

# Education Update



## Rob's Blog

Message from Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction Rob Saxton

I have spent my entire adult life as an educator, both in the classroom and in administration, but I am also a parent. And like every parent, I wanted my children to get the best possible educational start to life. I knew that those early years would be critical to laying the strong foundation that would support my children's future success. As a state, we want that strong educational start for every child in Oregon. We want to ensure that students enter school ready to learn, ready to explore, and ready to succeed.

As we work to streamline our system and provide better supports and services from birth through higher education, we need to have reliable ways to gauge how well we, as a state, are doing and what areas may need adjustment or additional focus. A new kindergarten assessment which will be launched this fall will help provide us with some of this important feedback so that we can better support our kids.

The kindergarten assessment is designed to do two things. It will allow us to see, for the first time in our state's history, how prepared our youngsters are for kindergarten. This will provide a valuable state-level perspective that will allow us to track trends and progress over time. In addition, the assessment will provide parents and teachers with a common understanding of what kids know and can do when they enter kindergarten. This is information I would want as a teacher to help me better target instruction to meet each student's individual learning needs. It is also information I would want as a parent so that I could provide additional support and focus on developing these skills at home.

Unfortunately our state continues to struggle with persistent achievement gaps, and the longer these gaps go unaddressed the harder they are to close. By identifying these gaps early – and providing the instruction and supports to address them early – we will help prepare students for success not just in kindergarten but in the years to come.

Assessing students at the beginning of the school year is nothing new. Many teachers start out the year this way so that they can hone in on exactly what their students need to be most successful. However, what is new is having a consistent tool used across the state. This consistent assessment will provide the state-level perspective on where we are today so that we can measure progress in the years to come.

If we truly want to see all of our students graduate high school college and career ready – prepared to go on to higher education, workforce training, and civic engagement – we absolutely need to provide that strong early start, and we have to have the data to know how we're doing. The earlier we know where each child stands the better chance we have to intervene where needed and improve students' likelihood for success. That strong early start will better prepare our students to be reading at third grade and meet other key milestones.

You can learn more about the kindergarten assessment in a recently released ODE [numbered memo](#). A website, with information specifically for parents, early childcare and education providers, and schools will be launched later this month. We will share that website and additional information on this new assessment in the May issue of Education Update.

With gratitude for all you do,

## Steps to Success

Articles and Resources Relating to the Common Core, the Oregon Diploma, the Essential Skills, and More...

### Educator Effectiveness Regional Spring Workshops - Round 2

The Oregon Department of Education, in partnership with the Oregon Education Association, Chalkboard Project, Confederation of School Administrators, and regional ESDs, is offering Educator Effectiveness Regional Workshops this spring to support districts across the state implement their new evaluation systems.

Round 1 sessions held in March were well attended and provided participants with a deeper understanding of student learning and growth goals, as well as the opportunity to hear from pilot districts on their progress in developing district evaluation and support systems aligned to the requirements of the Oregon Framework. Feedback from Round 1 participants provided the basis for the topics in Round 2 which include:

- Gathering Multiple Measures of Evidence
- Observation Calibration and Feedback (Inter-Rater Reliability)
- Considerations for Specialist Evaluations

ODE will provide \$1,000 for each district to fund a team to attend both workshops to cover travel expenses (per diem), and/or substitute teacher costs. Additional information will be forthcoming on how districts may access these funds through the hosting ESD in their region.

District teams will have time to collaborate throughout the day and network with other districts in their area. District teams could include: district administrator, teacher(s), OEA representative, building administrator, local board member, human resources person, superintendent, and/or ESD representative. Please register for the workshops using the following link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/EERegionalTrainings2013>.

If you have questions, please contact Tanya Frisendahl at [Tanya.Frisendahl@ode.state.or.us](mailto:Tanya.Frisendahl@ode.state.or.us) or 503-947-5754.

