

# Educator Advancement Council and Oregon Department of Education Education Staff Retention and Recruitment Grants

## Program Summary – 4/19/2022

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*Note: The information in this document is subject to change pending adoption of administrative rules by the Oregon State Board of Education.*

## Background

Over the last two years, the pandemic has exacerbated existing issues in the state's K-12 education workforce. School leaders, teachers, and staff have stepped up – taking on more than what they originally signed up for – to provide the best education possible for our students. However, school and district staff have made clear that they are overwhelmed and don't have the support they need to meet student needs. As a result, school districts across Oregon are seeing the impacts of the Great Resignation, as staff in all industries leave to pursue positions with better working conditions. There are not enough teachers, bus drivers, food service workers, educational assistants, and others to provide the high quality education that Oregon's students deserve.

Efforts to recruit, employ, and retain a high quality, diverse workforce fall short when the profession itself is in crisis, as evidenced by staffing shortages across the state and calls for change from staff, students, and communities. In order to attract future education staff, as well as sustain current staff, state and local education agencies are working to improve teaching and learning conditions through evidence-based strategies that meet local needs.

Historic and persistent inequities in Oregon's education system are also exacerbated by the impacts of the pandemic. Strategies for retention and recruitment should address persistent workforce shortages of diverse staff to ensure the workforce reflects the growing diversity of the state's students and communities, and to ensure a workforce that can meet the great and varied needs of students.

## Purpose

[HB 4030](#) provides \$78 million in grants to support retention and recruitment of K-12 educators and other support personnel in schools across Oregon. The legislative and executive intent of these funds is to use them for strategies identified and prioritized through involvement of school personnel to:

- Address high need specialties and workforce shortage areas for both classified and licensed staff;
- Build on existing efforts which address root causes of workforce attrition while responding to urgent needs; and
- Diversify the workforce, as well as ensure every educator and staff member can meet the academic and well-being needs of students, particularly students from historically and persistently underserved groups.

HB 4030 funds should be used for meaningful strategies that can be differentiated but have high leverage impacts for meeting long term district goals. For example, a retention bonus may be needed for substitute staff, while additional job-embedded collaboration time may address licensed educator needs. Given the short-term grant period, funds should be used to support short-term strategies which lay a foundation for longer-term solutions to persisting challenges. One of the best ways to do this is to support existing initiatives or programs to improve or expand through high-quality implementation and continuous improvement processes, as well as sharing learning across schools and districts.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to recruitment and retention challenges. The Oregon Department of Education and the Educator Advancement Council fully recognize this. These funds will be provided with maximum flexibility given to the districts, and district/school personnel will participate in developing plans for the use of funds. Grant funds should be used to meet local needs, which vary considerably across the state, and should be used to support evidence-based strategies which are proven to be effective. The Educator Advancement Council will provide a collated resource to help district leaders facilitate decision-making with their staff around use of funds.

## Timeline

- **April 20, 2022:** Review program parameters, proposed OARs for State Board of Education consideration, and other information by the Educator Advancement Council
- **April 22, 2022:** Provide program parameters, allocations, and other information to districts, charter schools and ESDs.
- **May 1, 2022:** Application period opens.
- **May 19, 2022:** State Board of Education presented with temporary rules for this program.
- **May 27, 2022:** Application period closes.
- **June 10, 2022:** Recipients determined, and any reallocation calculated and distributed.
- **July 1, 2022:** Final report templates and requirements posted.
  
- **April 1, 2023:** Reminders sent about final reports.
- **May 1, 2023:** Final reports due to ODE.
- **May 1- June 15, 2023:** Final reports reviewed and approved by ODE and recipients make final claims of remaining funds once final report reviewed.
- **June 15, 2023:** Last day to claim funds from ODE
- **June 30, 2023:** Last day to expend funds

## Eligible Applicants

School districts, education service districts, and public charter schools may apply for these grants. School districts are strongly encouraged to work with their public charter schools and apply on behalf of their charter schools. Similarly, ESDs may apply as a consortium of several districts that would like to combine their grant funds.

## Funding Availability

The total amount of funds provided by HB 4030 is \$78,162,971 for the remainder of the 2021-2023 biennium. All funds must be claimed by June 15, 2023. Any funds not claimed by that deadline will be returned to the legislature.

The funds will be allocated to districts, public charter schools and ESDs on an ADMw basis. A separate table has been created showing each recipient's amount. There are no matching funds required as part of this grant.

