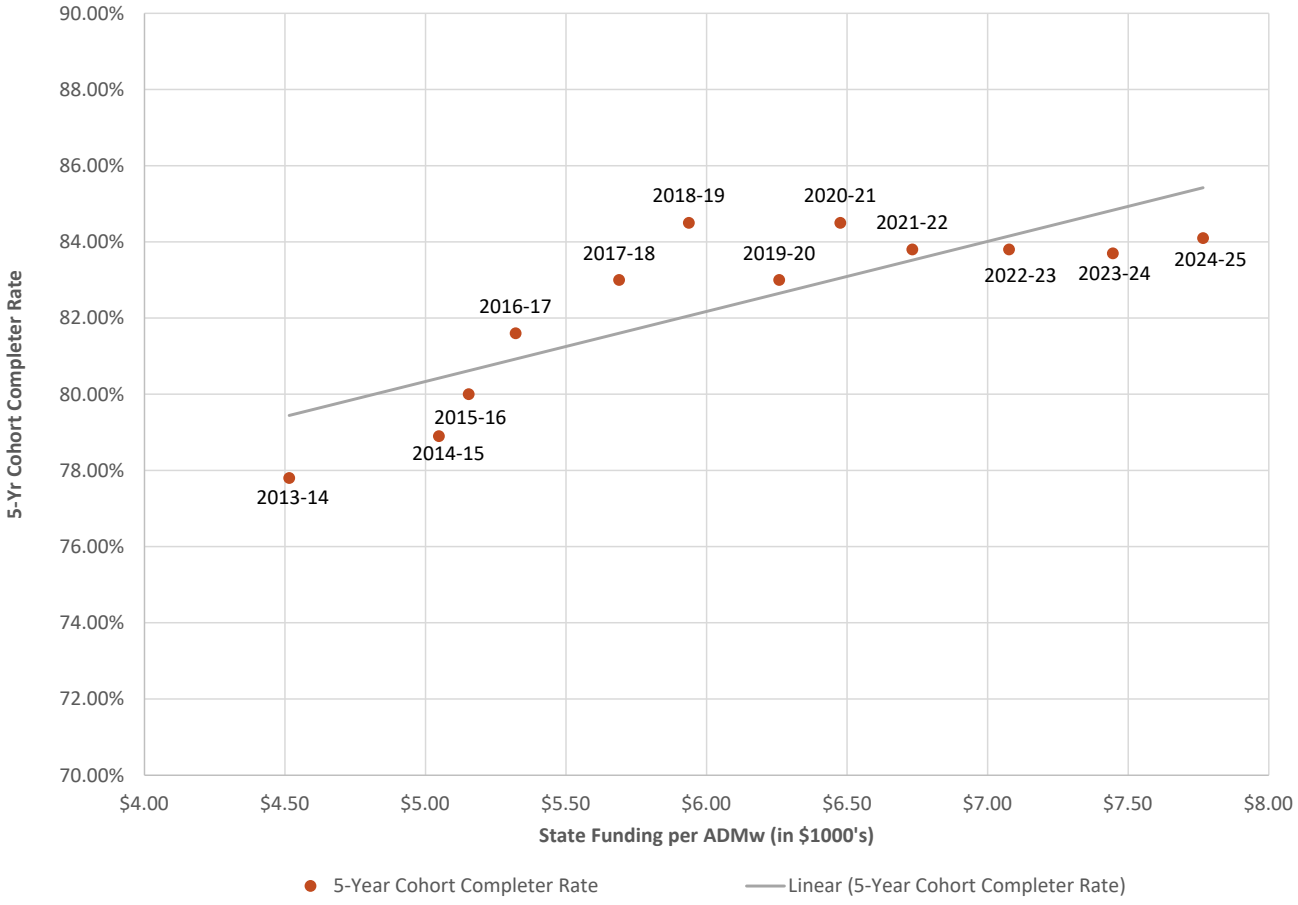


EXHIBIT 54: Predicted Five-Year Cohort Completer Rates

Model Limitations and Opportunities for Improvement

While the QEM provides a robust and validated baseline, the 2025 AIR evaluation identified specific structural limitations that the Commission is addressing to enhance the model's utility for policymakers.

- **Refining the Use of Outcome Data:** The AIR evaluation identified that the current reliance on a single outcome goal (the 90% graduation rate) is too narrow. In response, the Commission is exploring the inclusion of a broader set of adequacy goals such as
  - 3rd Grade English Language Arts Proficiency,
  - 9th Grade On-Track status, and
  - Regular Attendance

  to provide a more holistic view of the K-12 continuum without treating these as formal conditional model inputs.
- **Reassessing Prototype Complexity:** While the AIR report recommended increasing the number of prototype schools to better represent diverse student needs and district characteristics, the QEM remains a tool designed for statewide estimation. The commission agrees additional prototype schools should be added but it has not had the staffing capacity to do so.

- **Diversifying Expert Panels:** To align with Professional Judgment Panel (PJP) best practices, the AIR report recommended expanding panel diversity. The Commission is reviewing the idea of using neutral, external expert panels of practicing Oregon educators across diverse roles and locations to specify educational needs, ensuring that professional judgment remains the primary, informed driver to identify costs.
- **Enhancing Transparency and Stability:** The AIR evaluation highlighted the need to mitigate "destabilizing shifts" in cost estimates. To address this, the Commission is working to itemize changes in cost inputs more clearly, conduct rigorous quality reviews of financial codes, and develop strategies to integrate research-based updates more gradually and consistently.

Concluding Note on AIR Report Findings

The AIR report emphasizes that while the PJP approach is a valuable tool, its effective implementation requires continuous refinement to meet best practices. The AIR evaluation does not invalidate the current QEM estimates. Instead, it highlights that the model's primary shortcomings relate to how useful the information produced is, rather than fundamental errors in resource identification or pricing.

Importantly, AIR's independent cost estimates align directionally with the QEM, validating the Commission's core finding that state educational goals require significantly higher investment than historical funding levels have provided. In fact, AIR's findings suggest the QEC's Full QEM target is conservative: for the 2022–23 school year, the QEM modeled an adequate per-pupil funding level of $18,829, whereas the AIR Cost Model established adequacy at $22,210 per pupil.[103] The AIR adequacy estimate represented a 30% increase over actual state and local per-pupil expenditures ($17,136). Fully implementing AIR's recommendations (e.g., panel diversification, enhanced data granularity, and structured transparency) will be a multi-year, resource-intensive undertaking that the Commission supports advancing in close coordination with the Legislature.

2027-29 QEM Funding Estimates

For the 2027–29 biennium, the Quality Education Commission (QEC) estimates that a total investment of $13.78 billion is required for the Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding to maintain the current activities of Oregon's K-12 education system. Beyond this, the QEM identifies a Full QEM adequacy target of $16.21 billion, a comprehensive funding level designed to maintain current services while providing the necessary additional investments to improve student outcomes across the K-12 continuum.

Reconciliation of QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding and DAS CSL Estimates

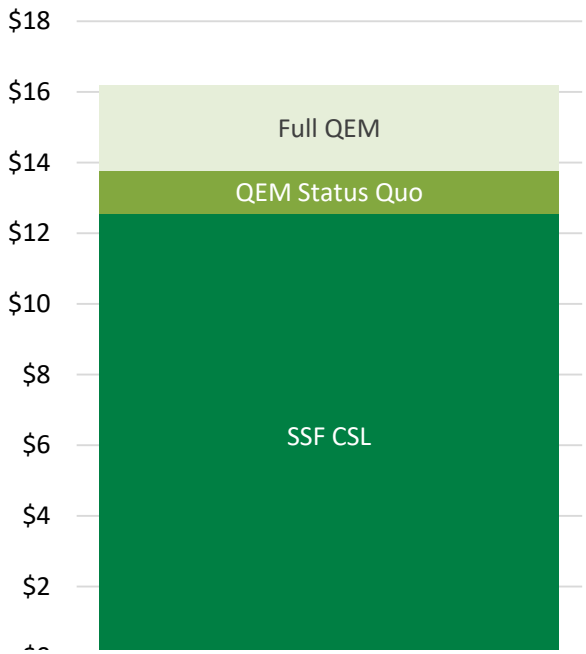
These estimates provide a more complete view of K-12 educational funding requirements than the statutory State School Fund (SSF) CSL target calculated by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), which is $12.56 billion, as the commission takes into account other historic funding sources beyond those allocated through the State School Fund. The Commission reconciles the variance between its comprehensive estimates and the SSF CSL target by accounting for the following structural and conceptual differences:

- **Statutory Current Service Level (CSL):** The Oregon Department of Administrative Services adjusts State School Fund expenditures from the prior biennium to account for inflation and enrollment changes. Since this cost estimate is for State School Fund allocated funding streams only, it excludes: K-12 educational activities previously funded through non-State School Fund sources (such as grants and funds for the Student Success Act other than the SSA transfer to the SSF), changes in non-state source funding source levels (such as declining federal funds), and cost increases outside of State School Fund sources (such as declining Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) side account earnings offsets) that lead to increased realized net debt service obligation payments to PERS-bond holding districts.

103 American Institutes for Research. 2025. Understanding the Cost of Providing Adequate Educational Opportunity in Oregon. Pg 37.

- **QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding Target:** Represents the total state cost to continue providing all current K-12 educational activities at the level provided during the prior biennium, regardless of the historical funding source of those activities, net of all forecast non-state revenues. In other words, the cost to continue services at the status quo level after removing all expected non-state supplied funding. If there are reductions in federal or local funding, the QEC's Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding number must include an estimate of the state cost of backfilling those reduced funding streams. The Statutory State School Fund Current Service Level (SSF CSL) estimate is a subset of the QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding estimate.
- **Full QEM State Funding Target:** The Full QEM State Funding Target is the amount that is necessary once additional activities to improve education are added to the status quo level of activities priced in the QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding Target. The funding level does not is cost estimate cannot consider whether that state funds are available or feasible; it only states the objective cost of these activities net of all non-state sources of funding. The QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding Target estimate is a subset of the Full QEM State Funding Target estimate.

EXHIBIT 55: Total Core K-12 State Funding ($ in Billions)



A portion of the services previously delivered in Oregon classrooms was sustained by temporarily elevated federal funding, such as one-time pandemic recovery funds that have now expired. Under its statutory mandate, the QEC is required to consider the cost to continue "[c]urrent practices in the state's system of kindergarten through grade 12 public education"[104] in its Status Quo Core K-12 Funding Service Level estimate, regardless of the original source of funding that previously supported those activities. Therefore, the current expected cost of activities previously paid for by now reduced non-state funds is included in the 2027-29 QEM estimates. However, the Commission also recognizes that the state may lack the fiscal capacity to backfill these sunsetting federal dollars with state resources.

If these services are not continued through increased state funding, they cannot be considered part of a true continued "Current Service Level" in practice. Instead, the projected loss of federal funds will impact available funds at the district level, reducing the ability to provide the previously delivered level and/or quality of K-12 educational services to students and their families, and consequently, the Commission would expect to see a decrease in educational outcomes. Without knowing the specific curtailment options that will be selected by districts, it is impossible to predict the exact locus or magnitude of these declines.

104 ORS 327.506(4)(a) https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors327.html

Updated 2026 Model Assumptions

The QEM is reviewed and refined each biennium to reflect current practices and costs. No inputs were added, nor were new assumptions evaluated within the professional judgment purview for the 2026 QEM Report. Therefore, the 2026 report has no itemized cost estimates for changes provided.

The 2027-29 Full QEM Updates

The 2026 Full QEM projection represents updates in the market price of education services rather than changes in the quantity of staff or services and supplies. A review of the 2024 and 2026 models confirms that staffing levels remain identical to those in the previous model. The current projection excludes enhancements such as an 180-day school year. The Commission will continue to consider incorporating them into future models.

