

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S Pipeline

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From My Desk to Yours

A Message from Stan Bunn
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Today, we released the first-ever report cards for Oregon Schools. We at the Department of Education are proud of the accomplishments of our public school system and these report cards will show why. We are leading today's students to achieve higher-level skills, teaching them subject matter which was unknown 30 years ago, and using tools which are being reinvented and upgraded on a daily basis in the business world.

All of these accomplishments are reasons to celebrate the exceptional work of Oregon teachers, administrators, and other school staff. Here's how Oregon Schools look: 3.8%, 39 schools, achieved an overall rating of Exceptional on their report cards. 35.8%, 372 schools, were rated as Strong. 56.7%, a remarkable 589 schools, were rated as Satisfactory when measured against the challenging requirements of this report card. That totals 96% of Oregon schools receiving report cards today that are meeting or exceeding demanding standards for public education.

What about the remaining schools—the 3.6%, or 36 schools, whose rating was low, or the 0.3%, 3 individual schools, whose rating was unacceptable? These schools are not forgotten or overlooked in today's celebrations. Of course, the local school district has the primary responsibility for seeing that improvement occurs in these schools. The Department is also positioned to offer immediate assistance in reviewing these schools' data to determine why each received the low rating and help them design an action plan. In addition, there will be a grant of \$10,000 available to help implement their plans for improvement. We will be calling upon all of our education partners, from ESD's to higher education, to help provide these schools the support they need.

Approximately 175 schools did not receive report cards today because they have incomplete or missing data or because analysis is underway to resolve discrepancies in the data. These schools will receive their report cards by February 29.

Let me leave you with two thoughts about the new report cards. First, there is a great deal that is positive about Oregon schools today. We need to celebrate that success and get the word out that students attending public schools are receiving a quality education. Second, and most important, we must be relentless in our pursuit of success for each and every student. We will assure that support is provided that will allow low performing schools to be successful in their efforts to improve. Regardless of the overall rating level, school staff, parents and community members can use the information contained in the report card to celebrate areas of strength and identify program improvements which will benefit their students.

In addition to The Superintendent's Pipeline, remember that more information about the Report Cards may be found on our website at www.ode.state.or.us. Please continue to communicate with me and the Department staff so we can be aware of your immediate needs.

Sincerely,



Stan Bunn

Oregon Department of Education

Report Card Trends

Schools in each of the reporting categories for the Report Card are spread across geographic regions of the state and reflect a range of socioeconomic levels and school sizes. In preliminary reviews of the categories, however, some trends or common traits appear among the schools.

In exceptional schools, on average, more than 75 percent of students met or exceeded state standards on state reading, writing, math multiple choice and math problem solving tests. These schools showed strong

improvement over time on state reading and math multiple-choice tests. School attendance rates averaged 94 percent.

In strong schools, on average, about 66 percent of elementary and middle school students and about 50 percent of high school students met or exceeded state standards on state reading, writing, math multiple choice and math problem solving tests. These schools showed strong improvement over time on state reading and math multiple-choice tests. School attendance rates averaged 94 percent. High school dropout rates averaged 2.5 percent.

In satisfactory schools, on average, about 50 percent of elementary and middle school students and about 33 percent of high school students met or exceeded state standards on state reading, writing, math multiple choice and math problem solving tests. Most of these schools showed some improvement over time on state reading and math

multiple-choice tests. School attendance rates averaged 92 percent. High school dropout rates averaged 5 percent.

In low schools, on average, fewer than 33 percent of students met or exceeded state standards on state reading, writing, math multiple choice and math problem solving tests. Most of these schools showed no improvement or declined over time on state reading and math multiple-choice tests. School attendance rates averaged 90 percent. High school dropout rates averaged 9 percent.

In unacceptable schools, on average, fewer than 30 percent of students met or exceeded standards on state reading, writing, math multiple choice and math problem solving tests. These schools did not improve over time on state reading and math multiple-choice tests. School attendance rates averaged less than 90 percent. High school dropout rates ranged from 8 to 11 percent.