## Funding Disbursement

All recipients that successfully apply for these grant funds will be required to execute a grant agreement with ODE. Once the grant agreement is executed, then recipients can claim up to 85% of the funds right away. They may then start to use the funds as they need to implement their programs. The remaining 15% of funds will be released upon the completion of all final reporting requirements as stated in the grant agreement. If a district fails to provide the required final reporting, then all grant funds will be required to be returned to ODE. All funds will be distributed through ODE's Electronic Grant Management System (EGMS).

## Eligible Uses of Funds

HB 4030 strongly encourages alignment with existing programs while addressing urgent needs. ODE and EAC encourage flexibility within a broad framework of eligible categories of expenses and recipients are encouraged to braid these funds with other funding sources. Recipients will be required to expend the funds in alignment with the following categories and demonstrate the use of an equity lens in making budget decisions. Which category(ies) a recipient chooses will be based on the local needs of the recipient, as informed by personnel needs and analysis of local workforce data.

The eligible categories of how recipients can spend the funds are:

- **Data collection and root cause analysis.** Recipients can use funds to gather data that will enable a deep and long-term understanding of the root causes of workforce shortages in the varied communities across the state in order to design solutions tailored to specific needs. This may include supporting existing community or personnel engagement efforts, such as those funded by the Student Investment Account, Regional Educator Networks, or other grant initiatives.
- **Reducing persistent local workforce shortages.** Recipients can use the funds to cover expenses associated with recruiting and retaining staff in hard to staff areas locally. These areas may include bilingual, rural, special education, Tribal, and racially, ethnically or linguistically diverse educators and staff; substitutes and emergency-licensed educators; as well as school nurses and specialists that support student mental health.
- **Supportive working conditions.** Recipients can use the funds to cover expenses associated with providing working conditions that reduce personnel burnout. This may include providing structures for peer-to-peer support, time for planning and collaboration, job-embedded learning opportunities, retention and recruitment bonuses, and prioritization of student and staff health.
- **Local or regional career pathways.** Recipients can use the funds to cover expenses associated with providing affordable pathways into or advancement within education careers, particularly for adult students, career changers, and local community members who might otherwise not access required education or career opportunities. This may include supporting existing programs, such as partnerships with educator preparation programs like Grow Your Own.
- **Education pre-service and in-service training.** Recipients can use the funds to provide high quality, culturally responsive preparation, development, and advancement opportunities to

aspiring and current educators and staff, at all career stages that improves individuals' sense of self-efficacy and reduces stress caused by lack of knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to be successful.

- **New staff support.** Recipients can use the funds to provide support to novice staff through induction and mentorship programs focused on culturally responsive curricula, instruction practices, and flexible learning environments that support every student to be successful.
- **School-level structural conditions.** Recipients can use the funds to remove school-level barriers to recruitment and retention (such as staff schedules, building policies, classroom environments, etc.) through piloting innovative, educator and staff-led solutions in service of building more flexible, responsive, and adaptive schools.

## Expenditure Period

Grant funding is available for any eligible use of funding incurred between **April 15, 2022** and **June 30, 2023**.

## Application Process

Recipients will need to complete and submit to ODE an electronic application. In the application, recipients will be required to identify which categories of expenses they will address with the funds and an estimate of how many funds they will put in each category. Recipients that do not provide this information will not have a complete application. Recipients will also need to describe how personnel participated in the development of the application and demonstrate the use of an equity lens in making budget decisions. Recipients may be required to submit artifacts demonstrating personnel involvement.

Once applications are received and reviewed recipients will be notified of their acceptance into the grant program. They will then need to execute a grant agreement with ODE. Once the grant agreement is fully executed, then the recipients can claim the funds.

## Final Requirements

All recipients will be required to submit a final report. The final report will consist of a narrative portion where the recipient explains how they used the funds in each eligible category of expense and how these funds were able to address short-term needs as well as some of the recipient's persistent problems. This narrative will also include some quantitative data from the district, including:

- How many and what types of school personnel were directly impacted through the grant funding; and
- Measurable impacts of the grant funding, such as improved retention rates for certain personnel groups, reduced substitute shortages, or increased job satisfaction among personnel.

Additionally, the recipient will be required to provide a financial report of how the funds were spent. Both of these reports will be provided to recipients on templates created by ODE. All reports will need to be submitted electronically to ODE in the form required to ease data collection.