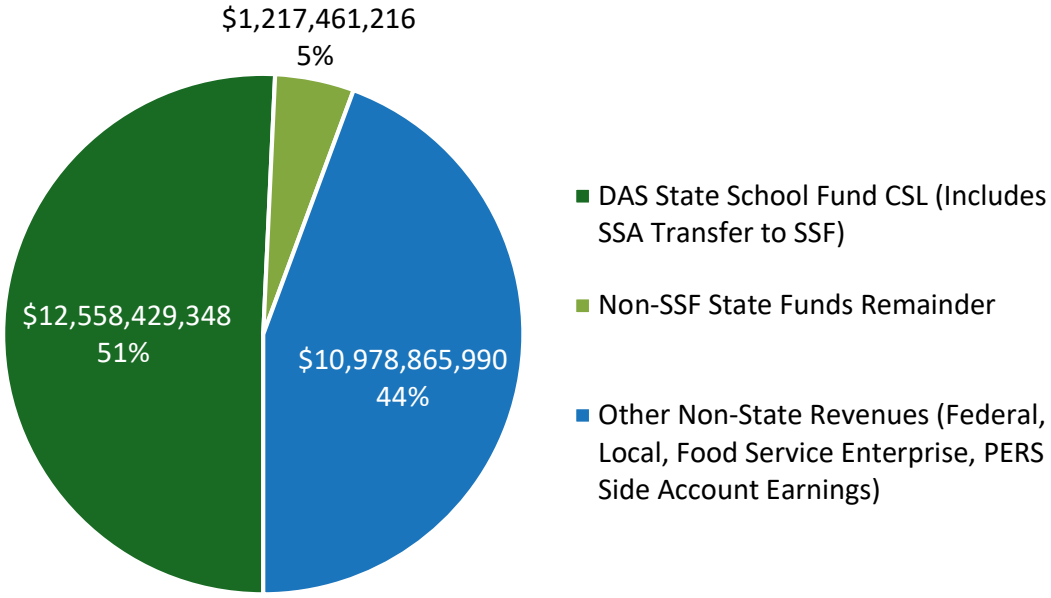
The Commission understands the legislature is considering updates and improvements to estimating the level of funding needed to reach the state's educational outcomes. Given this changing landscape and consensus about the shortcomings of the current model, Commissioners agreed that significant adjustments to the QEM should be informed by an improved model and process.

Simultaneously, the Commission recognizes that we write this report during acute fiscal challenges facing our state, including significant losses in federal funding impacting multiple areas of the state budget. At the school district level, this macro-level fiscal restraint meets district budget realities. The Commission acknowledges that if alternative funding is not found to at least partially offset declining federal resources, districts will need to make cuts. While Oregon already has one of the shortest school years in the country, simply cutting school days is not ideal. The Governor's recent Executive Order 26-06 reinforces the need to restore recently cut days. We do fear that less funds will lead to other cuts to staff and support services, which may also be detrimental.

Ultimately, the Commission is statutorily mandated to calculate and report an objective cost estimate of educational adequacy, represented by the $16.21 billion Full QEM target, regardless of whether current economic contractions suggest that full funding at this level is immediately viable. The Full QEM projection is not a discretionary budget request, but a legal obligation of the Commission to measure the actual fiscal gap between current operating levels and a system fully capable of achieving Oregon's educational goals. To satisfy this mandate, the Full QEM model determines the necessary state-sourced funding that would be required to close the gap between total system costs and all other available revenue sources. After accounting for federal funds, local revenues, food service enterprise revenues, and PERS side account earnings offsets, the remaining state funding requirement is mapped below. This recommendation encompasses the total state-funded dollars necessary for both the State School Fund (SSF) and other state funds dedicated to core K-12 activities aligned with QEM proposed inputs.

Exhibit 56 below demonstrates the amount needed to maintain the QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding. The blue section, nearly $11 billion, is the amount of non-state revenues expected; the dark green, close to $12.6 billion, is the amount calculated for the SSF CSL. The light green is the remaining amount needed to make up the difference to maintain funds at the current service level.

EXHIBIT 56: Status Quo Total Core Funding for K-12 Education Requirement by Funding Source



More details for the pie chart can be found in Exhibit 57 below. The total QEM Status Quo Total Core Funding Recommendation for both school districts and ESDs is roughly $24.75 billion. After subtracting the other non-state revenues from federal and local sources, which are expected to be nearly $11 billion, the total remaining need to continue services at status quo is $13.78 billion. Once the State School Fund Current Service Level is removed, this leaves about $1.2 billion remaining to achieve the Status Quo Total Core Funding for K-12.

EXHIBIT 57: Status Quo Total Core Funding for K-12 by Source (Exhibit 58 Expanded)

Funding Description	Fund Amount
Total Costs for QEM Status Quo Total Core Funding Recommendation, Districts plus ESDs	**$24,754,756,554**
Local Revenue not in Formula	-$2,913,243,173
Federal Revenue	-$2,223,972,696
Food Service Enterprise Revenue	-$25,786,414
PERS Side Account Earnings (net of debt service obligations)	+$245,220,477
Local Revenue Distributed by Formula	-$6,061,084,185
Subtotal: Other Non-State Revenues (Federal, Local, Food Service Enterprise, PERS Side Account Earnings)	**-10,978,865,990**
Subtotal: QEM Status Quo Total Core Funding for K-12 Education State Funding Recommendation (Total minus other non-state revenues)	**$13,775,890,564**
State School Fund CSL (Includes SSA Transfer to SSF)	**-$12,558,429,348**
Remaining Non-SSF State Funds for Status Quo Core K-12 Education Funding	$1,217,461,216

The Commission has consistently noted that the State School Fund (SSF) CSL estimate reflects and perpetuates historical budgetary choices rather than forecasting the full costs of an adequate educational system. Because CSL is a top-down macro-accounting model that escalates prior appropriations, any biennium where funding falls short of full operational needs creates a lower expenditure baseline for all future CSL calculations. This leads to a compounding 'ratcheting down' effect, where past funding constraints are rolled forward into subsequent budget cycles. In contrast, the QEM is a bottom-up resource-based prototype model that removes these historical budgetary constraints, modeling the true, unconstrained cost of the resources, staffing, and operational infrastructure necessary to support quality instruction and drive continuous improvement in student outcomes.

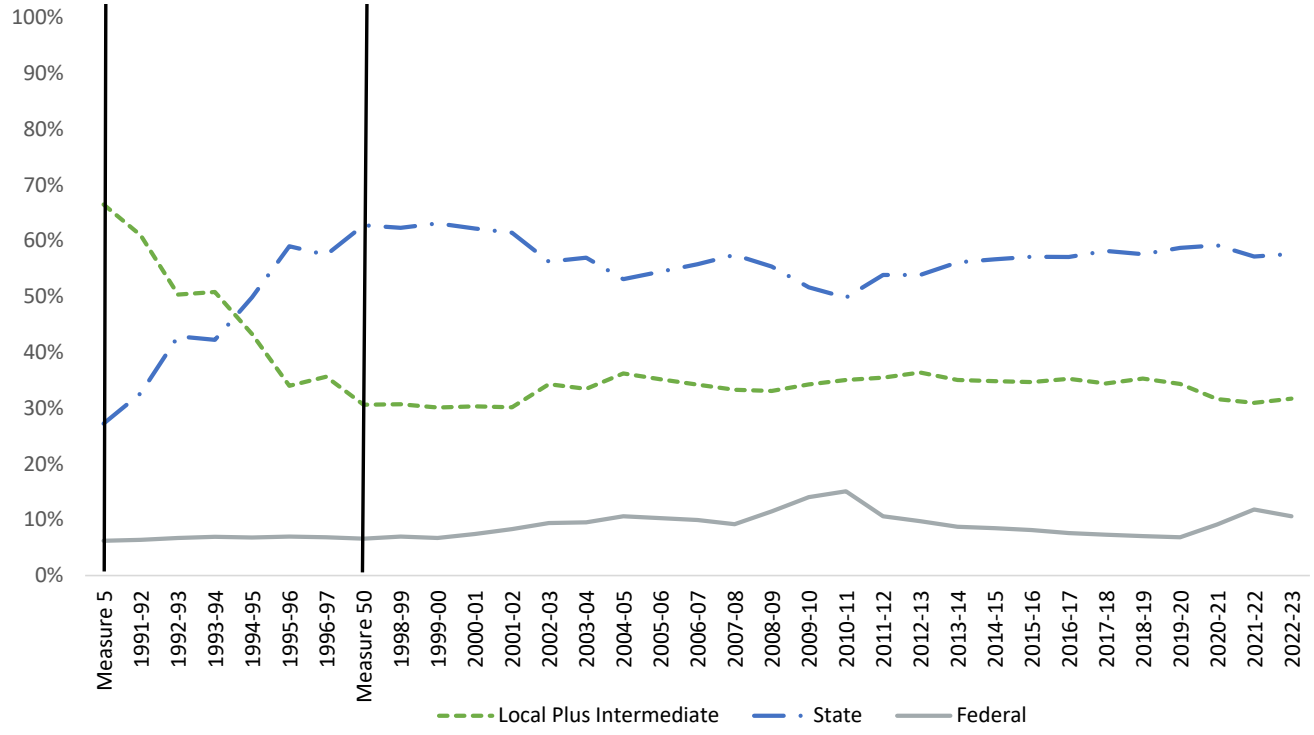
Context of Tax Revenue Impacts on Oregon Public Education Funding

The QEC acknowledges and honors the relatively unique situation that faces the Oregon Legislature when state school funding is addressed, namely, the adoption by Oregon voters of Measures 5 and 50,[105] which have a substantial impact on funding for Oregon's public school system.

- Measure 5 (1990): Limited tax rates for school funding to $5 per $1,000 of assessed value (which was equivalent to real market value)
- Measure 50 (1997): Repealed Measure 47, Limited annual property tax growth to 3%, Decoupled assessed value from real market value; established 90% of the 1995-96 assessed/real market value as the assessed value

These measures substantially impacted the funding available for public schools. Prior to 1990, local school districts generated approximately 70 percent of their operational funds locally, with the state contributing roughly 30 percent. Today, that ratio has inverted: the state now bears approximately 70 percent of the K-12 funding burden. This systemic shift places immense, recurring pressure on the state's General Fund. The historical impacts of Measures 5 and 50 on local and state revenue shares are illustrated in Exhibit 58 below.

EXHIBIT 58: Impact of Measure 5 and 50 on Local and State Public Education Funding



105 See A Brief History of Oregon Property Taxation for more information.

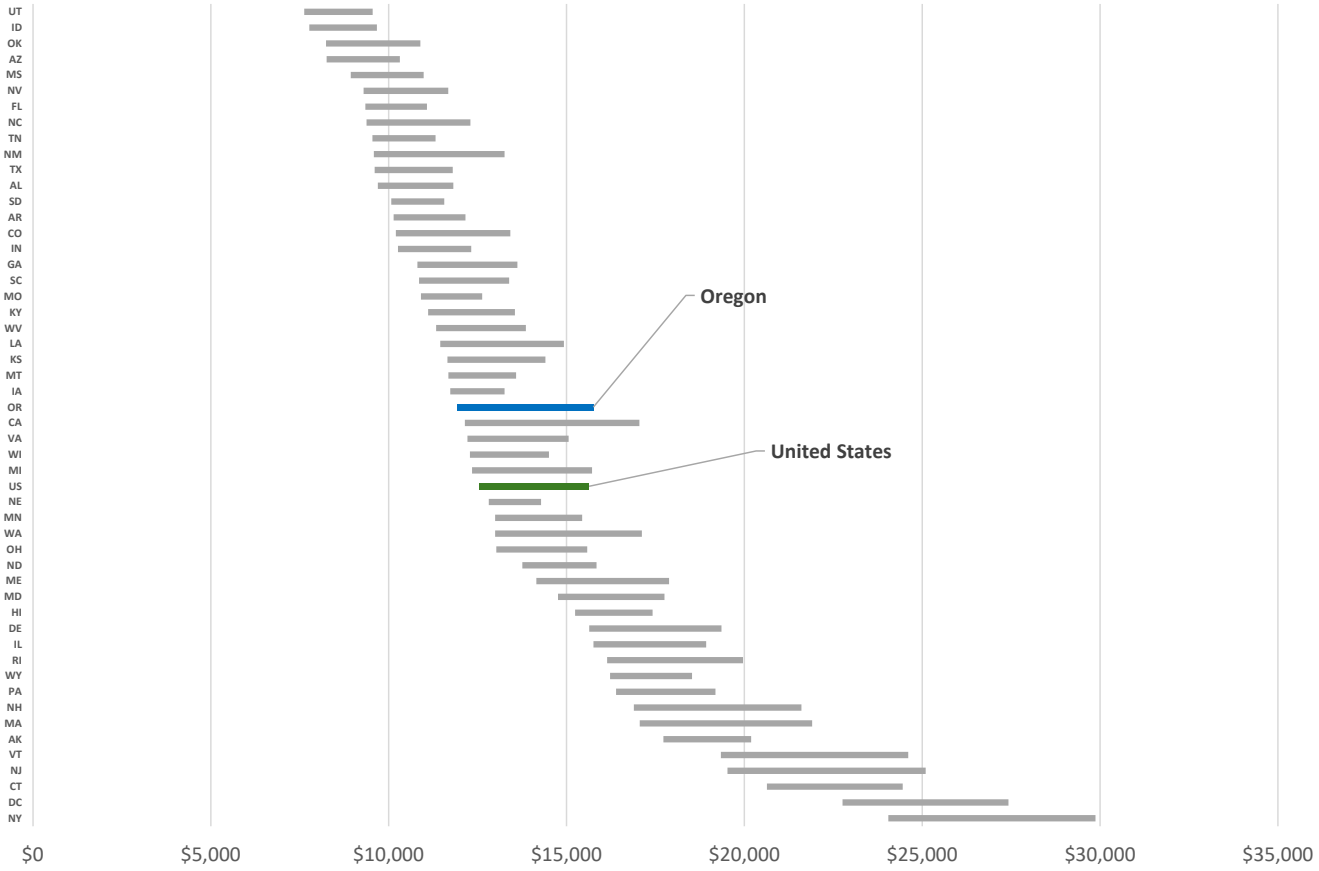
While federal revenues have historically remained relatively consistent, their share of total K-12 funding has typically increased during economic recessions and major federal interventions, such as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the expiration of ESSER funds related to COVID recovery and other Medicare/Medicaid funding changes, federal funds to Oregon are declining for the upcoming biennium. This drop occurs at the same time that the broader economy is struggling. While the U.S. is not officially in a nationwide recession, several indicators suggest the economy may already be experiencing highly localized recessionary conditions, with Moody's Analytics declaring Oregon as one of 22 states already effectively in or at high risk of a recession.[106] This combination of economic pressures creates a unique and profound challenge for Oregon legislators in the upcoming budgetary cycle: they must navigate a contracting federal funding footprint and flat local revenues, leaving them with fewer non-state resources to offset the rising structural costs of maintaining core K-12 educational services.

