

**African American/Black  
Student Success Plan  
Advisory Committee  
(AABSS)**

January 21, 2026

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**Tina Kotek, Governor**

Dr. Charlene Williams  
Director of the Oregon  
Department of Education  
Deputy Superintendent  
of Public Instruction

Michael Essien  
Assistant Superintendent of the  
Office of Equity, Diversity, and  
Inclusion

Jennifer Donovan  
Director of Student Success Plans  
Office of Equity, Diversity, and  
Inclusion

April Negrette.  
African American/Black Student  
Success Coordinator  
Office of Equity, Diversity, and  
Inclusion

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Details</b>
9:00 a.m.	<b>Welcome</b> Renee Anderson, Chair	
9:05 a.m.	<b>Gavel-in &amp; Rollcall Approve Minutes</b> Renee Anderson, Chair  Noted Edit to November 19 <sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Under Charter on page one, the Committee asks under which authority/statute are term limits mandated? Members inquired during in person meeting and were informed it was per the Assistant Superintendent of OEDI (Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion).</li></ul>	
9:10 a.m.	<b>Community Building (Ice Breaker)</b> Cynthia Richardson, Elder	<i>Community Building</i>
9:40 a.m.	<b>In-Person Retreat Review</b>  The December in-person retreat went very well, and the committee was able to create a Tree of Expectations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Orange/Roots - the skills, connections and knowledge you bring with you</li><li>Blue/Trunk - the ways we would like to work together</li><li>Green/Leaves - short term outcomes we would like to achieve from revising the SSP</li><li>Pink/Fruit + nuts – long term outcomes we would like to achieve from revising the SSP</li><li>Skills, knowledge and strengths members bring to the table<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Former Educator x6</li><li>Former public-school administrator x5</li><li>Working collaborative relationships with policy staff at other education agencies (ODE, TSPC, HECC, EAC, YDO, DELC) x5</li><li>Policy knowledge x4</li><li>Grant creations/management x3</li><li>Serve on State Board of Education/school boards x3</li><li>Sit on Racial Justice Council (RJC) education committee x2</li><li>Political connections x2</li><li>District staff x2</li><li>Institutional navigation/ODE experience x2</li></ul></li></ul>	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ AABSS AG experience/Been part of plan since 2016 x2</li><li>• Committee feedback:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Notice that student representative is missing<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ College student representatives have served in the past</li><li>▪ ODE also has a youth advisory, and one of their members has expressed interest in connecting with the advisory.</li></ul></li><li>○ Each Advisory Committee/Group Charter has a section dedicated to the various representatives, communities and identities that each body will seek to include.</li></ul></li><li>• Ways the committee would like to work together:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Collaborative (with black researchers/behavioral and mental health) x6</li><li>○ Student centered/student voice uplifted x6</li><li>○ Transparent, consistent communication (phone calls, meetings, email updates) (clearly) x5</li><li>○ Strengthening relationships/ (move at speed of) trust (building) x4</li><li>○ Restorative/repair x3</li><li>○ Add quarterly in person advisory meetings x3</li><li>○ Intentional/actionable x3</li><li>○ Productive/Efficient x3</li><li>○ Focused on impact/Accountable x2</li><li>○ Work group assignments x2</li><li>○ Honoring expertise/experience x2</li><li>○ Collective genius to solve problems/Trying new things x2</li><li>○ Observe organizations who are funded by AABSS/site visits x2</li><li>○ Volunteers leading(advising), staff receiving and facilitating (and executing) the work x2</li></ul></li><li>• Committee feedback:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ What does bullet point #3 mean? What specifically does that mean regarding emails?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ These notes were written by members; ODE copied them over following the retreat. The original writer was encouraged to speak up to clarify their response.</li><li>▪ In reviewing the sticky notes, the group discussed, and it was assumed that it meant clearer communication so that news isn't coming late. Suggested, it may refer to</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>	
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	<p>communication regarding the grantees.</p>	
9:39 a.m.	<p><b>Creating Operational Procedures and Group Norms</b> Renee Anderson, Chair Cynthia Richardson, Elder</p> <p>The group recognizes that there is a lot of work to be done, and to work as effectively as possible would like to adopt protocols.</p> <p>Running an Effective Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide Structure</li><li>• Establish meeting agreements:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Start any meeting by establishing a safe space where all attendees feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions. Some recommended agreements include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Be fully present</li><li>▪ Listen to understand</li><li>▪ Assume positive intent</li><li>▪ Use your voice; make space to hear other voices</li><li>▪ Engage in dialogue, not debate</li><li>▪ Be open, transparent, and willing to admit mistakes</li></ul></li><li>• Invite people to speak up</li><li>• Call our interruptions<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ I'll come back to you. Casey, would you please finish your thought?" If you notice that a specific team member interrupts frequently, you might pull them aside to address the issue directly.</li></ul></li><li>• Give credit where credit is due.</li><li>• Use (and encourage) inclusive and thoughtful language.</li><li>• Provide space for follow-up questions and input.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ As mentioned before, neurodivergent professionals may need more time to process information. Therefore, when you solicit questions and final thoughts at the end of the meeting, they may not be ready to share them. If an employee comes to you with additional input a few hours or days after the meeting, be sure to consider what they have to say.</li></ul></li><li>• Member feedback:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Members feel that there have been productive meetings in the past.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ This is to impact our future as we have and will continue to gain new</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>	<i>Discussion</i>