Understanding School Report Cards

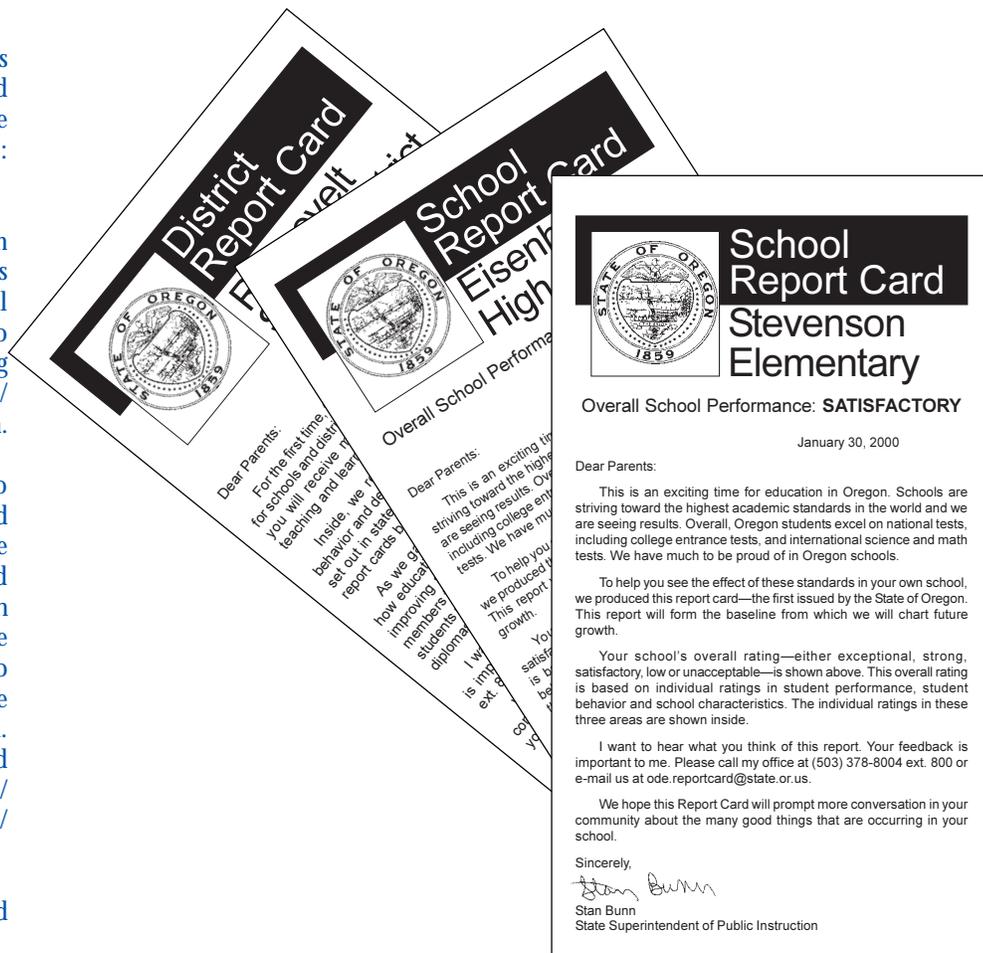
Several documents on the department's website are designed to help schools and districts answer questions and explain the reports cards to staff, parents and community members.

A four-page series of questions and answers may be especially helpful for teachers and other staff as general background about the Report Cards. It is posted at: www.ode.state.or.us/ReportCard/qa.pdf.

A three-page overview of the rating system describes in broad terms how school ratings are calculated. This document may be useful for principals and other administrators who want to understand the basics of the rating system. It is posted at: www.ode.state.or.us/ReportCard/RatingFormulaOverview.htm.

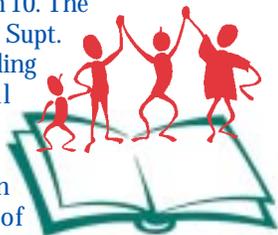
Two companion documents are intended to help teachers, parents and others read and interpret the ratings, tables and charts on the report card. A sample report card is marked with numbers corresponding to numbers on a "key." The key explains each item, where the data came from, how it is used to calculate a rating and how it fits into the total picture presented by the report card. The sample report card and key can be found at www.ode.state.or.us/ReportCard/readrc.pdf and www.ode.state.or.us/ReportCard/HowReadRpt.pdf.