The Commission fully recognizes and understands that under these compounding fiscal constraints, the state may be structurally unable to immediately fund the K-12 system at the recommended Full QEM target adequacy level. In periods of federal contraction and economic slowdown, the immediate focus may be limited to stabilizing the baseline Status Quo Core K-12 funding to prevent catastrophic local district service cliffs, even if progress toward full adequacy must be temporarily deferred or reversed.

Even within these structural constraints, Oregon's long-term commitment to K-12 public education funding remains clear. The state's per-pupil expenditure stands near the national median, both in terms of overall funding and the rate of funding increases compared to peer states, as shown in Exhibit 59.

106 Roughly half of U.S. states are effectively in a recession and 'hanging on by their fingertips,' Moody's chief economist says

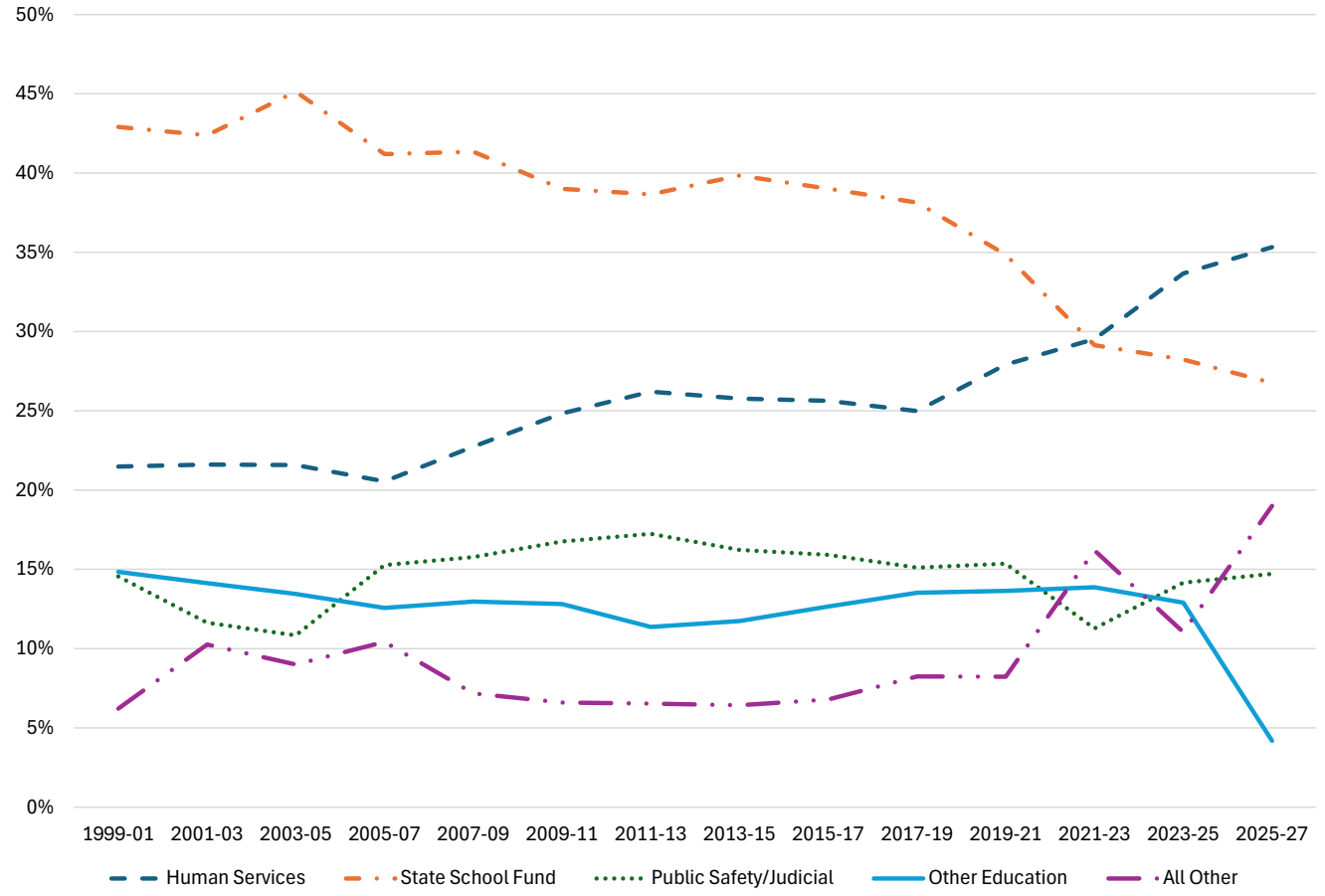
EXHIBIT 59: Increase in Per Pupil Current Spending (PPCS) Amounts, FY2018-FY2022



Data source: US ACS 2024 Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data from the Annual Survey of School System Finance.

This funding commitment, however, faces compounding pressure within the state's flexible budget. Isolating discretionary resources, specifically General Fund and Lottery revenues, demonstrates a long-term structural crowding-out effect. In the post-Measure 5 and Measure 50 era, as the state assumed primary responsibility for K-12 funding, the share of General Fund and Lottery resources allocated to the State School Fund (SSF) maintained a dominant position. However, as shown in Exhibit 60, that share has experienced a sustained decline as mandatory expenditures for healthcare, human services, and other state obligations have grown. While dedicated revenue streams like the Student Success Act provide vital supplemental funding, discretionary state resources face ongoing structural limits; a dilemma further exacerbated by the absence of a state sales tax to generate broad-based revenue.

EXHIBIT 60: General Fund and Lottery Revenue Shares, 1999-2027



The Student Success Act and Long-Term Adequacy

The 2019 Student Success Act represented a major legislative commitment to addressing structural funding deficiencies. While the Quality Education Commission (QEC) and community partners recognize that these investments mitigated critical gaps, Oregon's K-12 system continues to contend with the cumulative effects of long-term funding constraints.

Historically, state K-12 appropriations have remained below the inflation- and enrollment-adjusted baseline of the original 1999 Full QEM target. A long-term view of the model demonstrates the remarkable stability of the Commission's underlying framework over time. As illustrated in Exhibit 61, published QEC report recommendations (red line) consistently tracked within or below the inflation- and enrollment-adjusted 1999 benchmark for more than two decades. This long-term alignment confirms that the trajectory of QEM recommendations has been anchored in empirical continuity rather than shifts in foundational judgment parameters.

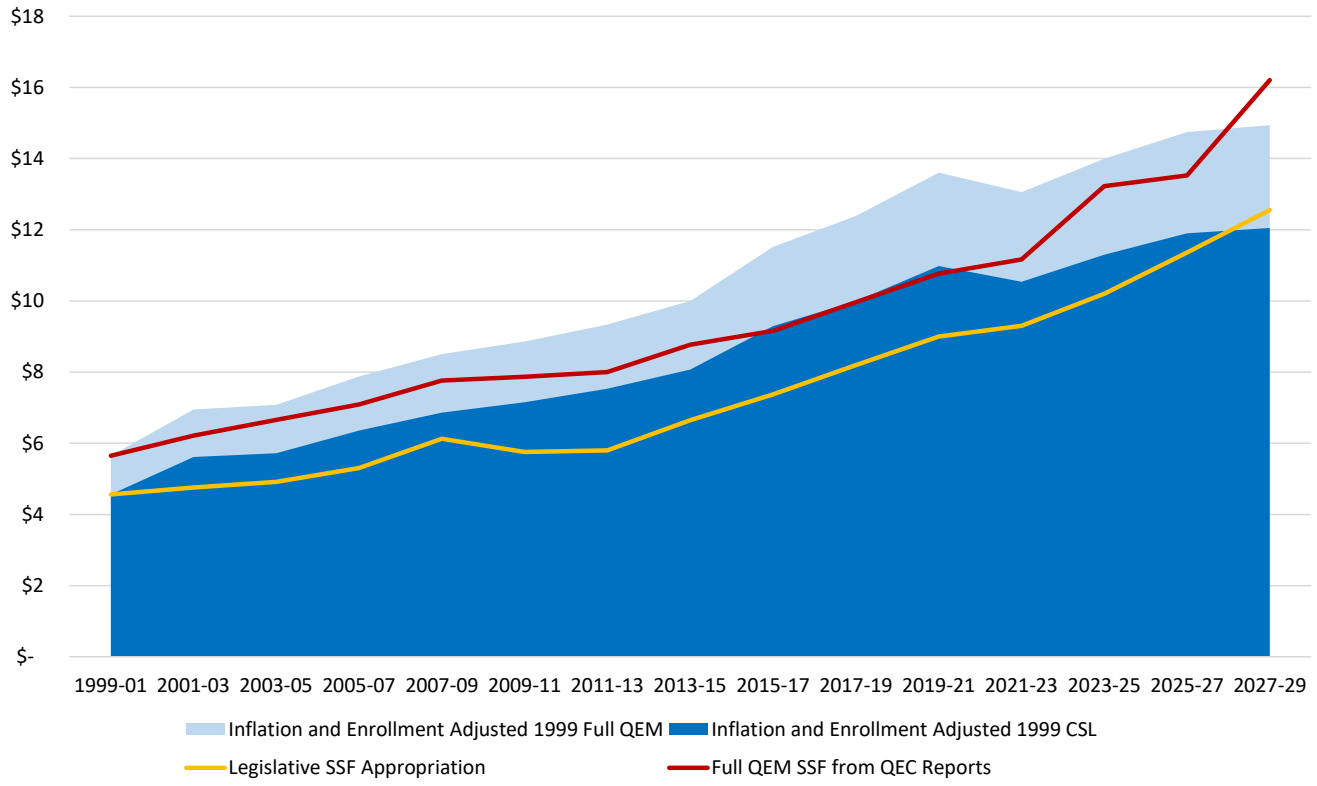
The 2027–29 Full QEM projection marks a notable milestone, crossing above the adjusted 1999 baseline for the first time in the model's history. Crucially, this shift reflects external, real-world market cost pressures on district inputs rather than an expansion of the model's baseline scope or service intensity.

A comparative parameter analysis between the 2024 and 2026 Full QEM models confirms complete stability in operational assumptions: staffing ratios, resource quantities, and service delivery levels remain identical. Instead, the updated projection is driven entirely by market price recalibrations required to deliver those same baseline services, shaped by three primary economic factors:

- Wage and cost-push inflation: Broad macroeconomic shifts affecting labor markets and essential educational materials.
- Benefit and retirement obligations: Compounding employer PERS and healthcare costs, net of side account performance.
- Reductions in non-state revenue: The sunsetting of temporary federal funds and other non-state resources that previously offset state costs.