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	<p>members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Members feel the bigger impact on the effective running of a meeting is due to ODE staffing rather than members or engagement skills.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ It is noted that once these norms are accepted, then the ODE staff who are attending meetings and working within the community need to also adopt and accept these norms.</li></ul></li><li>○ Q: When we are having an ineffective meeting, what steps can we take? That's the main reason for these so that we have actionable, predetermined steps we can take if need be.</li><li>○ Starting each meeting with a slide containing several bullet points listing group agreements is an effective technique.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ This strategy was well received and requested to be implemented.</li><li>▪ Determined to use group agreements during the intro or welcome slides.</li></ul></li><li>○ It's important to not only have a facilitator for each meeting, but also a timekeeper as well. And with that the way that the timekeeper is received as the role is to ensure overall efficiency and equal voices for all.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Gratitude for our current timekeeper, Dr. Dujon, they have done a great job.</li></ul></li><li>○ Committee agreements that were accepted by all members present:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Be fully present</li><li>▪ Listen to understand</li><li>▪ Assume positive intent</li><li>▪ Use your voice; make space to hear other voices</li><li>▪ Engage in dialogue, not debate</li><li>▪ Be open, transparent, and willing to admit mistakes</li></ul></li></ul>	
10:19 a.m.	<p><b>Meeting opens to public</b></p>	
10:19 a.m.	<p><b>Identifying Short and Long Term Goals</b> April Negrette, Program Coordinator</p> <p>Short term outcomes the committee would like to achieve from revising the AABSS SSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shared working purpose with clarity and continuous</li></ul>	<i>Discussion</i>



