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Superintendent's Update #161

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The June 2006 issue of Superintendent's *Pipeline* is now available on the ODE website.

http://www.ode.state.or.us/pipeline/2005_06/June2006.pdf

1. Senate panel aims to give kids better start

Learning - Commissioners say full-day kindergarten, Head Start and smaller class sizes could prevent problems

STEVEN CARTER
The Oregonian

A Senate commission decided Monday to move forward with a \$113 million plan for full-day kindergarten in Oregon and a Head Start program available for any eligible family that wants it.

The proposal also calls for reducing class sizes in grades one through three.

The proposal is in the draft stages, and questions remain about how it might be paid for. But commission members said the package would be one of the most cost-effective ways to improve education in Oregon, giving children a strong start in school that could prevent unemployment and other problems later in life.

Meeting in Salem, members of the Senate Commission on Educational Excellence informally voted to move ahead with the plan, in time for action by the 2007 Legislature. The commission, made up of legislators, business representatives, educators and parents, was appointed in February by Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem. It will hold hearings on its recommendations in the fall.

Commission co-chair Sen. Ryan Deckert, D-Beaverton, said the commission plans to have legislation drafted to carry out the recommendations. He said evidence is overwhelming that investing in early childhood education is a smart use of public education dollars.

"We wanted to pick an area where we could make the biggest difference in the life of kids," Deckert said. Deckert said if the plan were fully implemented, it would put Oregon among the leading states in funding early-childhood education.

About 20 states fund full-day kindergarten programs, Deckert said. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation plans to invest as much as \$90 million over the next 10 years in improving early learning in Washington state.

The Oregon proposal is to increase enrollment in Head Start programs for 3- and 4-year-olds by 3,296 pupils, which would mean that 80 percent of eligible low-income families would be enrolled.

To read the entire story visit:

<http://www.oregonlive.com/search/index.ssf?/base/news/115258652619310.xml?>

[oregonian?lcfp&coll=7](#)

2. Opportunities and Financial Resources for Schools

New Program Offers Safety Grants To High-School Students Oregon high schoolers who craft and execute plans to creatively educate their peers about the dangers of driving can earn grants from State Farm Insurance. "Shift Into Safety" offers schools grants of \$2,000 to \$5,000 to fund campaigns that will help change teens' thinking and behavior behind the wheel.

"Shift Into Safety" grant projects may focus on speeding, distractions, aggressive driving, seat belts, or any other topic that relates to teen-driver safety. State Farm is looking for campaigns that motivate young drivers to think first and foremost about getting to their destinations safely and to change their behaviors accordingly.

Any student group within a school can apply for a grant, from an individual class to a student club.

State Farm will announce grant winners in December 2006. All public high schools within State Farm's six-state Pacific Northwest Zone—Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington--are eligible.

For applications and rules, contact: Jeff Aeschliman, (503) 463-3829,
jeff.aeschliman.c85n@statefarm.com 

National Poverty Institute

Voices of the Heart

A real chance to make a difference, to open possibilities for effective change toward eradicating poverty

Monday, July 24 – Thursday, July 27

Lewis & Clark College campus, Portland, Oregon

With Donna Beegle, Ed.D., national public speaker, trainer and author.

Poverty is a real issue in our society that is often misunderstood. This four-day session provides an opportunity for participants to gain a foundation, rooted in research and real life experiences, for understanding poverty and addressing its impact. The goal is to move beyond helping people cope with poverty and toward providing genuine opportunities for success. This program is open to everyone and may be taken for 2 semester hours continuing education credit. For information and registration visit <http://www.lclark.edu/dept/ccps> or call 503-768-6040

3. Teacher Feature

"In my travels around the state, I meet many excellent educators. I wanted a way to acknowledge and celebrate their work, so each week we will highlight one of these amazing teachers. This is a series of 'stories' about educators who are making a difference for Oregon's children."

-- Susan Castillo

Kevin Gordon

Ellis Parker Elementary, Eugene, Oregon

By Susan Castillo

Kevin Gordon is beloved by his students, parents, and colleagues for his creativity, leadership, sincerity, and passion for education.

Since he came to the school, the scores for Reading, Social Studies, and Science have steadily improved and there is a waiting list of students who want to transfer into the school.

Former Principal Mike Garling said, "He was a breath of fresh air to this school." He now facilitates change by examining data, sharing information and techniques with his colleagues and sparking their interest in new programs.

Colleague Christine White said, "I know this sounds crazy, but we all love going to staff meetings. He always makes it fun. He's really creative and it rubs off on us."

As Asst. Superintendent Henry said, "Kevin is an educator of the highest caliber and is extremely dedicated and committed to quality education. He serves as a role model for teachers and educational leaders."

Mr. Gordon is a true teacher leader and has served on numerous school and district committees. He is involved in governance, curriculum design, policy issues and activities, and he played a key role in the development of an effective and innovative instructional program at Ellis Parker which includes project based learning, second language instruction, differentiated instruction, and a focus on individualized student attention.

Kevin Gordon's energy and creativity are great assets to his school and colleagues but they are most readily evident in his classroom where he involves, inspires, and excites his students. Whether his class is talking to a neurosurgeon about his work, examining a human brain, collecting watershed information on Palm Pilots, raising and releasing salmon, or practicing math as part of their food collection program, their core subjects are integrated into topics of student interest.


He has a knack for seeing and taking advantage of all learning opportunities, so when one morning he came across a large metal object in the school yard he quickly moved it to his classroom before the students arrived. Covered with a sheet, the object served as the focus for the day's lessons. As White remembered, "He hyped it all morning with the kids. They had to come up with ideas on what was under the sheet. All of the kids were totally engaged. He called the local TV station and they sent a crew out to his classroom. On camera, the kids got to read stories about what they thought it was. They were all excited. It turns out that it was a vacuum chamber from the U of O. All the other teachers had just passed it by, but Mr. Gordon saw it as a learning opportunity."

4. Susan's Schedule

This week - The Superintendent lunched with elected officials Dan Gardner and Hardy Myers, met with Oregon Library Association, met with the Western Culinary Institute, and met with Oregon Board of Education chair Jerry Berger.

Next week - Susan will meet with education leadership from CCWD, OUS, and the Governor's office.

- For scheduling inquiries, please contact Jennifer Busey at (503) 947-5740.
- Please forward this UPDATE to others who might find it of interest.

If you would like to be added to this list or if you would like to unsubscribe, please email Shelby.r.Campos@state.or.us 

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