Following comprehensive updates in the 2022 Report to incorporate evidence-based best practices, the Commission deliberately maintained consistent professional judgment parameters across the 2024 and 2026 report cycles. This deliberate stability ensures analytical continuity and close alignment with state budgeting frameworks established in coordination with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and the Joint Partnership Executive Advisory Committee (JPEA). The 2027–29 Full QEM estimate thus provides an accurate, market-adjusted baseline required to sustain established educational quality standards in Oregon classrooms.

EXHIBIT 61: Comparison to 1999 Full QEM Accounting for Inflation and Student Enrollment Changes, 1999 to 2027 ($ in Billions)[107]



107 For 2027-29, the State School Fund amount is assumed to be the Department of Administrative Services' calculated State School Fund Current Service Level Projection, as the QEM Report is published before the budget is legislatively adopted.

Alternatives for Meeting the Quality Goals

The primary recommendation of the QEC is that the legislature fully fund the QEM in the next and future biennia in order to achieve the state's education goals. This recommendation includes funding schools at a level that would allow for all of the recommended best practices to be implemented and for the staffing ratios and investments aligned with the prototype schools outlined in this report.

However, as detailed in the preceding analysis of Oregon's unique tax structure, declining federal revenues, and localized recessionary risks, the Commission realistically understands that fully funding this target may not be immediately viable for the state's budget. In a landscape where the state may struggle to even stabilize the baseline Status Quo level, the statutory directive under ORS 327.506(5), which directs the Quality Education Commission to identify at least two alternative methods for meeting Oregon's quality education goals, becomes a critical tool for strategic prioritization. Should the Legislature be unable to fully fund the QEM, the Commission advises against dispersing limited funds across minor, disconnected pilot programs. Instead, any partial or alternative investment must be concentrated strategically.

Rather than trying to fund a thinned-out version of the entire QEM model, the state should focus any additional resources on one of two comprehensive, goal-aligned alternative frameworks. While both still require significant, dedicated investments in Oregon's children, they offer structured pathways to maximize the impact of any available state dollars:

1. Funding grounded in a holistic system of support

When considering the whole community, whole family, and whole child, schools are at the heart of support. Schools today go well beyond academic instruction to create the conditions for students to learn: providing meals, social-emotional and mental health support, technology, and medical support. Funding for programs can be difficult to navigate, especially if the supports exist across a variety of state agencies, such as education, human services, transportation, housing, etc. with varied qualification and reporting criteria. Many schools and districts are currently navigating this, some are also supporting families in their own navigation; however, funding for wraparound supports is tricky and there is often a lack of experienced and/or credentialed staff available to support the work.

The QEC recommends centering support through the school districts so that they can identify and meet the needs of the community through rich engagement, coordination across support agencies, and physical spaces for services. While typically the need for this work is staffing–which requires addressing shortages–safe buildings, transportation, healthcare, and affordable housing are intermixed.

State-funded wraparound support services should include but is not limited to:

- Dedicated staffing and time for local community support providers (social workers, medical providers, etc.) to partner with their local schools to coordinate support;
- Housing support services that are specific to families with children;
- Dedicated staffing and time for schools to coordinate support with local community support providers;
- Ongoing non-competitive funding for schools or community spaces to provide space for services, including utilities;
- Grant opportunities to expand or remediate existing buildings for use;
- Non-competitive grants supporting family engagement to use for stipends for meeting attendance, transportation/gas, childcare, and survey creation and data analysis;

- Post-secondary education scholarships for individuals working to enter the high-need fields in the community services realm; and
- Non-competitive grants to provide adult education (e.g. adult basic education, high school equivalency, English as a second language, parenting).

By establishing or expanding social and physical supports to communities, families, and students, the QEC expects to see impacts in the following areas:

- Improvement in school climates–becoming more welcoming, supportive spaces;
- Regular attender rates;
- Increased mental and behavioral health for students; and
- Increased well-being of school staff at all levels.

Having social and physical needs met creates the environment in which students thrive academically.

2. Funding grounded in the outcomes of the Education Accountability Act

The Education Accountability Act (EAA, or Senate Bill 141 of 2025) puts strong emphasis on improving the educational system to see progress across twelve student educational quality metrics.[108] One goal-aligned way to ground funding, if not meeting the full QEM, is to support programs that are aimed to improve the student educational experience as measured by the 7 Common Metrics and the 5 Local Metrics. Building on existing programs and increasing funding to broaden program participation and scope could include:[109]

- Expanding early literacy support through increased funds for the Early Literacy Success Initiative (3rd Grade Reading Proficiency)
- Establishing resources to support improvements in mathematical literacy (8th Grade Math Proficiency, 9th Grade On-Track)
- Expanding early warning system/early indicator and intervention system support through increased staffing, mental health supports, technology fees, etc. (K-2 Regular Attenders, K-12 Regular Attenders, 9th Grade On-Track)
- Supporting science instruction in early grades with local-context learning opportunities like field trips and project-based learning (5th Grade Science Achievement)
- Sustaining and expanding the English Learner Outcomes Program (House Bill 3499, 2015)(Multilingual Proficiency)
- Supporting CTE education through increased Secondary Career Pathway funding (Graduation and Completion Rates, Career and Workforce Readiness)

New or expanded funding that centers on research-based approaches to support improvements for these student academic outcomes gives clear connections between the funding and the state's educational goals; prioritizing funds for school districts with the greatest need creates a focused approach that can expand as improvements are made. With outcomes having clear ties to the state's accountability model, this option both supports the goals while ensuring that resources are directly addressing the need.

108 See the Education Accountability Act section of this report for more in-depth information about the act, its goals, and measures of success.

109 The initial metrics that are expected to be impacted are in parentheses; however, cascading effects should be seen as well. For example, improvements in Reading proficiency should, ultimately, lead to increased graduation and postsecondary readiness.

Methodology for Calculating the Current Service Level

The State School Fund Current Service Level (SSF CSL) is a statutorily required estimate designed to isolate the baseline cost of continuing currently approved legislative programs into the next biennium.[110] To establish this for agency budgets and the State School Fund (SSF), legislative budget analysts from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and the Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) begin with the prior cycle's Legislatively Approved Budget (LAB) captured at a specific point in time, generally through April or May of even-numbered years.

To transition this raw baseline into an Essential Budget Level, analysts perform a series of technical mathematical adjustments:

- Removal of One-Time Funding: Appropriations dedicated to non-recurring projects or short-term programs are systematically subtracted.
- Program Phase-ins/Phase-outs: Programs that only operated for a portion of the previous biennium are built out ("phased in") to reflect their full 24-month operating costs, while sunsetting programs are factored down.
- Deduction of Statutory Set-Asides: For the State School Fund specifically, statutory "carve-outs" allocated for targeted statewide educational programs under ORS 327.008 are subtracted to determine the "Full Formula" jump-off point.
- Formula Resource Reconciliation: Analysts incorporate estimates produced by the Legislative Revenue Office (LRO) regarding local revenue sources (primarily local property taxes and the Common School Fund), which historically account for roughly 34% of the total formula allocation, to accurately derive the required State General Fund share.

Once the net formula baseline is isolated, the macro-model processes the total SSF budget by segregating it into two rigid structural components to apply specific inflationary pressures.

The largest allocation, representing 85% of the total formula base, is dedicated to Personal Services. Rather than applying standard state agency inflation factors to this segment, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) runs a specialized K-12 educator workforce compensation model. This model projects salary growth using established long-run averages derived from a 20-year historical trend. Within this calculation, classified staff salary projections are tied to general inflation trends, while administrator salaries mirror historical averages. For health and welfare benefits, the model automatically embeds the strict 3.4% annual statutory growth cap for the Oregon Educators Benefit Board (OEBB), which was enacted under Senate Bill 1067 (2017), applying this maximum rate even during cycles when actual premium increases trend lower.

The remaining 15% of the total formula base is designated for Services and Supplies. This portion is adjusted using the blanket inflationary rate issued by DAS to all standard state agencies for operational expenses, which historically has tracked at 4.2% per biennium (or 2.1% annually).

After these distinct inflationary multipliers are applied to their respective components, the consolidated baseline undergoes a final macro-level adjustment for mandatory caseload changes. These adjustments are derived dynamically from K-12 student enrollment projections tracking the system's Average Daily Membership (ADM).

The Quality Education Commission has long expressed concern over how this standardized framework interacts with K-12 education funding. As detailed in the 2018 and 2022 QEC reports, the historical macro-model produced a systemic "ratcheting down" effect on the Quality Education Model. Because the DAS model escalates only those

110 Learn more about the SSF CSL in the 2023 Oregon State Legislature presentation State School Fund Current Service Level

audited actual expenditures rather than costs, localized, mid-biennium operational budget cuts are routinely captured and embedded directly into subsequent base-year snapshots. Consequently, the baseline CSL calculation fails to represent the true fiscal cost of providing Oregon students with a stable educational standard.

Governor's Office Review Process

In November 2023, Governor Tina Kotek committed to a collaborative input process to review and modernize the structural methods used to model public school funding. Spearheaded by the Governor's Office in partnership with the State Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), the initiative convened education stakeholders throughout the spring of 2024, including representatives from licensed and classified labor associations, superintendents, school board members, and school business officials.

The review targeted five structural elements driving divergence between model assumptions and district operations:

- **Historical vs. Forward-Looking Data:** Balancing the state's reliance on historical expenditure data with stakeholder requests for active, forward-looking labor contract tracking.
- **Inflation Adjustments:** Realignment of baseline inflation multipliers.
- **Biennial Distribution Splits:** Re-evaluating the traditional 50/50 annual split of the two-year legislatively adopted budget to better protect second-year purchasing power.
- **Pension and Benefit Accounting:** Analyzing PERS obligations, side account dynamics, and underlying benefit tracking metrics.
- **Policy-Driven Costs:** Factoring in the localized fiscal impacts of state policy alterations, frequently experienced by districts as unfunded mandates.

Technical Adjustments and Methodology Realignment

The collaborative process yielded critical alignments on the baseline mechanics of the macro-forecasting model, shifting core assumptions to match observed trends.[111]

Personnel Cost Projections & Time-Horizon Calibration

Personnel compensation remains the paramount driver of K-12 operational expenses, accounting for roughly 85% of the standard SSF CSL baseline calculation. Historical analysis spanning ten consecutive years revealed that the state's centralized macro-forecasting equations systematically underestimated actual personnel expenditures, averaging a structural lag of approximately -2% for licensed educators and exceeding -3% for classified staff.

This systematic underestimation occurs because a rigid, centralized macro-model natively operates on a time delay and cannot simulate the decentralized upward cost pressures resulting from independent collective bargaining across 197 distinct school districts and 19 Education Service Districts (ESDs). To permanently minimize this forecasting gap, the state shifted its historical data window.

Methodological Shift: The compensation projection model was recalibrated to utilize a 10-year historical data window instead of the previous 20-year data window. Shifting to a more compact, modern timeline captures real-time labor market shifts, localized salary matrices, and hiring realities far more precisely, providing a structural correction that automatically rolls forward into all future biennial budget cycles.

Personnel Turnover and Churn

Standard state agency CSL mechanics traditionally reset position costs downward when older, higher-paid staff turnover, assuming replacements enter at a baseline or entry-level salary step. For the K-12 model, stakeholders and state analysts aligned on a more realistic approach. When workforce turnover occurs due to retirements or separations, the model utilizes historical regression tracking verified relationships between Average Educator salaries,

111 See the State School Fund Increase proposal for more information.

retirement rates, total FTE, and replacement hiring trends. This mathematical framework keeps the model agnostic to individual personnel assignments while preventing the flawed assumption that replacement teachers enter at the absolute lowest pay step.

Local Property Tax Revenue Stabilization

The total State School Fund baseline is a combined framework of local property tax revenues (historically comprising roughly 34%) and state General Fund appropriations (roughly 66%). Standard state modeling practices historically omitted second-year fluctuations in local property tax collections during the mid-biennium window, limiting the state's capacity to accurately assess total available resources. Under the updated methodology, state agencies project and incorporate annual local property tax variations dynamically, increasing the precision of the net state funding target.

Ongoing Areas of Methodological Divergence

While significant updates were institutionalized, structural points of friction persist between centralized macro-modeling constraints and decentralized district governance.