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	<p>improvement space that builds trust x10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan efficiency and actionable x7</li><li>• Student centered/student voice uplifted x6</li><li>• improved tracking and data on AAB students x5</li><li>• RFA input and clarity x5</li><li>• Culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy in action in classrooms x3</li><li>• Accountability with funding and providing support to grantees x3</li><li>• Systems of support beyond schools into careers x2</li></ul> <p>Question: What can we solidify by June? What needs to be done to make this happen? Ex: recruiting, onboarding, creating a space where all voices are heard, finishing the plan, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request: Create some way for members to sort these in terms of priority to be sent out in the follow-up email.</li><li>• Member feedback: What's the specific ask? What type of plan revisions, or what can we do by June?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ The committee will likely be working on plan revisions for some time; the ask is what are some of the things we as a committee should prioritize and begin showing progress by June?</li></ul></li><li>• Members asked if ODE staff have any recommendations as to which of the above points should be prioritized?</li><li>• Tentative Advisory Committee Timeline:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ December 2025: Begin updating AABSS Plan</li><li>◦ June 2026:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Feb AC Mtg – Update Plan</li><li>▪ March AC Mtg – Update Plan</li><li>▪ April AC Mtg – Update Plan</li><li>▪ May – Feedback to ODE</li><li>▪ June – ODE Close Feedback Loop</li><li>▪ Community Engagement with AABSS Plan</li></ul></li><li>◦ Dec 2026: Feedback on AABSS RFA Application</li><li>◦ Aug 2027 AABSS RFA sent to DOJ for review</li><li>◦ Jan 2028: AABSS RFA opens</li><li>◦ July 2028: Begin new cohort of AABSS grantees</li></ul></li><li>• Members would like to work on some sort of verbiage or policies/procedures to be used in the event a grantee is not using their grant funds appropriately. The group would like to prioritize “accountability with funding and providing support to grantees”.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Advisory bodies will begin receiving all of the communication updates that go out to grantees</li></ul></li></ul>	
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	<p>as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Also, grantees will be presenting at monthly Advisory meetings starting February 2026.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ These will be predominantly informational sessions with a portion of the time for question and group discussion following their presentation.</li><li>▪ The purpose and goals of grantee presentations to the Advisory Committee are to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share local/place-based information about grant-supported work, including collaboration/partnerships</li><li>• Support Advisory Committee awareness of SSP implementation</li><li>• Conduct inquiry into the why and how of successes and challenges; and</li><li>• Provide an opportunity for Advisory Committee members to ask questions and offer mentoring and technical assistance to support continuous improvement of the Student Success Plan strategies for improving student outcomes.</li></ul></li><li>▪ Members noted that there's a difference between an informational presentation and an official inquiry. Noted how this may change expectations and how members show up in space.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ODE as staff are working on additional accountability measures and processes for grantees (with input from the AG), but that would not be a purpose of the grantee presentations to the AG.</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve graduation outcomes x5</li><li>• Alignment and collaboration with other agencies for AAB student success x3</li><li>• Furthering educational opportunities/higher % of students completing 2, 4-year degrees or career programs/becoming employees x2</li></ul> <p>Question: Thinking 1-3 years into the future – What needs to happen for us to become a strong force in the community and support black students? Who are the key partners, and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Members asked if ODE staff have any recommendations as to which of the above points should be prioritized?</li><li>• Members point out that based on the feedback shown above, academic achievements and graduation are important and should be taking priority. During breaks, students need to be working with grantees.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Credit recovery is also important.</li><li>◦ Flushing out verbiage or standards for this so that we can be ready when the next RFA is released.</li><li>◦ Member inquiry: How is it possible for students to graduate without knowing math? What is ODE doing about that to change the underlying systemic problem, not just providing additional support to a failing system.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Requested to have this be a follow up item in the next meeting if possible.</li><li>▪ Potentially having Dr. Williams speak to the underlying systemic problem as to why students are experiencing these discrepancies, and then what will the follow up be? How will strategies and accountability evolve to find the pieces that are working or reconfigured to better serve students.</li><li>▪ Members suggest that there is likely going to be an answer that ODE could make funding decisions; however, in the eyes of DOJ the lawsuit it may open could be a larger liability. The organization would not be eligible for another; however, the answer to what ODE can do and then additionally what it is willing to do may be two different answers. Transparency is key though.</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The state was at risk of being sued for failing students as well. There is risk on both sides; the focus needs to be on the students.</li><li>• The risk should not side to protect the state, it's not protecting the students.</li><li>• Getting sued and being wrong are not the same thing. Make the right choice even if there's a risk; that's what lawyers are for.</li><li>○ ODE will work to find answers as best possible. Some of the seemingly conflicting data may have something to do with a modified diploma; however, staff present are unable to speak to data further. There is a lot of interesting data that the agency is working to better analyze in real time to better influence the RFA and overall SSP.</li><li>○ Additional members inquired regarding the accountability framework and associated measures the agency is using and have been developing. It has been requested to have someone come in to speak to that end during a monthly meeting.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How can this influence the RFA</li><li>▪ If students fail or retaking classes, it's not the student's fault; it's the pedagogy and methodology that are being taught.</li><li>▪ Supports don't begin when a class is failing; grades should be monitored more closely so that grades can be improved in real time.</li><li>▪ The Salem-Kaiser approach is called a co-requisite model in the post-secondary sector. The evidence of success in math is compelling.</li></ul></li><li>○ Member request: Can the data be updated in HB 2016 and have that been presented at our next meeting?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The data members have is from 2013 - 2014 school year. Is it possible to get the data for all school years 2014 - 2025? That way we can see the trends</li></ul></li></ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ This bill was created because students were being failed by the system, and they're still being failed.</li><li>▪ Schools have students five days a week all day. The academic failing of students isn't the fault of the CBO's; it's the school system.</li></ul> <p>Member requested action items from notes from the last two meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is ODE doing? Want to be informed by both positive and negative grantee outcomes.</li></ul>	
11:14 a.m.	<p><b>Community Announcements and Updates</b> Renee Anderson, Chair</p> <p>Last night was the first black town hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislatures showed up</li><li>• Community voiced their needs and concerns; everyone was heard, and the legislatures answered lots of good questions.</li></ul> <p>Kairos annual event February 6<sup>th</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Spread the Love Save the Date</a></li></ul> <p>Committee Chair has an upcoming event they will be sharing as well. Look for the flyer with the follow up email.</p>	<i>Informational</i>
11:16 a.m.	<p><b>Adjourn</b></p> <p>Renee Anderson, Chair</p>	
<p><b>Members Present:</b> Member Anderson, Member Brewton Denison, Member Detman, Member Dujon, Member Harmon Johnson, Member LeGrand, Member O'Connell, Member Richardson, Member Wilson-Huey, Member Williams</p> <p><b>Members Absent:</b> Member Akiyama, Member Bolden, Member DeGruy-Bell, Member Pitts, Member Thorne Ladd, Member White</p> <p><b>ODE Staff Present:</b> April Negrette, Miriam Neidhardt McPhee, Mujidat Saaka, Jenni Amado</p>		

**Next Meeting: Online– February 18, 2026: 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.**