

## menu December 2017 Education Update

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# Oregon Achieves... Together!

## A Message from Acting Deputy Superintendent Colt Gill



**Colt Gill**

Students who regularly attend school have a far greater opportunity to learn and progress. In Oregon, however, many students are absent 10 percent or more school days, robbing them of these opportunities. Some of Oregon's highest rates of chronic absenteeism are at kindergarten and first grade, which can impact how soon a student learns to read. That is critical because there's a direct correlation between reading by third grade and graduating from high school on-time.

In the 2016-17 school year, more than 108,000 students in Oregon were chronically absent from school. That ranks us near the bottom of states nationally. And, it is a statistic that has gotten worse year after year for the last three years. It is a dramatic statistic, almost one in five students missing 10 percent or more of their education each year.

There is no point in placing blame. This is a problem we all need to own; it is ours. And it is our shared responsibility to find solutions. Our children deserve a future that is not eclipsed by a limited opportunity to learn and graduate with a path to a fulfilling future. We (educators, families and communities) all have a stake in making sure our students are in school and engaged in learning.

When nearly 20 percent of all students are missing this much school, we should be clear that this is a universal problem in Oregon. However, the statistics get worse for some of the students we serve. Nearly a quarter of our economically disadvantaged students are chronically absent. Almost 27 percent of our students with disabilities are chronically absent. Over 30 percent of our Native American/Alaska Native students experience chronic absenteeism. These are among the student groups our systems struggle to serve well. It is imperative that students in these communities feel welcome in school as well as experience curriculum and practices that are both engaging and culturally responsive, so that they know their school is a place that cares about them, their

future, and their success.

In 2017 the Oregon Legislature provided \$7.4 million for one of Governor Brown's priority efforts to impact graduation outcomes: [The Chronic Absenteeism Statewide Plan](#). The plan works to curb chronic absenteeism in four ways:

First is an awareness campaign that will be launched later this school year. We want to ensure everyone understands the negative impact of chronic absenteeism, but more importantly the opportunity education provides with regular attendance. There are many reasons students miss school, but we know that we can improve attendance dramatically when certain things are in place, such as reliable transportation, a welcoming and safe environment, access to health care, an engaging and culturally relevant curriculum, quality teaching, and positive student-to-student and student-to-staff relationships.

Second is coaching and systems review and support offered to specific school districts statewide that are highly impacted by chronic absenteeism. These include 20-30 districts of varying sizes where high rates of chronic absenteeism are impacting student outcomes. ODE will offer coaching support to staff and help initiate strategies proven to improve school attendance.

Third is professional development for systems review and support that will be delivered to districts through a regional approach. This will be inclusive of community input and partnership so that it is flexible enough to support our diverse communities across Oregon.

Fourth is technical assistance and best practice guidelines, providing all districts with on-demand answers to questions, vetted resources and access to local best practices and lessons learned.

Our plan relies on strong partnerships with local and state health agencies, community organizations, business leaders and others to provide essential support that addresses the root causes of chronic absenteeism.

We know these strategies can work because we are already seeing evidence of success. [Oakridge School District](#) is experiencing good results with its Strive For Five program, which encourages students to miss fewer than five days per year. A key component has been getting the community involved in reinforcing the importance of regularly attending class. Schools like Willamina, which is part of the [Tribal Attendance Pilot Project \(TAPP\)](#), have also seen significant improvements in attendance. This project was initiated last year to improve attendance among American Indian/Alaska Native students.

Chronic absenteeism is a complex problem that won't be eliminated overnight, but we have the tools to improve and provide more opportunities for our students. This plan offers schools strategies and interventions that we know can have a significant impact in keeping students in school, engaged in learning and on track for graduation. The plan is inclusive of all partners and schools. I hope you can find a way to participate.



## Addressing Chronic Absenteeism Key to Improving

# Graduation Rates

Students who are chronically absent from school – defined as missing 10 percent or more days of school in a year – are far more likely to face negative outcomes such as dropping out, not graduating or even juvenile justice contacts. That’s why Governor Kate Brown, the Oregon Legislature and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) are making it a priority to reduce the state’s high rate of chronic absenteeism.

We have a [Chronic Absenteeism State Plan](#) to guide the work and lawmakers approved \$7.4-million for the current biennium to fund strategies to combat the problem. While the rate of chronic absenteeism is high for all students in Oregon, it’s disproportionately high for some specific student groups such as American Indian/Alaska Native, students with disabilities, students of color and students experiencing economic disadvantages. Addressing the problem will require partnerships with local and state health agencies, community based organizations, community and business members and families.