1. **Contractual Data Integration vs. Local Autonomy**

   Education partners requested that the state calculate the CSL using active, forward-looking local collective bargaining agreement data rather than relying on historical, backward-looking trends. However, the Commission's technical advisor notes that integrating forward-looking contract assumptions remains structurally unfeasible under existing data parameters:

   - Decentralized Bargaining Realities: The state possesses no statutory authority to predict, control, or simulate independent, local bargaining determinations executed across 197 sovereign school boards.
   - Absence of a Unified Data Architecture: Oregon lacks an integrated, uniform state-level data infrastructure capable of standardizing highly localized salary grids, job descriptions, or contractual work-year calendars. Many smaller or non-unified districts do not maintain traditional step-and-column salary schedules.

   The systemic nature of this infrastructure deficit is underscored by the passage of Senate Bill 283 (2023), which established the Joint Task Force on Statewide Educator Salary Schedules specifically to study the challenges of constructing uniform job definitions and regional salary minimums from scratch. Until that centralized infrastructure is realized, lagging historical trends remain the only operationally accessible baseline data.

2. **Local Cost Containment Dynamics**

   Fiduciary planning and operational cost containment at the local level depend heavily on predictable, structurally sound state revenue projections. Because roughly 85% of local K-12 operational budgets are legally locked into personnel contracts driven by local labor market conditions, structural under-calculations at the state level directly force districts into defensive budgeting postures. When state allocations fail to meet real-world contractual obligations, local boards are forced to execute reactive, mid-biennium interventions—such as escalating class sizes, cutting elective or specialized programs, shortening school years, or initiating staff layoffs.

3. **PERS Integration and Fiscal Volatility**

   The methodology by which the CSL framework integrates Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) liabilities remains a primary area of divergence. Volatility in side account earnings, employer rate structures, and fixed debt service obligations have significantly altered local liabilities:

PERS Variable / Projection Metric	Base Year (2024-25)	Projected Horizon (2027-28)	Long-Term Projection (2028-31)
Gross PERS Employer Contribution Rate	28.32%	26.23%	Steady Macro Trend
PERS Side Account Earnings Rate	11.87%	1.85%	Modeled Flat at 1.85%
Blended PERS Rate	15.16%	24.38%	Sustained at 24.38%
Net Side Account Revenue Drainage	-$57.8 million/ year	-$210 million/ year	-$35 to -$37 million/ year

Concurrently, districts and ESDs remain legally bound to heavy local debt service schedules for Pension Obligation Bonds (POBs), which are projected to peak at over $465.6 million in the 2026-27 school year before dropping to a structural baseline between $101 million and $107 million in later years. While individual districts retain discretion over how they capitalize local side accounts or structure bond portfolios, the system-wide collapse of side account investment yields creates an escalating baseline cost across the state's educational landscape, highlighting an ongoing need for direct legislative engagement regarding how the CSL captures volatile pension offsets.

4. **The Enrollment Disconnect: ADMw vs. ADMr**

Stakeholders requested that declining student enrollment figures be completely excluded from the 2025-2027 forecasting model to hold the overall CSL funding allocation harmless. Navigating this request requires distinguishing between how enrollment data drives macro-level CSL budget generation versus how it drives local distribution formula mechanics:

The Local Distribution Level: The statutory SSF allocation formula utilizes extended ADMw (Average Daily Membership weighted), which calculates funding using the higher of the current or prior year's weighted enrollment. This operational cushion acts as a distributional hold-harmless mechanism, providing declining districts a temporary financial glide path to scale down local operations smoothly.

The Macro CSL Level: To project the total required state-level budget pie, the DAS CSL macro-model relies strictly on unweighted ADMr (Average Daily Membership resident) actual student headcounts.

Because actual unweighted student counts are experiencing a sustained contraction across Oregon, the macro-model automatically scales the overall state-level budget downward before the local distribution formula ever processes the weighted student counts used in the actual allocative process.

School Year Baseline	Unweighted Student Headcount (ADMr)	Weighted Student Headcount (ADMw)
2024-25	537,748 Resident Students	669,810 Weighted Students
2025-26	531,372 Resident Students	667,464 Weighted Students
2026-27	530,225 Resident Students	660,728 Weighted Students

Consequently, while the extended ADMw formula protects a declining district's relative share of the funding pie, the unweighted ADMr contraction within the macro CSL calculation actively shrinks the total size of the pie available to all districts system-wide.

CSL Calculation Progress

The Commission notes the substantial technical progress realized through the implementation of the 2024 forecasting modifications. By combining three targeted methodology shifts the state generated an estimated $515 million increase in baseline CSL funding for the 2025-27 budget cycle to be carried forward into future biennial budgets.

- transitioning to a 49/51 annual biennial distribution split (which builds the future CSL baseline off the higher-funded second year);
- contracting the compensation data window to 10 years; and
- modernizing local property tax revenue accounting;

The long-term durability of these structural stabilizations depends completely on protecting these refined baseline parameters and preventing any future methodological rollbacks.

Considerations for Future Modelling

The QEC is committed to continuously improving the Quality Education Model through refinement of inputs, exploration of new best practices, and collaboration with educators, policymakers, and researchers. To support continuous improvement, the validation of the current model, review the AIR report staffing, and next steps are explored below.

Validation of the Current Model

Crucially, the AIR evaluation clarified that its findings do not invalidate current QEM cost estimates, nor did it identify fundamental errors such as omitted resources or inaccurate pricing. Instead, the evaluation emphasized that the QEM's primary opportunities for improvement lie in the utility, granularity, and presentation of the information it produces.

AIR noted that the model's reporting could be enhanced by formalizing a broader set of outcome benchmarks and expanding its baseline prototype schools. Over time, references like the "90% graduation rate" became widely cited shorthand for educational success; however, the QEM is not mechanically conditioned on outcome formulas. Rather, outcome measures currently serve as reference points that inform the professional judgment of commissioners when determining the service intensity and inputs required above status quo levels to improve student performance.

To build upon the current model and further advance educational equity, the Commission has embraced the AIR modernization roadmap. Importantly, these enhancements define a strategic, multi-year developmental pathway for future QEC report cycles beyond 2026. Key focus areas for future model iterations include:

- Explicit, Multi-Metric Outcome Frameworks: Formalizing a comprehensive suite of academic, growth, and equity indicators to systematically guide panel judgment regarding required service intensity, moving explicitly past singular shorthand benchmarks.
- Expanded, Data-Driven Prototype Schools: Increasing the number and diversity of prototype models (including virtual frameworks and varied high school structures) built on actual Oregon enrollment data and stratified by student need levels and geographic locale.
- Diversified Professional Judgment Panels (PJPs): Broadening expert panel recruitment to include local educators, specialists, administrators, and school business officials who directly reflect the specific regional and demographic contexts of the prototypes being costed.
- Granular, Localized Cost Analysis: Enhancing analytical capabilities to model school- and district-level cost variations, enabling a more precise assessment of localized funding gaps across Oregon's diverse communities.

The Capacity Reality: Staffing the AIR Recommendations

The AIR report acknowledges that implementing these methodological best practices is highly resource-intensive and iterative. Currently, the QEC operates under severe capacity constraints, relying on fractional dedicated staff support to maintain core operations. While the Commission receives limited administrative and project assistance during reporting cycles, much of this support is informal, temporary, and relies on ad-hoc capacity outside standard position duties.

To evaluate the resources required to transition from this baseline to a fully modernized framework, Commission staff conducted a capacity analysis. Transitioning the QEM to the multi-panel, data-driven framework envisioned by AIR would require a temporary, multi-biennium developmental surge in state administrative capacity:

Operational Area	Peak Buildout FTE (Permanent Baseline FTE)	Key Responsibilities
Panel Recruitment & Management	3.0 – 5.0 FTE (1.0 - 1.5 FTE)	▪ Peak: Recruiting, vetting, scheduling, and logistics for diversified regional panels. ▪ Permanent: Ongoing panel roster management and biennial rotation refreshes.
Data Analysis & Research	4.0 – 6.0 FTE (1.5 - 2.0 FTE)	▪ Peak: Constructing statistical cost engines, school-level data mapping, and gap tools. ▪ Permanent: Routine model re-estimation, price updates, and dashboard updates.
QEM Implementation & Prototypes	3.0 – 5.0 FTE (1.0 - 1.5 FTE)	▪ Peak: Designing multi-prototype structures, virtual models, and equity indicators. ▪ Permanent: Maintaining prototype parameters and recalibrating baseline service inputs.
Project Management & Oversight	2.0 – 3.0 FTE (0.5 - 1.0 FTE)	▪ Peak: Program management, DAS/JPEA inter-agency alignment, and legislative liaison. ▪ Permanent: Commission facilitation, biennial report publishing, and routine governance.
Total Estimated Capacity Need	**12.0 – 19.0 FTE (4.0 - 6.0 FTE)**	*Surge Horizon: 2–3 Biennia Temporary Modernization Buildout* *Ongoing Baseline: Post-Buildout Permanent Maintenance*

Next Steps and Immediate Funding Request

The Commission recognizes that this 12.0–19.0 FTE capacity represents a temporary 4-to-6-year developmental surge (spanning 2 to 3 biennia) to build out the multi-prototype framework and localized cost engines. Once fully established, staffing needs would taper to a permanent maintenance baseline of approximately 4.0 to 6.0 FTE.

To initiate this buildout and stabilize current operations, the Commission urgently requests an immediate down payment of 2.0 FTE at the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) for the upcoming biennium:

- **One Senior Economist - Economist 4 (1164):** Dedicated to model validation, data visualization, and beginning the complex data-mapping required to translate prototype costs to school-level projections.
- **One Senior Policy Analyst - Operations and Policy Analyst 4 (0873):** Dedicated to managing meeting facilitation, initial pilot panel recruitment, inter-agency coordination, and report design.

With the completed 2025 AIR evaluation as a roadmap, the QEC is poised to modernize the QEM into a premier tool for educational equity. By securing this initial, critical staffing support, the Legislature will ensure that future iterations of the model are uniquely equipped to more accurately approximate the strategic investments and best practices necessary to guarantee every Oregon student the educational opportunities they deserve.

Findings, Recommendations, and Conclusions

Findings

The following are the key findings from the 2026 Quality Education Model Report:

1. In this year's report, the QEC has focused on their statutory directive to determine the Core K-12 State Funding Requirement to reach Oregon's quality goals. We leave the determination of adequacy and which state funding streams and grant programs should count toward that to the Legislature.
2. The ODE and DAS continued the 2024 Governor's partnership process to ensure consistent CSL determination, contributing to better system alignment in the development of funding estimates for Oregon's schools.
3. For the upcoming 2027-29 biennium, the QEM estimates that it will require a Core K-12 State Funding investment of $16.21 billion to fully fund the Full QEM model projection. This is $2.42 billion more than the $13.78 billion investment the QEC forecasts will be necessary to maintain the status quo state funding level provided during the 2025-27 biennium, and $3.65 billion more than the SSF CSL estimate available at the time of this report's publication.
4. According to US Census data from 2024,[112] Oregon ranked 20th in state-sourced per pupil funding. If Oregon were to fund its schools at the level recommended in this report, our national ranking would rise to 12th. Oregon ranked 18th in state-sourced per-pupil funding in 1999, when the first Full Implementation QEM projection was conducted.[113]
5. The Full Implementation of the QEM is not an arbitrary target nor a capricious wish list. There are several important funding needs that are not represented in the 2026 Full QEM. The Commission continues to analyze new inputs for future integration in the model, including, but not limited to, transitioning to a recommendation for a 180-day school year.

Recommendations

The QEC has kept recommendations relatively consistent with prior reports, knowing that the things that make the biggest difference for students—quality materials and instruction, supporting well-being, providing adequate funding, building a skilled workforce, and fiscal and data transparency—remain the same. The QEC remains committed to working toward Oregon's Educational Goals alongside policymakers, educators, and Oregonians.

1. **Fund the QEM Baseline or Target the Statutory Alternatives:** Fully fund the $16.21 billion QEM target or strategically invest in the alternative, goal-aligned frameworks (Holistic Systems of Support or Education Accountability Act Metrics) outlined in this report to prevent catastrophic local district service cliffs.
2. **Incorporate System-Wide Best Practices:** Avoid the temptation to rely on isolated, administratively heavy pilot programs that treat the symptoms rather than the root causes of educational disparities. Instead, full commitment and capacity for the best practices that are supported by existing programs should be centered. Implementation of strategies needs to be high quality that reach the level of the student and teacher and fit together to improve the system overall.