### Resources Added to the Educator Effectiveness Toolkit

Two new resources have been added to the [Educator Effectiveness Toolkit](#) on the ODE website.

#### [What does my district need to do?](#)

This document outlines a process districts can choose to follow to complete their evaluation and support system assurance in time for the July 1, 2013 deadline. It is offered as a model, not a requirement. For each step, Actions and Resources are offered with hyperlinks to materials that districts may find helpful.

#### [Template for District Evaluation and Support Systems](#)

This template was created to offer a format for districts to use as they develop their evaluation and support system. It provides a blank shell for districts to fill in. It is provided as a model only, and is not required.

### Round 2 Training Dates

- **April 3, 2013:**  
Region 1 - Multnomah ESD
- **April 9, 2013:**  
Region 3 - Lane Community College
- **April 11, 2013:**  
Region 4 - Douglas ESD
- **April 15, 2013:**  
Region 2 – Northwest Regional ESD
- **April 22, 2013:** Region 6 - Pendleton Convention Center
- **April 23, 2013:** Region 7 - Malheur ESD
- **April 24, 2013:** Region 5 – Eagle Crest Resort

## Teacher Talk

Articles and Resources Relating to Curriculum, Instruction, Special Programs, and More...

### Common Core Regional Training Sessions

The statewide Regional Training Series “Oregon in Action” for district and school leaders of CCSS offers trainings on the Common Core State Standards in both English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics. Sessions are scheduled in seven locations around the state in the month of April. [Click here](#) for a flyer. [Click here](#) to register.

**Who Should Attend?** Teachers, Instructional Coaches, PLC Leads, Department Chairs, and School or District Administrators who would like to plan for instructional best practices within the CCSS.

### Updated IIA Guidance

The purpose of Title II, Part A is to increase student academic achievement by promoting strategies that will positively impact teacher and principal effectiveness. Activities funded through IIA must adhere to the following priorities:

- Improve the effectiveness of teachers and principals,
- Achieve equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals,
- Support targeted professional development based on identified needs.

As a result of the receipt of Oregon’s conditional ESEA waiver, there are now both state and federal requirements for college and career ready standards as well as educator evaluation systems in Oregon. ODE has updated its guidance on allowable activities under Title IIA for both the CCSS and Educator Evaluation Systems to reflect the increased flexibility:

- [CCSS Guidance](#)
- [Educator Evaluation Systems](#)

### Entering Freshman Profiles

The Entering Freshman Profile is created for each Oregon high school to provide information about student performance at Oregon University System (OUS) institutions. The profile looks at students who graduated from an Oregon high school and attended an OUS institution as first-time freshmen during the subsequent academic year. The report includes information on where students are going in OUS, how they performed in high school, and how well they did in their first year at OUS. The Entering Freshman Profile reports for the high school graduating class of 2011 have now been released. Reports are available by high school, district, or state at: <http://www.ous.edu/dept/ir/hsprofile>.

### NAEP Releases New Study on Math Course Content and Rigor

In March, NAEP released the [Mathematics Curriculum Study](#), an analysis of high school algebra I and geometry textbooks to identify the actual course content. NAEP conducted this study because [previous research](#) showed that high school graduates in 2005 earned more mathematics credits, took higher level mathematics courses, and obtained higher grades in mathematics courses than in 1990. However, these improvements in students’ academic records were not reflected in twelfth-grade NAEP mathematics and science scores. [Findings](#) from the current study showed that at least 10% of algebra I and geometry classes focused on elementary and middle school math; that 73% of participants in an “honors” algebra I course received an intermediate level curriculum; and that school course titles often overstated course content and challenge. For more information about NAEP research, contact Beth LaDuca, NAEP State Coordinator, at 503-947-5836 or [beth.laduca@state.or.us](mailto:beth.laduca@state.or.us).

## Student Wellness

Articles and Resources on Student Health, Wellness, Safety, and More...