All these documents can be photocopied and distributed widely.



Reading Summit March 10

The second Oregon Reading Summit will be held at the Portland Convention Center on March 10. The summit, part of Supt. Stan Bunn's reading initiative, will bring teachers together with top researchers in the field of reading for a day focusing on methods to improve reading instruction. Keynote speaker will be P. David Pearson, a well-known reading expert and contributor to *The Reading Teacher* and other journals. Pearson is currently head of the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.



Other main speakers include Phyllis Hunter, a Reading Consultant with the Texas Education Agency, John Dashney,

an Oregon children's author and storyteller, and Stan Bunn, who will provide an update on the activities of the reading initiative to date.

There is no registration fee, and lunch is provided. However, only 800 spaces are available for the event. Registration forms can be obtained from the Department's website at www.ode.state.or.us/reading/events.asp

An additional activity on Saturday, March 11 will be the Oregon Reads! Showcase of Successful Reading Programs. This event, held at Montgomery Park, is targeted toward eligible schools for the Reading Excellence grants, but others may attend on a space available basis.

For further information, contact Donna DeRoche at (503) 378-8004 ext 248 (e-mail donna.deroche@state.or.us)

February Pipeline *Extra!*

A Pipeline Extra! will be distributed in mid-February focusing on the upcoming Statewide Assessments for Spring 2000. A notice will be sent when it is posted, but you may also want to alert interested people in your district to be watching for publication around Feb. 10.

Meeting Dates Change

The State Board meeting dates for June have been changed. The Board will now meet on **June 14 and 15** (rather than June 16-17).



Title 1A, Title IV, and Title VI Funding

Superintendents, principals, business managers and federal program coordinators will be pleased to learn that the Federal Omnibus Appropriations Budget, passed and signed into law in November of 1999, includes modest increases in Title IA Basic and Title IV Safe and Drug Free Schools. Title VI and will be funded at about the same level as this year. Title IA Concentration is also level funded. The Class Size Reduction Initiative will be funded for another year with a slight increase.

Many factors including child count and fluctuating poverty levels influence the Oregon portion of the national budget and subsequent allocation to local districts. The Office of Student Services will inform districts through a numbered memorandum of local allocations when that information becomes available.

Funding Opportunities

Two opportunities to obtain funding for specialized programs or operations are available with due dates coming soon.

The Qualified Zone Academy Bonds can be issued to fund programs which work with business partnerships. Details explaining the bond requirements are in Numbered Memorandum 148-1999-00. The application period ends Feb. 29, 2000.

Facility Grant Applications are due at the Department of Education by February 15, 2000 for a district to be eligible for a 1999-00 grant. Details on this grant are in Numbered Memorandum 114-1999-00.

A complete listing of Numbered Memoranda can be found on the Department's website at www.ode.state.or.us/admin/memos/index.htm.

OPTE Hearings Scheduled

The Oregon Department of Education will hold information sessions and hearings on the proposed federal Carl D. Perkins State Plan which allocates about \$13.5 million annually for professional and technical education.

A hearing in Salem will be held Feb. 9 from 3 to 5 p.m. in Room 155 of Building 50 at Chemeketa Community College. A Feb. 16 session from 1 to 3 p.m. will originate from Jackson Education Service District in Medford, but connecting sites via satellite will be available at Mazama High School in Klamath Falls, Roseburg High School, Crook-Deschutes Education Service District in Redmond, and the Nyssa School District office.

The proposed plan is available on the Department's web site at www.ode.state.or.us/opte/Perkins_III_Task_Forces/TheStatePlan.pdf. Contact person is Holly Miles at holly.miles@state.or.us or 503-378-3584 ext. 328.

If you have questions or comments about this publication, please contact Barbara Wolfe, communications team, at barbara.wolfe@state.or.us or (503) 378-3310 ext. 440