112 US Census data from 2024
113 Per-pupil funding in 1999

3. **Fully Commit to Addressing Long-Standing Disparities:** Protect and sustain investments addressing long-standing disparities seen by race, ethnicity, home language, income, disability status, and other historically and currently marginalized student groups. Continued support for the 2019 Student Success Act (SSA) goals through the Corporate Activity Tax (CAT) is essential to realize the vision of the SSA, which remains a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve system effectiveness.
4. **Expand High-Quality Early Learning Access:** Increase equal opportunity and access to developmentally appropriate, culturally specific, and inclusive early learning programs. High-quality early learning prepares children to enter kindergarten ready to learn, producing lifelong positive academic and life outcomes.
5. **Foster Students' Sense of Belonging:** Continually monitor and invest in student mental and behavioral health and embed systemic support for social and emotional skill development to help students become effective, collaborative learners. Students must be well to learn and our public education system must support their physical and emotional well-being so they can thrive in classroom settings.
6. **Foster Deep Community Partnerships:** Support school districts in building active partnerships with non-profits, healthcare providers, and social service agencies best positioned to deliver critical wraparound supports to families.
7. **Advance Fiscal Transparency:** Continue to make progress on fiscal transparency (at the state & district level) as required within the Education Accountability Act.
8. **Address Workforce Transparency and Shortage:** Address workforce shortages in some of our most critical workforce areas working with students who need excellent instruction most alongside the development of the business case for an Educator Workforce Data System (as directed by Senate Bill 283, Section 1) to enable longitudinal analysis of statewide staffing challenges.
9. **Build Continuous Improvement Data Systems:** Provide educators, policymakers, and the public with a central, statewide data dashboard integrating fiscal, academic, and program information. Decision-making teams at the state, ESD, and local levels require ready access to these protocols to identify student needs and deploy swift, well-informed interventions.

Conclusion

For more than 25 years, this report has examined the inputs, best practices, and investment levels required to sustain an effective public education system in Oregon. While much has changed in the educational landscape over these decades, the Quality Education Commission (QEC) remains confident in the fundamental integrity of—and is committed to working with partners to continuously improve on—the Quality Education Model. Potential revision discussions are ongoing; the QEC is eager to be included in the conversation about where we are now and how we move to a future with better and more broadly informed modeling to inform decisions.

As Oregon moves into a system of shared accountability under the Education Accountability Act, student support and outcomes continue to be a central priority for educators at all levels in Oregon. Utilizing the best practices and fully funding support are key to realizing Oregon's Educational Goals.

Acronyms and Key Terms[114]

ADM: Average Daily Membership; a count of students based on their enrolled days. A student in a regular program who was enrolled for the entire school year will have an ADM of 1.0.

ADMr: Regular Average Daily Membership; a count of students based on their enrolled days without any weights that only accounts for the students in that school year (not adjusted for year-to-year decreases in student counts).

ADMw: Weighted Average Daily Membership; a count of students weighted by the legislatively-defined system that seeks to address the additional costs associated with higher-need students. For example, if a student is enrolled for the entire school year in a pregnant and parenting program, the student will have an ADMw of 2.0: 1.0 for their regular enrollment, and 1.0 for the pregnant and parenting program additional weight.

AI/AN: American Indian/ Alaska Native

CAT: Corporate Activity Tax

Combined Focal Student Group: means students reported to the Oregon Department of Education through standard data collections in any of the following student groups: (a) Economically Disadvantaged Students; (b) Students Recently Arrived; (c) Justice Involved Youth; (d) Students from Racial or Ethnic Groups that Have Historically Experienced Academic Disparities; (e) Students who are Pregnant, Parenting, and/or Students who Experience any Pregnancy-related Condition; (f) Students with Disabilities; (g) Foster Students; (h) Students Navigating Housing Instability; (i) Migratory Students; and (j) Emerging bilingual students (OAR 581-003-0001).

CSL: Current Service Level; the estimated cost to continue services at the current level with adjustments for the actual costs. For example, if inflation resulted in an increase in salaries for a specific type of position, the CSL would add that inflation adjustment to the prior cost to arrive at a new estimate. If the cost of laptops has gone down, the CSL will decrease the prior cost to arrive at a new estimate.

DAS: Oregon's Department of Administrative Services

EAA: Education Accountability Act or Senate Bill 141 of 2025

EAC: Educator Advancement Council

EL: English Learner, a student receiving services to support their English language acquisition

ELA: English Language Arts

ELOP: English Learner Outcomes Program

ELPA: English Language Proficiency Assessment

ELTC: Early Learning Transition Check-In

ESD: Education Service District

EVE: Elevating Voices in Education Workforce survey

FSS: Fund for Student Success

FTE: Full Time Equivalency, or staffing positions

114 Note: these terms can be complicated and nuanced; the intention in this glossary is to provide a definition for general understanding rather than a thorough or deep understanding.

Full Implementation of the QEM (Full QEM): Estimates the costs to maintain the same level of service in schools as the previous biennium plus the additional resources necessary for schools to implement the educational best practices recommended by the Commission and improve the outcomes of the system to advance the achievement of the quality education goals.

GIA: Grant-in-Aid

HSS: High School Success, or Measure 98

JPEA: Oregon's Joint Committee on Public Education Appropriations

LPRO: Legislative Policy and Research Office

ML: Multilingual learner is one of many terms used to reflect students that are currently or have received services to support development of the English language. For data, the terms current English Learner and English Learners is used to reflect enrollment in an English Language Development Program to align with the federal definition. Ever English Learners are students who have graduated out of an English Language Development Program.

Other related terms include emerging bilingual students, and linguistically diverse students. See the Oregon Multilingual Learner Strategic Plan for more information.

ODE: Oregon Department of Education

OHA: Oregon Health Authority

OSAS: Oregon Statewide Assessment System

OTELP: On track to English language proficiency

PJP: Professional Judgment Panel

QEC: Quality Education Commission

QEC Status Quo Core K-12 State Funding: Estimates the costs to maintain the same level of resources and implement the same level of service in schools as the previous biennium.

QEM: Quality Education Model

SEED: Student Educational Equity Development survey

SEIA: Statewide Education Initiatives Account; a specific set of funds originating from the Student Success Act

SHS: Student Health Survey

SIA: Student Investment Account; a specific set of funds originating from the Student Success Act

SSA: Student Success Act of 2019

SSF: State School Fund; the main source of operating revenue for Oregon's K-12 public schools. It is composed of State and Local resources, with State resources allocated by the Legislature each biennium, and Local resources to be included in the formula as described in law.

SSF CSL: State School Fund Current Service Level

Students Navigating Housing Instability: students and youth that have been identified for McKinney Vento services. Other terms used include McKinney Vento students, Students Navigating Houselessness, and Homeless Students.

Students with Disabilities: Students that have been identified for support through an Individualized Education Program. Other terms include Special Education students, or Students with an IEP.

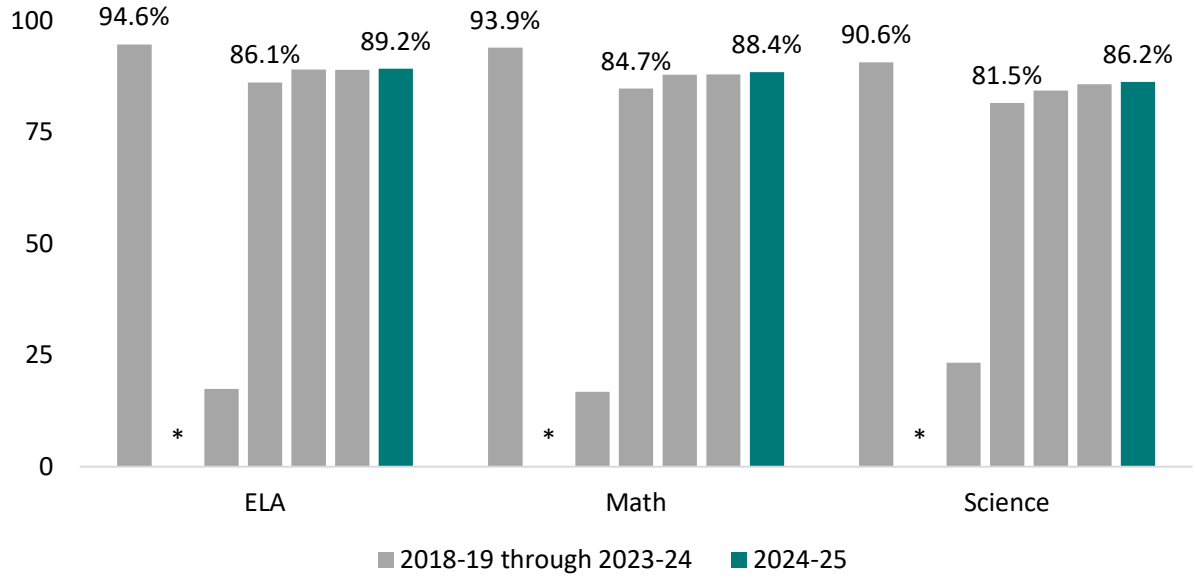
TAG: Talented and Gifted

TSPC: Teacher Standards and Practices Commission

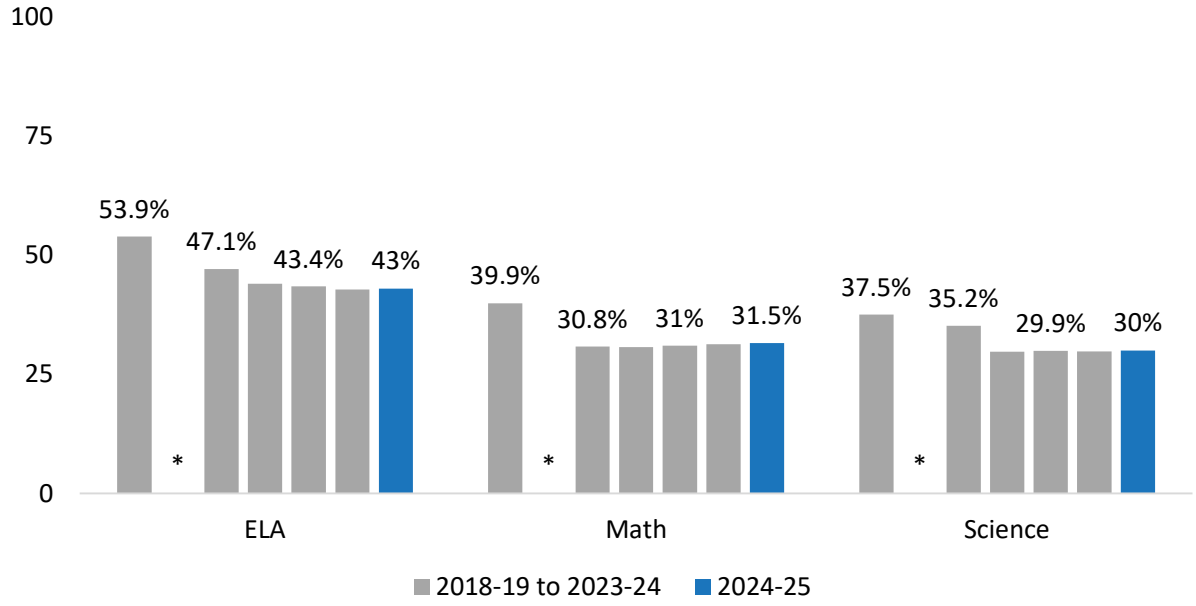
Appendix A: Oregon State Summative Test Results

The Oregon Statewide Assessment System (OSAS) is Oregon's K-12 yearly summative assessment. In all graphs within this appendix, ELA stands for English Language Arts.

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 1: OSAS PARTICIPATION Rates by Subject, 2019 to 2025



APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 2: OSAS PROFICIENCY Rates by Subject, 2019 to 2025



APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 3: OSAS PARTICIPATION Rates by Grade Level and Subject, 2024 and 2025

Enrolled Grade	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
3	93.9%	93.6%	-0.3	93.5%	93.3%	-0.2			
4	93.6%	93.5%	-0.1	93.3%	93.2%	-0.1			
5	93.6%	93.4%	-0.2	93.5%	93.1%	-0.4	94.6%	94.1%	-0.5
6	91.9%	92.4%	+0.5	91.6%	92%	+0.4			
7	90.6%	90.4%	-0.2	89.7%	89.7%	0			
8	88.1%	88.9%	+0.8	87%	88%	+1	90.4%	90.8%	+0.4
11	71.5%	73%	+1.5	68%	70.2%	+2.2	72.5%	74.4%	+1.9

Note: Science is administered to grades 5, 8, and 11 only. High school participation rates are too low to support most comparisons, both across districts and schools across time. The participation threshold recommended by Oregon's Technical Advisory Committee to support defensible school and district comparisons is 80%.