### The Rational Enquirer

*Information provided by the Adolescent Health Section, Oregon Public Health*

**The Rational Enquirer**, a publication of the Oregon Teen Pregnancy Task Force, is an annual publication on youth sexual health. The publication informs youth on a wide array of topics related to sexual health and can be used to spark discussions about healthy sexuality. The Rational Enquirer presents facts, information, and personal stories on healthy relationships, decision-making, contraception, sexually-transmitted infections, gender identity, etc. Youth writers contribute to The Rational Enquirer every year.

The Rational Enquirer can be used as a tool for discussion in high-school sexuality education classes. Articles can be used as a starting point for a debate in a social studies class or students can be encouraged to submit articles as a writing assignment. This year's edition has articles on improving communication with your boyfriend or girlfriend, social networking safety, information on sexually transmitted infections, and birth control methods.

The Rational Enquirer is distributed free of charge to high-school health education teachers, school nurses, school-based health centers, and youth-serving organizations. To see past editions go to <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/ah/re/re.shtml>. The 2013 edition will be released in late April. If you would like to order multiple copies of the 2013 "RE" for use in your classroom, please send an e-mail to [jessica.duke@state.or.us](mailto:jessica.duke@state.or.us) with the number of copies you would like.

### Mandatory PE by 2017: How Are We Doing?

*Information provided by the Oregon Public Health Division*

The 2011-12 Oregon physical education data was released in late February. This latest report suggests that Oregon schools have a long way to go before meeting the requirement to provide 150 minutes of PE per week for students in grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week for grades 6-8 by the 2017-18 school year. House Bill 3141 (now ORS 329.496) was passed in 2007, with 10 years given to ramp up PE programs. Now, 5 years later, these goals seem further from reach.

Findings from the new report indicate that the average minutes for PE offered in grades K-5 has stayed relatively the same compared with 2008-09, when the data was first collected. The minutes provided to 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students have actually decreased and increases at 6<sup>th</sup> grade are minimal.

Since Oregon passed the PE law in 2007, schools have had tough choices to make. Physical education teachers and programs are often among the first to be cut during critical funding decisions. For Oregon to meet the 2017 mandate, the overall health and academic contributions of physical education will need to be recognized, valued, and supported. [Click here](#) to read the full article.

### Walk+Bike Challenge

Reason #1 to [Sign up for the Walk+Bike Challenge](#): Getting kids walking and biking to school [can increase their concentration level](#). You, by encouraging walking and biking, are supporting academic performance.

Sign your school up for the Walk+Bike Challenge, a free event for schools, and give our kids a better chance in school.

[Click here to read about reasons to sign up, more about the Challenge, and the free incentives you'll receive.](#)



## Legal Corner

Articles and Resources on Rules, Statutes, Policy, Numbered Memos, and More...

### 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade OAKS Writing Assessment

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade OAKS Writing assessments **will not** be returning for the 2013-14 school year. Over the past few weeks, ODE has received a strong message from the field in a variety of venues that those assessments should not be administered during the 2013-14 school year. The 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade OAKS Writing assessments will return for the 2013-14 school year. As districts prepare for the Common Core State Standards, it's important to continue measuring students' writing ability locally in order to address any knowledge and skill gaps effectively. Please contact Derek Brown if you have any questions at 503-947-5841 or [derek.brown@state.or.us](mailto:derek.brown@state.or.us).

### Executive Memo Update

Since the last issue of Education Update, ODE has released one numbered memo. An overview of the memo is provided below.

On March 8, 2013 the State Board of Education adopted OAR 581-022-2130 which directs all school districts to administer the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment to students enrolled in kindergarten beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

At the state level, this assessment will help answer the following questions:

- Are Oregon's children arriving at kindergarten ready to learn?
- Is their level of school readiness improving or declining over time?
- Are there disparities between groups of children that must be addressed?
- Are there particular areas of school readiness that Oregon must target?

