

# Education Update



## Rob's Blog

Message from Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction Rob Saxton

Welcome back from Spring Break! As we head into the final months of the school year, I want to discuss a topic that has received a great deal of attention over the last few weeks – student instructional hours.

This month, districts around the state will be submitting their Division 22 Assurance Forms to the Department, and one of the elements superintendents and school boards will be signing off on are the requirements around minimum instructional hours and minimum course hours.

While submitting these forms may seem like a routine exercise, the requirements and all that they represent are far from routine. This is our state's commitment to student learning, to ensuring that our children have access to at least a set minimum of instructional time, and I have been pleased with the increased focus this issue has received.

I know that the recent Portland Public Schools instructional hours complaint and ensuing report has prompted a great deal of conversation around the state as well as a deeper examination of what these requirements mean and why they are important. Oregon has tended to have a shorter school year and longer summer than most other states and as a result our students have less access to instruction and less of an opportunity to learn than many of their peers around the country. I know that this is a situation we would all like to see reversed.

The minimum requirements around instructional hours and course hours are just that – minimums. With the budget constraints districts have faced over the last decade, I know many have struggled to meet the minimums, but as we move forward, I hope that districts will see these numbers not as a target but as a baseline. As our state strives to meet rigorous educational goals and prepare students for a rapidly changing world, we need to look beyond the minimums and find ways to not only meet but exceed these expectations.

As you finish up your review of your instructional hours in preparation for submitting your assurances, I would like to ask you two things. First, I would ask that you do a careful review of your hours this year and review the Portland Public report if you have any questions about how to interpret the requirements. I know that when I was a superintendent I had always believed my district was in compliance. I have since learned that we were a few hours under the 130 hour requirement. So I encourage you to take the time to double check the math and ensure you are in compliance. Second, if you learn that you are out of compliance with either the yearly instructional hours or the course hour requirement, you must report that on your assurance form and submit a plan for how you will be back in compliance for this coming school year. I know there are several districts that will be in that situation and ODE is here to offer technical assistance to districts working to get back into compliance. For more on this, see page 5 of this newsletter.

I know first-hand the complexities of school calendars and what it takes to adjust them, and I appreciate everything you and your teams do to maximize instructional learning time for our students.

Thanks for all you do,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Saxton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## Steps to Success

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

### Oregon DATA Project Resources

An intense series of DATA trainings around the state has added to the library of resources available from [Direct Access to Achievement](#). Recent one-day data retreats held at the request of districts in Salem, Woodburn, and The Dalles, as well as visits to participating schools in Hood River and La Grande have resulted in new videos, updated training guides, and shared data team/PLC documents. Click the links below to view posted videos:

- [The Grade Alike Team process](#)
- [Crockpots and Results Indicators](#)
- [Third-grade PLC meeting](#)

### Oregon Adopts the Next Generation Science Standards



On March 6, 2014, the Oregon State Board of Education (SBE) voted unanimously to adopt the Next Generation Science

Standards (NGSS) as the new Oregon Science Standards. The adoption includes the [grade level middle school science standards sequence](#) unanimously recommended by the Oregon Science Content and Assessment Panel. You can access the Oregon [NGSS review report](#) and materials provided to the SBE as well as the [archived video](#) of the meeting on the [SBE website](#).

It is important to remember that the new Oregon Science Standards will be phased in so that districts can implement changes in local curriculum, provide appropriate professional development for teachers and administrators, and provide students with opportunities to learn the content, practices, and cross-cutting concepts prior to assessment. Oregon students will continue to be assessed on the Oregon 2009 Science Content Standards via OAKS Science until a new science assessment that aligns with the newly adopted standards is developed and becomes operational in 2018-2019.

More detailed information is [available online](#). If you have questions, please contact [Cheryl Kleckner](#). For science assessment information or questions, please contact [Rachel Aazzerah](#).

### Round 2 of PLT Conferences

This month Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) will participate in the second round of ODE-provided professional learning conferences to learn, develop, and share strategies for successful implementation of Educator Effectiveness and the Common Core. Conferences are scheduled to be held around the state in the following locations:

**La Grande** - April 3-4, 2014, Eastern Oregon University ([Click here](#) to register)

**Eugene** - April 10-11, 2014, Eugene Hilton/Hult Center ([Click here](#) to register)

**Portland** - April 17-18, 2014, Sheraton Portland Airport ([Click here](#) to register)

Registered teams will be reimbursed 100% for the cost of their attendance at these conferences. District/ESD teams can register at the links above. Please contact [Sarah Phillips](#) or [Nicole Dalton](#) for more information.