One such partnership is already showing some success. The [Tribal Attendance Pilot Projects \(TAPP\)](#) bring together nine school districts and each of the nine federally recognized Native American tribes to bring family advocates into schools to help address chronic absenteeism. In its first year, 10 of the 17 schools who had TAPP family advocates saw improved chronic absenteeism rates compared to the year before. TAPP received funding to continue for the current biennium and we look forward to sharing more as their work continues.

There is a lot of information about chronic absenteeism on the ODE website. We have a [Chronic Absenteeism page](#) which includes an FAQ and research and there is a [chronic absenteeism one-pager](#) on the [Graduation Improvement page](#).



## Accountability and School Improvement 2017-2018 District Supports

Earlier this fall, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) shared an update regarding the Oregon Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)’s accountability system, including how schools will be identified for Comprehensive (CSI) and Targeted (TSI) supports. This message provides an updated timeline and supporting information related to the new accountability model.

December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ODE staff will conduct initial outreach to superintendents in school districts with a significant number of preliminarily identified CSI and TSI schools*;</li> <li>Outreach will include an invitation for school districts to participate in an improvement partnership aimed at engagement protocols for examining state and local data.</li> </ul>
January – February 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School districts that elect to engage in an improvement partnership with ODE will receive small grants to support initial planning meetings.</li> </ul>
March – June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ODE staff and partners will provide support and technical assistance on engagement protocols to aid district leadership in determining improvement priorities and next steps.</li> </ul>
October 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ODE will formally identify CSI and TSI schools;</li> <li>ODE staff will conduct outreach to superintendents in all districts that have identified CSI and TSI schools.</li> </ul>

\*The District and School Effectiveness team is unable to include all Oregon districts with suggested CSI/TSI schools in the preliminary outreach for the 2017-2018 school year.

#### Alternative Schools

- ODE continues to refine the state model and approach for accountability and support for alternative schools;
- ODE is committed to reengaging stakeholders to ensure the new accountability model and the models for improvement meet the needs of districts who have alternative or non-traditional schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support.

#### CSI Schools

- Bottom 10% (Level 1) for at least half of the rated indicators for all students

#### TSI Schools

- Bottom 10% (Level 1) for at least half of the rated indicators for specific student groups

#### Indicators used to identify schools:

- Chronic Absenteeism
- ELA/Math Achievement
- ELA/Math Growth
- EL Progress/ EL Proficiency
- 9th Grade-on-Track
- 4-Year Graduation
- 5-Year Graduation
- 5-Year Completer

Thank you for your continued service to Oregon and Oregon's students. If you have additional questions, please contact [Tim Boyd](#) or [Shawna Moran](#).

# Equity Focus: Holidays & Celebrations By Darryl Tukufu

Educators! December is a month that presents multiple “teachable moments.” This is the month where many of you and/or your students may celebrate one or more holidays and/or religious celebrations, which offers great opportunities for teaching about our multicultural world.

Some of the celebrations and events that will happen this year:

- Fiesta of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexican)
- St. Lucia Day (Swedish)
- Hanukkah (Jewish)
- Christmas Day (Christian)
- Mawlid (Islam)
- Omisoka (Japanese)
- Yule (German)
- Kwanzaa (African American)

You can go online to Education World or simply Google the holiday and/or celebration, and you will find a great deal of information about the specific celebration days, the origin, concepts, and practice.

Let’s look at one in which you may not be too familiar:

## Habari Gani? -- What's the news?

Learn about Kwanzaa, the world's fastest growing holiday, with activities that include the following:

- Label an Africa map
- Make a Kwanzaa game
- Colorful flags
- Kwanzaa word search
- Weave a Kwanzaa mat
- Plus more lessons!

It is very interesting about Kwanzaa. December 26th will start the first day of the 52nd year of this celebration. As a young teenager, I was in Los Angeles and a member of Us Organization, founded by Dr. Maulana Karenga, who is also the founder of Kwanzaa. I have been celebrating Kwanzaa for 51 years.

There were only about 40 or 50 people involved in my first year, 1967, but during the development days, some of us were able to make contributions to the celebration or simply participate. Kwanzaa grew and spread from Los Angeles to San Diego, from the Bay area to Newark and New York, over to Philadelphia, jumping to Chicago and New Orleans, and then over about a five-year span moving throughout the country. The first Kwanzaa celebration in Oregon was in 1971. It still continues today, at least the public ceremonies, at centers in Portland. It has always been difficult to determine how many individual households celebrate this holiday. I have celebrated and/or participated in Kwanzaa public programs in 11 cities over the years.