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 4: OSAS PROFICIENCY Rates by Grade Level and Subject, 2024 and 2025

Enrolled Grade	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
3	39.3%	40.3%	+1	40.1%	40.1%				
4	42.2%	42.1%	-0.1	37.9%	36.9%	-1			
5	47.2%	46.7%	-0.5	31.7%	31.3%	-0.4	31%	30.4%	-0.6
6	40.9%	41.7%	+0.8	28.7%	29.3%	+0.6			
7	43.6%	44.2%	+0.6	30.9%	31.5%	+0.6			
8	40.9%	41.6%	+0.7	26.8%	28.9%	+2.1	26.3%	27.2%	+0.9
11	45.5%	44.4%	-1.1	20.3%	20.3%	0	32.4%	32.6%	+0.2

Note: Science is administered to grades 5, 8, and 11 only.

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 5: OSAS PARTICIPATION by Federally Defined Race and Ethnicity and Subject, 2024 and 2025

Student Group	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
American Indian/ Alaska Native	86.9%	88.1%	+1.2	86.2%	87.2%	+1	82.5%	84.3%	+1.8
Asian	93.4%	94%	+0.6	93%	93.4%	+0.4	89.5%	92.2%	+2.7
Black/ African American	87.7%	88.5%	+0.8	85.6%	87.1%	+1.5	81%	82%	+1
Hispanic/ Latino	91.9%	92.3%	+0.4	91.1%	91.7%	+0.6	87.8%	88.4%	+0.6
Multiracial	89.1%	89%	-0.1	88%	88.1%	+0.1	84.8%	85.7%	+0.9
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	92.5%	93%	+0.5	91.2%	91.9%	+0.7	89.1%	88.2%	-0.9
White	87.2%	87.4%	+0.2	86.2%	86.5%	+0.3	84.7%	85.1%	+0.4

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 6: OSAS PROFICIENCY by Federally Defined Race and Ethnicity and Subject, 2024 and 2025

Student Group	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
American Indian/ Alaska Native	25.6%	27%	+1.4	15%	15.9%	+0.9	18%	16.5%	-1.5
Asian	62.1%	61.1%	-1	55.9%	55.4%	-0.5	43.8%	44.3%	+0.5
Black/ African American	24.5%	25.3%	+0.8	14.9%	15.3%	+0.4	11%	13.5%	+2.5
Hispanic/ Latino	26.1%	26.4%	+0.3	15.7%	16%	+0.3	15.1%	14.8%	-0.3
Multiracial	48%	48.3%	+0.3	35.7%	36.2%	+0.5	33.4%	34.6%	+1.2
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	21.3%	21.3%	0	11.3%	10.9%	-0.4	11.3%	10.8%	-0.5
White	49.6%	50.1%	+0.5	37.2%	37.7%	+0.5	36.1%	36.6%	+0.5

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 7: OSAS PARTICIPATION by Expanded Race and Ethnicity and Subject, 2024 and 2025

Student Group	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
American Indian/ Alaska Native +	89.3%	89.5%	+0.2	88.2%	88.6%	+0.4	85.2%	86.2%	+1
Asian +	92.4%	92.8%	+0.4	91.8%	92.1%	+0.3	88.5%	90.4%	+1.9
Black/ African American +	87.6%	87.9%	+0.3	85.8%	86.8%	+1	82%	82.4%	+0.4
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander +	91.3%	91.2%	-0.1	90.1%	90.2%	+0.1	86.9%	88%	+1.1
White +	88.6%	88.8%	+0.2	87.6%	88%	+0.4	85.6%	86%	+0.4
Hispanic/ Latino	89.3%	89.5%	+0.2	88.2%	88.6%	+0.4	85.2%	86.2%	+1

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 8: OSAS PROFICIENCY by Expanded Race and Ethnicity and Subject, 2024 and 2025

Student Group	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
American Indian/ Alaska Native +	28.5%	29.2%	+0.7	16.9%	17.3%	+0.4	17.3%	17.6%	+0.3
Asian +	61.4%	61.1%	-0.3	52.8%	52.7%	-0.1	43.8%	44.6%	+0.8
Black/ African American +	29.5%	29.7%	+0.2	17.8%	18.4%	+0.6	16.5%	17.5%	+1
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander +	32.1%	32.9%	+0.8	20.8%	21%	+0.2	19.9%	20.2%	+0.3
White +	43.7%	43.9%	+0.2	31.8%	32%	+0.2	30.8%	31%	+0.2
Hispanic/ Latino	28.5%	29.2%	+0.7	16.9%	17.3%	+0.4	17.3%	17.6%	+0.3

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 9: OSAS PARTICIPATION by Student Group and Subject, 2024 and 2025

Student Group	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
Currently or Formerly Incarcerated	53.1%	54.2%	+1.1	52%	52.3%	+0.3	50%	51.8%	+1.8
English Learner	94%	94.7%	+0.7	93.5%	94.2%	+0.7	89.2%	89.9%	+0.7
Ever English Learner	93.5%	94.3%	+0.8	92.8%	93.7%	+0.9	89%	90.1%	+1.1
Foster Care	83.9%	82.7%	-1.2	83%	80.9%	-2.1	76.6%	76.3%	-0.3
Migrant Education	95.4%	95.9%	+0.5	95.2%	95.7%	+0.5	92%	92.8%	+0.8
Military Connected	88.9%	90.2%	+1.3	88.1%	89.5%	+1.4	88.1%	88.8%	+0.7
Students Navigating Housing Instability	86.8%	88%	+1.2	85.6%	86.8%	+1.2	81.3%	81%	-0.3
Students Experiencing Poverty	89.1%	89.2%	+0.1	88%	88.2%	+0.2	85%	84.7%	-0.3
Talented and Gifted	92.3%	94%	+1.7	91.3%	93.3%	+2	89.4%	92.2%	+2.8

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 10: OSAS PROFICIENCY by Student Group and Subject, 2024 and 2025

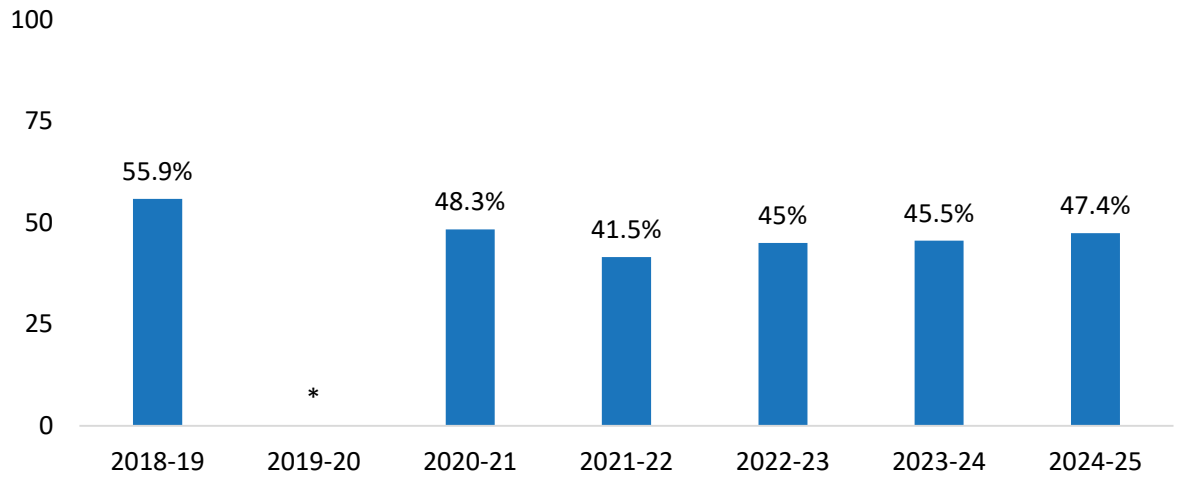
Student Group	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
Currently or Formerly Incarcerated	12.2%	14.2%	+2	<5%	<5%	--	8%	9.5%	+1.5
English Learner	5.7%	5.6%	-0.1	5.6%	5.3%	-0.3	<5%	<5%	--
Ever English Learner	22.2%	22.3%	+0.1	15%	15.1%	+0.1	11.7%	12.6%	+0.9
Foster Care	21.4%	20.3%	-1.1	11.7%	11.3%	-0.4	14.5%	14.2%	-0.3
Migrant Education	18.7%	18.1%	-0.6	11.4%	10.3%	-1.1	9.3%	8.6%	-0.7
Military Connected	43.2%	48.2%	+5	32.9%	34%	+1.1	32.1%	31.6%	-0.5

Student Group	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
Students Navigating Housing Instability	19.9%	19.1%	-0.8	11.2%	11.3%	+0.1	11.9%	13.3%	+1.4
Students Experiencing Poverty	25.6%	25.9%	+0.3	15.8%	16.4%	+0.6	16.1%	16.2%	+0.1
Talented and Gifted	89%	90%	+1	83.1%	84.4%	+1.3	75.7%	77.6%	+1.9

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 11: Extended OSAS PROFICIENCY by Grade Level and Subject, 2024 and 2025

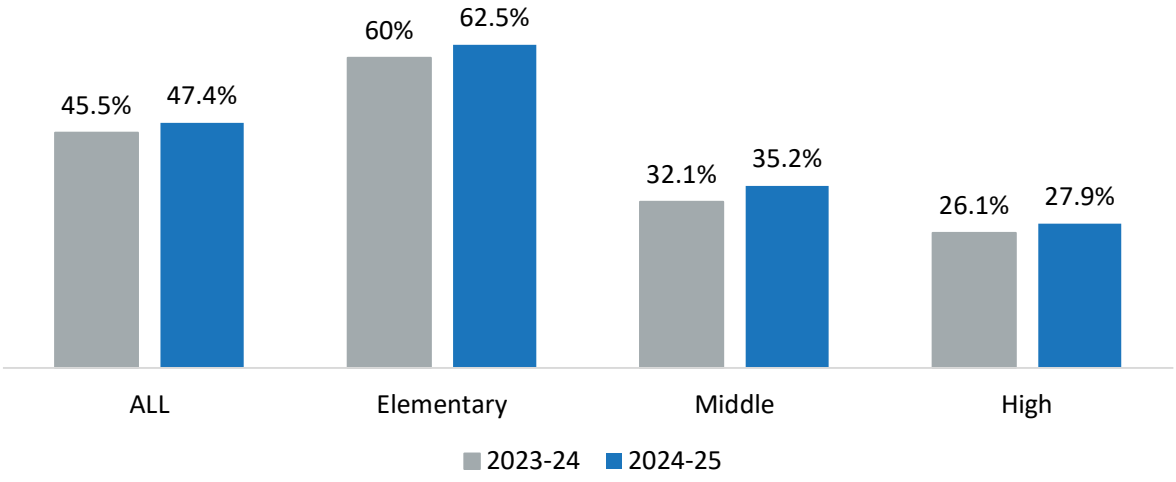
Enrolled Grade	ELA 2023-24	ELA 2024-25	ELA One Year Change	Math 2023-24	Math 2024-25	Math One Year Change	Science 2023-24	Science 2024-25	Science One Year Change
3	26.0%	18.5%	-7.5	26.9%	17.6%	-9.3			
4	34.5%	26.9%	-7.6	20.5%	15.2%	-5.3			
5	25.1%	22.2%	-2.9	25.7%	15.8%	-9.9	38.0%	32.1%	-5.9
6	25.9%	24.0%	-1.9	29.0%	15.7%	-13.3			
7	31.9%	23.0%	-8.9	41.7%	31.5%	-10.2			
8	31.3%	24.8%	-6.5	36.1%	17.8%	-18.3	40.1%	33.7%	-6.4
11	37.2%	30.2%	-7.0	33.3%	18.9%	-14.4	49.7%	39.8%	-9.9

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 12: On-Track to English Language Proficiency, 2019 to 2025



On-Track to English Language Proficiency is the percentage of students who are meeting progress expectations on the state English Language Proficiency Assessment. Learn more about the English Language Proficiency assessment.