At the student level, the assessment is designed to provide parents and teachers with a common understanding of what children know and are able to do upon entering kindergarten. This type of information can help teachers target instruction to meet students' individual learning needs. [Click here](#) to access the full memo.

### State Board of Education March Actions



At their March meeting, the State Board took the following actions:

- Approved the REALMS Charter School waiver request
- Denied the Oregon Virtual Education Charter School (East & West) waiver request
- Approved January 2013 minutes
- Approved Commissioner Out-of-State Travel
- Approved the following Community College Programs:
  - Chemeketa Community College: Human and Social Services NonTraditional Health Worker (certificate of completion)
  - Portland Community College: Emergency Telecommunications Service Dispatcher (certificate of completion)
  - Portland Community College: Environmental Landscape Technician (AAS degree)
  - Umpqua Community College: Medical Office Administration (AAS degree & certificate of competency)
- Approved Spring 2013 Bond Sale – Columbia Gorge Community College Capital Construction
- Adopted Kindergarten Readiness Assessment OAR 581-022-2130
- Approved ODE Affirmative Action Plan

## Upcoming Opportunities

Articles and Resources on Scholarships, Grants, Professional Development, and More...

### SAT Readiness WebEx: Resources For Schools, Rigor For Students

WebEx attendees will learn how to effectively use free and low-cost resources created by the SAT test makers which help students perform their best on test day. We will discuss successful approaches to preparing students for the SAT that range from classroom integration of College Board materials to independent self-paced study. Participants will also learn how to combine school-level and student-level data from the PSAT with College Board resources, resulting in efficient and effective improvement in critical academic skills and content knowledge.

**The SAT WebEx will be offered:**

- Thursday, April 4, 2013 at 3:00pm. [Click here](#) to join the WebEx.
- Thursday, April 11, 2013 at 12:00pm. [Click here](#) to join the WebEx.

### Mentoring Grant Application

The Beginning Teacher and Administrator Mentoring Program Request for Application for the 2013-14 school year is now available on [ODE's Mentoring webpage](#). The Oregon Department of Education will be hosting a [webinar](#) to provide information and answer questions on April 8 from 4:00-5:00 pm. Mentoring Grant allocations are dependent upon legislative funding. Contact Tanya Frisendahl at [tanya.frisendahl@state.or.us](mailto:tanya.frisendahl@state.or.us) for more information.

### CCSS Gates Grant

The Gates Foundation is offering a grant to support middle and high school teacher networks in incorporating and implementing the Common Core. **Proposals are due April 22.** [Click here](#) to learn more.

### Copyright Workshop for Educators & Librarians

Don't have a licensed librarian on staff who monitors copyright adherence at your school? Educators with questions about copyright might be interested in an online workshop sponsored by the American Library Association. The workshop, "Copyright for K-12 Librarians and Educators," costs \$55 and is scheduled for Thursday, April 11 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. The workshop will offer guidance on ways to legally provide materials to students by exploring scenarios often encountered by educators in schools. For more information and to register, go to: <http://bit.ly/ZnohiD>.

### Youth Photo Contest

Oregon youth are invited to reveal their perspective on health during the fifth annual "The Way I See It" youth photo contest. The theme of this year's contest is *Healthy Beginnings* « *Healthy Communities*. Oregon youth between the ages of 12 and 18 are eligible to submit photos exploring the interconnection between healthy beginnings and healthy communities. In other words, how ensuring prevention early on - healthy babies, healthy children, healthy youth - is critical to ensuring good community health for everyone.

Contest winners will be announced in mid-May and will receive cash prizes (\$300 for 1st place, \$200 for 2nd and \$100 for 3rd). The contest is now open and entries can be submitted until midnight on April 28. Complete contest rules and submission instructions can be found at [www.nwhf.org/photocontest](http://www.nwhf.org/photocontest). For more information contact Jennifer Young at 971-673-0245 or [jennifer.l.young@state.or.us](mailto:jennifer.l.young@state.or.us)