Kwanzaa, according to Education World, is considered the fastest growing holiday in the world. And, yes, in many places there is a diverse population. Celebrations can be found in places with a substantial biracial and/or multicultural population such as Oregon and Minnesota in the United States, and Canada and Europe. Over the years, I have seen many individuals -- largely White but certainly not omitting other race and ethnic groups -- that may have wed into predominantly African-American families or have close African-American friends, attend public programs or individual family celebrations. It is also celebrated in some places in the Caribbean, South America, and the African continent.

Thus, if you celebrate any holiday, "Happy Holidays!" If it's Kwanzaa, I say, "Kwanzaa yenu iwe na heri (may your Kwanzaa be filled with joy)!"

## Guidance Available on Educator Evaluations for 2017-2018

In June 2017, the State Board of Education adopted revisions to OAR 581-022-1723, which describes the requirements for teacher and administrator evaluation and support. These revisions were informed by recommendations provided by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) [Educator Effectiveness Work Group](#). A one-page document entitled [Guidance for Educator Evaluations for 2017-18](#) is available in the [Educator Effectiveness Toolkit](#) to aid districts in their planning for evaluations for the 2017-18 school year. [Oregon's Framework for Teacher and Administrator Evaluations](#) as well as other Oregon Department of Education (ODE)-provided guidance have also been updated to reflect these changes. Please contact [Sarah Martin](#), Education Specialist, with any questions.

## North Clackamas School District, Lake Health District Awarded for Summer Meal Programs for Students

In November 2017, two Summer Food Service Program sponsors in Oregon were selected by the United States Department of Agriculture Western Regional Office (USDA WRO) as Summer Sunshine Awards award recipients. The Summer Sunshine Award is a competitive award that recognizes outstanding achievements of individuals and organizations who, through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or Seamless Summer Option (SSO), provide nutritious summer meals to children in the Western Region states.

North Clackamas School District (NCSD) and Lake Health District both received the Summer Sunshine award for "Successful and Innovative Community Partnerships." This year, the award review panel included representatives from USDA WRO as well as the Food and Research Action Center (FRAC), Share our Strength, Feeding America, and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Office of Community Food Systems. Each awardee will receive a certificate, banner and SFSP promotion materials.

NCSD partnered with more than 10 organizations, including Providence Health Services who provided enrichment through healthy eating and physical activities. This partnership was formed during a Summer Meals Partner meeting involving summer meal sponsors and partner organizations in January 2017. This meeting was presented by Oregon Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs (ODE CNP), Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon (PHFO), USDA WRO, and FRAC. In addition to offering enrichment opportunities, NCSD was able to add 3 new meal sites with the help of district partnerships. NCSD also brought in an intern through PHFO to assist with summer meal outreach in 2017.

The summer of 2017 was the first time that Lake Health District participated in the summer meal program. The last time a summer meals site was available in Lake County was in 2014. Additionally, Lake Health District was the only summer meal sponsor in Lake County and operated five meal sites in its inaugural year. They partnered with over 15 organizations, including Lake County SD 7, and at least 80 volunteers to reach children last summer. In addition to offering summer meals, Lake Health District offered enrichment opportunities through numerous partners, including garden-related activities and bike safety.

NCSD, Providence Health Services and Lake Health District were recipients of Start-up and Expansion Grants for At-Risk Afterschool and Summer Meal Programs through ODE CNP. NCSD and Lake Health District also received Summer Meals Support Fund grants from PHFO. Both of these grants assist in funding various strategies meant to increase participation in these child nutrition programs.

A new funding cycle has begun and Start-up and Expansion Grants for At-risk Afterschool and Summer Meal Programs are available for up to \$20,000 per organization for the 2017-2019 state biennium. These funds may be used to reimburse food service equipment, outreach materials, enrichment materials, and some staff costs to expand access to At-risk Afterschool and Summer Meals. For more information on the Start-up and Expansion Grants for At-risk Afterschool and Summer Meal programs and/or Summer Meal Partner meetings, please contact [Cathy Brock](#) at (503) 947-5898.