### DATA Project Webinar

The last webinar in ODE's Direct Access to Achievement series, "What Difference Is this Making? Evaluating Program Effectiveness and Fidelity of Implementation" is set for Wednesday, April 23, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. For connection information, visit the Oregon DATA Project [webpage](#).

## Teacher Talk

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

### The Impact of SB 290

Oregon Districts have been assisted in the process of changing educator professional growth and support by [The Oregon Framework for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation and Support Systems](#), which provides state criteria that ensure local evaluation systems are rigorous and designed to support professional growth and continuous improvement. The required elements in Teacher and Administrator Evaluation and Support Systems are: Standards of Professional Practice; Differentiated Performance Levels; Multiple Measures; Evaluation and Professional Growth Cycle; and Aligned Professional Learning.

#### **Aligned Professional Learning**

While aligned professional learning is a term that may be new to many Oregon teachers, it combines the familiar practices of effective professional

development and data-based decision making. The key to aligned professional learning is that decisions about the learning opportunities teachers engage in are based on an examination of multiple sources of evidence related to teacher practice, including observations, collection of artifacts, self-reflection, and goal setting. This evidence provides a picture of the teacher's strengths and weaknesses and offers opportunities to make informed decisions regarding individual professional growth.

ODE is providing a variety of resources to support district professional learning plans. Districts received non-competitive grant funds based on ADMw for professional learning to support implementation of Educator Effectiveness and CCSS in their districts based on local needs. ODE has also developed webpages and toolkits to support both [Common Core State Standards](#) and [Educator Effectiveness](#). For more information please contact [Sarah Martin](#) at 503-947-5668 or [click here](#).

### Peer Review Panel

In 2014, all districts must present details and documentation of their local educator evaluation and support system to a regional Peer Review Panel (PRP). In this process, districts will receive targeted feedback and supports tailored to districts' needs and identify best practices. ODE will provide statewide professional learning opportunities and regional implementation support. Draft versions of the PRP Guidelines and Self-Appraisal Tool are now available on the [ODE website](#). You are invited to give your input on the PRP documents in an [online survey](#) to help enhance the process. For more information please contact [Sarah Phillips](#) at 503-947-5783.

### Early Childhood Grants

The Early Learning Professional Development Grants for 2014-15 have two purposes:

1. Expand and scale up partnerships involving community colleges to create early childhood stackable and portable certificates, credentials, and degree programs that prepare more non-traditional, dual-language educators and that support more seamless transitions from high school to degree completion.
2. Scale up AA degree programs to be flexible in meeting the needs of the existing early childhood workforce and provide a comprehensive array of supports to individuals completing degrees in Early Childhood Education.

The Department may award up to four grants totaling approximately \$400,000. The Request for Applications will be released on March 31, 2014 and are due no later than noon on May 12. On April 3 at 3:00 pm a webinar will be held to address any questions related to the funding opportunity. Please contact [Lisa Harnisch](#), Early Learning Division, with questions or visit the [ODE Strategic Initiatives](#) page for additional information.

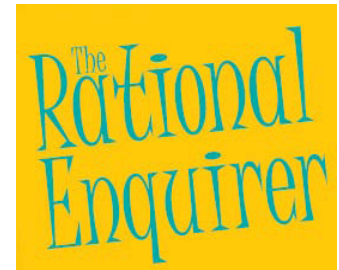
## Student Wellness

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

### The Rational Enquirer 2014

*Provided by Oregon Public Health*

The Rational Enquirer turns 19 years old in 2014. The Rational Enquirer is a youth focused publication written for teens, by teens on topics of identity, love, life, and sex. In addition to new articles, this year's edition takes a look back at articles throughout the years. These articles show that what is important to youth is as relevant today as in 1995. The Rational Enquirer is a great conversation starter between parents, adults, and youth around youth sexual health. It is important to support teens in making healthy positive choices to avoid negative outcomes, as well as supporting youth to have a social, physical, emotional, and mental well-being in their sexual health. Youth are involved in defining their own needs, sharing experiences and knowledge through the articles.



The new edition will be available in April of 2014 and is published once a year by the Oregon Teen Pregnancy Task Force. If you know of a teen that would like to submit an article for future publications, or if you would like to request a copy, contact [Lindsay Weaver](#). [Click here](#) to access current and past editions online.

### Awards Highlight Importance of Student and School Wellness

Lynch View Elementary (Centennial School District), Crescent Valley High School (Corvallis School District), and Lincoln Elementary (Corvallis School District) are the recipients of the 2014 Oregon School Wellness Awards. This is the seventh year of the awards which recognize outstanding school wellness programs around the state that creatively and effectively promote healthy student behavior.