APPENDIX A EXHIBIT 13: Change in On-Track to English Language Proficiency by Grade Band, 2024 to 2025



Appendix B: Quality Education Model Information

Background and Request

Oregon's Quality Education Commission (QEC) publishes a report every even-numbered year of the legislative biennium. These reports include predictions of what Oregon's public K-12 education system will cost for the subsequent biennium if the current service levels (CSL) from the prior biennium is maintained, as well as costs for full implementation (Full-QEM) of the model that goes beyond current service level provisions in intentional ways that align with current research and best practices are incorporated. These model predictions for CSL and Full-QEM have been made since 1999 by the Quality Education Model, a model that uses expenses incurred during the prior biennium, combined with expected rates of inflation and model-predicted trends for expenses, and the weighted Average Daily Membership (ADMw) used to distribute the State School Fund allocation to districts, to generate the CSL and Full-QEM sums.

The QEC wants to expand the transparency of the QEM and live into its commitment to ensure that the audiences for this report, including the Joint Public Education Appropriation Committee (JPEA), has full and complete accounting of the model, its inputs, processes, and assumptions. This appendix elaborates the costing assumptions that are reflected in the QEM, showing what is counted in the model and where it is counted, as well as the rationale supporting these decisions. As described within the body of this report, the Full QEM accounts for all sources of public K-12 funding, but is designed to use that information to estimate the SSF needed for the following biennium.

How the QEM Works

The model works by incorporating expenses leveraging two primary methods, Method #1 and Method #2, which generate per-pupil expenditures in different ways that are combined for overall cost predictions.

Method #1

The model incorporates all expenses that can directly be framed as per-pupil expenditures, including district- and ESD-level staff, and school-site level expenditures like textbooks, on a per-pupil basis as direct cost scalars that get multiplied by the State School Fund ADMw forecast.

Method #2

There are other costs that cannot be directly estimated as per-pupil expenditures. These expenses include school-level salaries for instructional staff, such as teachers, administrators, and classified support staff. When generating these model cost predictions, the model incorporates the actual observed staffing levels, student-staff service ratios for these positions in schools at or near the size of the prototype schools to determine what those per-pupil expenses are and multiplies those figures by the salary assumptions.

All the expenses are then combined by the model for overall Status Quo and Full QEM estimates of the Total District and ESD cost of delivering a K-12 system of education in the state of Oregon, regardless of funding source.

NON-STATE SCHOOL FUND ALLOCATED FUNDS BACKED OUT

Importantly, there are Non-State School Fund allocated funds that are then backed out of the model. These funds are backed out in order to include only funds that are distributed through the State School Fund (SSF) in the model. These funds were also identified and agreed to by the prior LFO in November of 2021, in consultation with ODE staff who run the model for the QEC. All non-SSF revenues from the General Fund (Fund 100), Special Revenue Fund (Fund 200),

Federal Sources (Fund 201), Non-Federal Sources (Fund 250), Student Investment Account (Fund 251), Measure 98 - High School Success (Fund 252), Child Nutrition Fund (Fund 299), and Enterprise Funds (Fund 500) are netted out of the total funding amount required in the following areas:

- **Local Revenue Outside Formula**
  - All District revenues reported under 1000 and 2000 series source codes or under source codes 3103, 3104, 3800, 3900, 4801, or 4899 (DISTRICT ONLY)
  - Does not include projected ESD revenues reported under source codes in the 1000 (excluding 1110, 1190, 1600) or 2000 (excluding 2101, 2103, 2800) source code series or under source codes 3800 and 3900
- **Federal Revenue**
  - All District or ESD revenues reported under source codes in the 4100, 4200, 4300, 4500, 4700 source code series or under source codes 4802, 4803, 4899, or 4900
- **Food Service Enterprise Revenue**
  - All District Revenues reported under source code 1600
- **PERS Side Account Earnings Amount**
  - Total Salaries x Pers Side Account Earnings Rate = PERS Side Account Earnings Amount - District and ESD Debt Service Payments in PERS Bonds

After subtracting these sources of funding which are not distributed through the SSF, the total formula distribution has been identified. Thereafter, the following three adjustments are made:

1. Local Revenue distributed by the State School Fund Formula is subtracted (-)
   a. All District revenues reported under source codes 1110, 1190, 2101, 2103, 2800, 3103, 3104, 4801, or 4899
   b. All ESD revenues reported under source codes 1110 , 1190, 4801, 3103, 3104, 2101, 2800, or 4899
2. The high cost disability fund is added (+)

Which all sum to the final SSF Requirement. There may be additional funding from federal special education funding that would need to be subtracted, as well, but this has not occurred during the most recent biennia.

The tables in the following pages demonstrate the ESD- and district-level per-pupil expenditures data that are directly estimated as per-pupil expenditures for Method #1, as well as the expenditures that the prototype schools are used to generate per-pupil expenditure estimates for Method #2 with examples from the 21-23 biennium.

Method #1

Per-Pupil Expenditures that are Directly Estimated for Schools, Districts, and ESDs

APPENDIX B EXHIBIT 1: School and District Level Expenditures Included in the Model

Expenditure Description	Function Codes	Object Codes	Subject Area Codes	Reason for Exclusions
Operations and Maintenance	2540	Excludes 420, 430, 440, 500-series, 610, and 620	All	Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, Capital Outlays, Redemption of Principal and Interest (Regular Interest and Bus Garage, Bus and Capital Improvement Interest), which are accounted for separately
Transportation	2550	Excludes 420, 430, 440, 500-Series, 610, 620, 700-Series, and 800-Series	All	Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, Capital Outlays, Redemption of Principal and Interest (Regular Interest and Bus Garage, Bus and Capital Improvement Interest), Transfers (Fund modifications, Transits and Other Transfers), Other Uses of Funds (Planned Reserves), which are accounted for separately
Food Service	3100	All	All	
Other Support Services	2220, 2570, 2610, 2620, 2670, 2690, 3300, and 3500	Excludes 420, 430, 440, 500-series, 610, and 620	All	Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, Capital Outlays, Redemption of Principal and Interest (Regular Interest and Bus Garage, Bus and Capital Improvement Interest), which are accounted for separately
Business and Fiscal Services	2510, 2520	excludes 420, 430, 440	All	Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, which are accounted for separately
Assessment and Curriculum Development	2210, 2230	Excludes 420, 430, 440, 500-series, 610, and 620	All	Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, Capital Outlays, Redemption of Principal and Interest (Regular Interest and Bus Garage, Bus and Capital Improvement Interest), which are accounted for separately
Central Administration	2310, 2320	excludes 420, 430, 440	All	Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, which are accounted for separately
Extra-Curricular	1113, 1122, and 1132	Excludes 100-Series	All	Excludes Salaries/ Stipends, which are accounted for separately
Centralized Special Education	All	Excludes 100 and 200-Series	320	Excludes Salaries and Associated Payroll Costs for School-Level Staff, which are accounted for separately
Classroom Supplies	1000-Series, excluding 1113, 1122, & 1132	410 and 460	All	Excludes Extra-Curricular expenditures, which are accounted for separately
Personnel Services	2640	Excludes 420, 430, 440, 500-series, 610, and 620	All	Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, Capital Outlays, Redemption of Principal and Interest (Regular Interest and Bus Garage, Bus and Capital Improvement Interest), which are accounted for separately

Expenditure Description	Function Codes	Object Codes	Subject Area Codes	Reason for Exclusions
Regular Substitutes	1000-Series, excluding 1113, 1122 and 1132, and 2100-series	121 and 122	Excludes 320	Excludes Extra-Curricular expenditures, and Special Education substitute expenditures, which are accounted for separately. Includes Support Services for Students
Textbooks	All	420	All	
Public Information	2630	Excludes 420, 430, 440, 500-series, 610, and 620		Excludes Textbooks, Library Books, Periodicals, Capital Outlays, Redemption of Principal and Interest (Regular Interest and Bus Garage, Bus and Capital Improvement Interest), which are accounted for separately
Office of Principal	2410 and 2490	300- and 400- Series	All	
Media Materials	2220	410, 420, 460, and 470	All	Excludes Textbooks, which are accounted for separately
Media Materials	All Other Function codes	430 and 440	All	Excludes Textbooks, which are accounted for separately
Special Education Substitutes	1000-Series, excluding 1113, 1122 and 1132, and 2100-series	121 and 122	320	Excludes Extra-Curricular expenditures, and non-Special Education substitute expenditures which are accounted for separately. Includes Support Services for Students

APPENDIX B EXHIBIT 2: ESD Level Expenditures Included in the Model

Expenditure Description	Function Codes	Object Codes	Subject Area Codes	Reason for Exclusions
Special Education	1000-, 2000- and 3000-Series	Excludes 370-series	320	Excludes tuition (Tuition Payments to Other Districts Within the State, Tuition Payments to Other Districts Outside the State, Tuition Payments to Private Schools, Other Tuition). These tuitions are effectively transfers and the final expenditures are recorded at the institution where the student attends school.
Special Education	1220, 1250, 1260	Excludes 370-series	Excludes 320	See Note Above
Instructional Support	1100-series, 1210, 1271, 1272, 1280, 1290-series, 1300, 1400, 2100-series, 2200-series, 2400-series	Excludes 370-series	Excludes 320	Excludes tuition (Tuition Payments to Other Districts Within the State, Tuition Payments to Other Districts Outside the State, Tuition Payments to Private Schools, Other Tuition). These tuitions are effectively transfers and the final expenditures are recorded at the institution where the student attends school. Excludes Special Education Expenditures, which are accounted for separately.

Expenditure Description	Function Codes	Object Codes	Subject Area Codes	Reason for Exclusions
Administration	2300-series, 2510, 2520, 2540, 2640, 2670, 2700	Excludes 370-series	Excludes 320	See Exclusion Note in the Instructional Support row
Technology Services	2660	Excludes 370-series	Excludes 320	See Exclusion Note in the Instructional Support row
Central Services	2550, 2570, 2610, 2620, 2630, 2690, 3100, 3200, 3300, 3500	Excludes 370-series	Excludes 320	See Exclusion Note in the Instructional Support row

Method #2

2026 QEM Model Statewide School-Level Salary Expenditure Estimates Generated Indirectly Using the Prototype Schools

APPENDIX B EXHIBIT 3: 2027-29 Teacher Salary

School Year	Total Teachers	Teacher Average Salary Assumption	Teacher Salaries
2027-28	36,549	$96,261	$3,518,243,289
2028-29	36,389	$100,587	$3,660,260,343
2027-29 School-Level Teacher Salaries			**$7,178,503,632**

APPENDIX B EXHIBIT 4: 2027-29 School Level Administrator Salary

School Year	Total Administrators	Principal Average Salary Assumption	Assistant Principal Salary Assumption	Administrator Salaries
2027-28	1,679	$160,912	$147,480	$262,075,078.54
2028-29	1,674	$166,992	$152,693	$270,910,537.14
2027-29 School-Level Administrator Salaries				**$532,985,616**

APPENDIX B EXHIBIT 5: 2027-29 Classified Staff Salary

School Year	Total Classified Staff	Classified Staff Average Salary Assumption	Classified Salaries
2027-28	18,079	$48,915	$884,334,285
2028-29	18,000	$50,038	$900,684,000
2027-29 School-Level Support Staff Salaries			$1,785,018,285
2027-29 School-Level Instructional Staff Salaries			$9,496,507,533

Appendix C: 2026 QEM Cost Model for Public Release

The 2026 QEM cost model spreadsheet is downloadable from the QEC website: 2026 QEM Cost Model

Appendix D: 2026 QEC Best Practices Survey Results

The survey results are located on the QEC website, Results of 2026 Best Practices Survey.

Appendix E: The Best Practices White Papers

The Quality Education Commission (QEC) Best Practices White Papers were developed from presentations by subject matter experts at the Oregon Department of Education and the Educator Advancement Council in 2024 and 2025 to the QEC. Final versions are found on the QEC website and linked below:

- Best Practices for Culturally Responsive High-Quality Instructional Materials in Oregon
- Best Practices for Educator Recruitment and Retention
- Best Practices for Educator Workforce Well-Being and Belonging
- Best Practices for School Safety and Prevention in Schools
- Best Practices in Supporting American Indian and Alaska Native Students
- Best Practices in Supporting Multilingual Learners
- High-Quality Instructional Materials, a Key to Consistency and Equity in Oregon's Classrooms
- Implementing Belonging and Wellness in Schools
- Leaning into the Power of Formative Assessment Practice
- Strategic Investment in Special Education Enhancing Quality, Equity, and Outcomes for All Students
- Talented and Gifted Education Best Practices for Programs and Services
- The Every Day Matters and High School Success Programs, Supporting Regular Attendance and On-Time Graduation

Appendix F: Figures on Categorical Expenditure Growth

Figures and tables on categorical expenditure growth for the 2024-25 school year are found on the QEC website: 2024-25 Per Pupil Categorical Expenditures for the QEM.

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