## Oakridge Principal: Formative Assessment Is an Exciting Opportunity

Oakridge Elementary School is located in the Oakridge School District in Lane County, Oregon, serving 300 students in grades kindergarten through 6th grade. Oakridge Elementary only had 16 teachers when it started using formative assessment tools last year. Now, according to Principal Tiffany O'Donnell, "We have a building of instructional leaders."

O'Donnell says the move to using formative assessment practices happened because of an Oregon Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (OFAST) grant which provided materials and training for the teachers over the course of the 2016-17 school year. (All of the OFAST materials and other resources can be found by [clicking here and selecting Formative Assessment.](#))

The school started small by focusing on applying formative assessment practices in math, where they had consistently struggled to improve student achievement. After reflecting on the year and the successes they saw, the teachers were energized and elected to expand the practice to reading as well. In addition, the evidence of impact was contagious and by the end of the year teachers wanted to see the formative assessment practices expanded to the Junior High and High School.

One specific strategy the school adopted through the project was involving students in monitoring their progress. Now every student has a data notebook where reading and math progress as well as attendance data is recorded. Meetings between the teacher and student allow teachers to look at this information "before it's too late" rather than relying on summative results. O'Donnell says the combined focus on formative assessment practices and improving attendance—though better data collection and a community focus on Strive for Five (missing less than 5 percent of school days)—resulted in cutting the district's chronic absenteeism rate in half.

Although the OFAST grant is over, O'Donnell is committed to sustaining the work. She convened teachers over the summer for additional training time and has applied for a rural grant to expand the work. Her message to other districts? Talk to a school that participated in the OFAST project\* and consider partnerships with one of these schools or districts to learn more about the benefit. She says formative assessment can really help rural districts. "I can see a difference in student ownership of learning," she said.

## State Board Approves Vision Screening Rules

At its December 7 meeting, the State Board of Education [approved rules on vision screening related to Senate Bill 187](#), which was passed by lawmakers earlier this year. The law requires that the Oregon Department of Education create a process by which a person or nonprofit entity is designated by the Department of Education to provide vision screening and establish the process for providing reimbursement to education providers to help cover the cost of vision screenings.

According to [a letter submitted by the Oregon Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation](#), “25 percent of all children have an undiagnosed vision problem significant enough to affect their performance in school.” The goal of SB 187 and the rules approved by the State Board is to help detect those problems as early as possible.

## Colt Gill to Address Whole Child Summit

Acting Deputy Superintendent Colt Gill is scheduled to speak at the Confederation of School Administrators (COSA)'s 3rd Annual Whole Child Summit in Portland on January 19. The event focuses on students dealing with trauma in their lives and how to make sure they succeed in the classroom. Laura van Dernoot Lipsky, founder and director of the Trauma Stewardship Institute, will also present at the conference, which includes several breakout sessions. [Click here for more information on the summit](#) and a link to register for the event. You can read more about Trauma Informed Practices on the [Graduation improvement page of the ODE website](#).



## Bend High Teacher Receives Milken Educator Award for \$25,000

In a Dec. 12 all-school assembly in front of her students, colleagues, and distinguished community members, Bend Senior High School math teacher Andria Lindsey was surprised with the prestigious Milken Educator Award for the state of Oregon and a gift check of \$25,000.

Lindsey is one of up to 44 recipients across the country who will receive the honor during the 2017-18 school year, and the only recipient for Oregon. The Milken Award recognizes exemplary elementary and secondary school teachers, principals, and specialists who are furthering excellence in education. She is the 79th recipient of the award since Oregon joined the program in 1990, and joins a network of more than 2,600 K-12 educators from across the country.

Lindsey has been a math teacher at Bend Senior High School since 2005, and for the past four years has taken on the role of International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Coordinator. She has taught and supported students from entry-level math courses up through IB Calculus, and much of her success can be attributed to her emphasis on relationship building with students and making math approachable and fun. Lindsey established Bend High's math lab to support students, as well as a middle school tutoring program that connects high school students with middle school students. She serves her colleagues and professional community as a teacher coach and mentor, math department head, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) trainer, and member of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

“Andria’s passion and dedication to teaching and learning is second to none,” said Bend High School Principal Christopher Reese. “Her number one priority is to create a classroom climate that is warm, inviting, safe and secure, and that is built on trust. Bend Senior High School is a better place because of her. She is an asset to education and an absolutely phenomenal teacher.”

Andria was presented with the Milken Educator Award by Dr. Jane Foley, senior vice president of the Milken



Family Foundation, and Acting Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction Colt Gill.

“Andria models the attitudes and high standards she desires to see reflected in her students, and as a result is highly regarded by students and staff alike,” said Gill. “I applaud Andria on this well-deserved honor and her commitment to inspire excellence, change lives, and shape the future.”

Be sure to visit [Andria Lindsey's page](#) on the Milken website!

## Yamhill Carlton High School Educator Named Oregon Small Schools Association Teacher of the Year

The Oregon Small Schools Association (OSSA) named Yamhill Carlton High School's Jordan Slavish as its 2018 Teacher of the Year. Slavish came to the school four years ago as a math teacher, but has willingly embraced new projects. He is an important part of the Yamhill Carlton Career Academy, which joins academics and industry partnerships and focuses on students interested in agriculture and/or manufacturing careers. According to Principal Gregory Neuman, the school's Agriculture Drone program, which Slavish co-leads with a school parent, started at the Academy.

The Agricultural Drone program began through the request of a local farmer who wanted to involve students in developing drones to survey his crops. Slavish immediately began to gather information, resources and students for the project. Principal Neuman said the Agriculture Drone system that resulted from this program is the envy of other school districts as well as professionals in the field. It “gives students real-world experiences in a field that not only provides high-wage, high-demand employment opportunities down the road, but is also incredibly engaging for students and a real source of pride for our school and community,” Neuman said.

Through the drone program, Slavish came up with the idea to start a rocketry program at Yamhill Carlton High School as well. Using the Systems Go Rocketry curriculum, Slavish and a fellow educator co-teach the program.

Slavish said he is honored to receive the OSSA Teacher of the Year recognition. “Small schools have so much to offer our students, and I'm proud to be able to provide unique opportunities to my students. I'm just one part of the YC family, and this recognition speaks to the hard work that everyone at our district puts in every day. From rockets to drones to recording studios, our philosophy is that students can learn faster than we can teach them -- sometimes it's just a matter of putting the tools in front of them and stepping out of the way,” Slavish said.

Slavish received his award on Nov. 11 at the OSSA event during the Oregon School Boards Association Annual Convention in Portland.

## Child Care Contribution Tax Credit Available

Don't miss out! The Early Learning Division (ELD) still has \$944,148.55 in available tax credits for 2017. By making a contribution to the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit program, an individual or company receives an Oregon state tax credit of 50 cents for each dollar contributed. These contributions are used to financially support quality improvements for child care businesses throughout Oregon, support the early learning workforce, and help children start school ready to succeed. Contributors are ultimately supporting a statewide early learning system that is safe, high quality, and accessible. Any individual or company with an Oregon state tax liability is eligible to contribute. [Please visit the ELD website](#) for more information and fillable contribution forms. The deadline for submitting a contribution for 2017 is December 31, however, you can still contribute beyond that date for a 2018 credit. Contact Program Development Specialist [Sandy Gorsage](#) at 503-947-3121 for more information.

# Oregon Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program



On Nov. 17, Oregon's six semifinalists for the [United States Senate Youth Program](#) convened in Salem for a day of networking with public officials, touring the Capitol, and learning about education policy. The highlight of the day was a meet and greet with Governor Kate Brown, who engaged them in a conversation around their next steps following high school. Pictured above from left to right: Ryan Laws from Crater Academy of Health and Public Services, Emma Empol from South Medford High School, Enrique Flores from South Salem High School, Governor Kate Brown, Maya Bedge from Westview High School, Kelly Han from Westview High School, and Harrison Schreiber from Crescent

Valley High School.

On Dec. 8, Enrique Flores and Kelly Han were notified of their selection as state delegates for the program. As delegates, Enrique and Kelly will each receive a \$10,000 college scholarship for undergraduate studies, with encouragement to pursue coursework in history and political science, as well as attend an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. March 3-10, 2018. While in Washington, student delegates from across the nation will attend meetings and briefings with members of Congress, Congressional staff, the President, a justice of the Supreme Court, leaders of cabinet agencies, an ambassador to the United States and senior members of the national media. Congratulations, Enrique and Kelly!

## Adapting Vroom for Diverse Developmental Needs

Check out this brief [tutorial video](#) that demonstrates how the fun Vroom brain-building tips can be adapted for children with diverse developmental needs. Topics include social-emotional development and building empathy. Have a look! Please contact the Oregon Vroom Coordinator for additional information about Vroom and for free Vroom materials at [ari.wubbold@state.or.us](mailto:ari.wubbold@state.or.us).



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