“Student health and student learning are inextricably linked,” said Deputy Superintendent Rob Saxton. “These schools understand that vital connection and have created school environments that support and encourage student, staff, and family health through a focus on good nutrition, physical activity, and overall wellness. I want to congratulate Crescent Valley High School, Lincoln Elementary, and Lynch View Elementary for this well-deserved recognition.”

The Oregon Department of Education is joined in recognizing these schools by the Nutrition Education Services/Oregon Dairy Council which serves as the Title Sponsor for these awards. Each award recipient receives a \$2,500 cash prize, a banner, and a certificate of recognition to be presented at local school celebrations later this spring.

“Healthy students are better students,” said Anne Goetze, Director of Nutrition Education Services/Oregon Dairy Council. “Research shows that improved nutrition, daily breakfast, and increased physical activity can lead to improved academic performance. These schools are examples of what is possible when our students, staff, and communities truly embrace health and wellness as a tool to support student success.”

School Wellness Policies are required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture from school districts receiving federally-funded school meals. [Click here](#) for more information on the 2014 Oregon School Wellness Award recipients.



## Legal Corner

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

### March 6-7, 2014 State Board Actions

- Adopted Vision Screening Certification / Temporary Rule / OAR 581-021-0031
- Adopted Next Generation Science Standards
- Approved Jada Rupley as Early Learning Advisor to the Board
- Adopted Division 6 Course Approval / Temporary Rules / OAR 589-006-0050 & 589-006-0150
- Division 7 Programs / Temporary Rule / OAR 589-007-0400 and 589-007-0500
- Approved Eagle Charter School Request for Renewal
- Directed ODE staff to include recommended terms in negotiation of Eagle Charter School charter
- Approved Consent Agenda
  - January 2014 Minutes
  - Contracted-Out-of-District Reimbursement/OAR 589-002-0120
  - Community College Program Approval



### March 21, 2014 State Board Actions

- Adopted March 6-7, 2014, Minutes
- Adopted American Indian / Alaskan Native Culturally Relevant Teaching, Learning, and Pedagogy Grant / Temporary Rules / OAR 581-018-0520 to 581-018-0535
- Adopted Early Learning Professional Development Grant / Temporary Rules / OAR 581-018-0575 to 581-018-0590

## Instructional Hours

Earlier this month, ODE issued an Order regarding instructional hours in response to a complaint filed by a coalition of parents in Portland. At the heart of the parents' complaint was the question, was PPS providing the minimum instructional hours required under OARs 581-022-1160 and 581-022-1131. A copy of the Order can be found [here](#). The appeal also highlighted problems with the district's complaint process. OAR 581-022-1941 requires districts to "establish a process for the prompt resolution of a complaint by a person who resides in the district or by any parent or guardian of a student who attends school in the school district." The rule lays out specific elements that must be included in the complaint process.

Minimum instructional hours and complaint process requirements are all set forth in Division 22 of the Oregon Administrative Rules. Districts may apply for a waiver from the Division 22 standards under OAR 581-022-1920. If the State Board of Education determines the district will continue to meet the intent of the standards, the waiver may be granted. Waivers under OAR 581-022-1920 may be granted for up to one year. To apply for a waiver, districts should submit a written request to the State Board of Education Board Administrator, [Emily Nazarov](#).

## Earthquake Drills

Legislation passed in 2013 requires Oregon schools to participate in two earthquake drills a year and to instruct students on emergency procedures so that students can respond to an emergency without confusion or panic. One way school districts can fulfill this requirement is by registering for the Oregon ShakeOut, a statewide earthquake drill scheduled for October 16, 2014 at 10:14 a.m. Registration is easy and available at their [website](#). [Click here](#) for more information on the Shakeout. More information regarding the Legislation is available [here](#).

## Upcoming Opportunities

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

### Oregon Teacher of the Year

Since 1955, the Oregon Department of Education annually selects one outstanding individual to serve as an advocate for the teaching profession and Oregon's Teacher of the Year (TOY). Candidates for the Oregon TOY program are exceptionally dedicated, knowledgeable, and skilled public school educators in pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The Oregon Teacher of the Year has gained the respect and admiration of students, parents, and fellow educators, plays an active role in his or her community, and is distinguished as a leader in the profession.

Teachers may be nominated by a student, colleague, administrator, school or district committee, friend, or family member to apply for the award. We urge you to recommend an amazing teacher today. Please follow [this link](#) to nominate your teacher. Nominations for the 2015 Teacher of the Year are due **by the close of business on May 23, 2014**. Please contact [Lauren Slyh](#) with any questions. We are very excited about this year's selection process and the opportunity to celebrate amazing teaching in our state!

### Law Day Art Contest

The Oregon New Lawyers Division's Law Related Education Subcommittee announces the inaugural Law Day Art Contest, which gives students an opportunity to express their ideas about the importance of the right to vote. The art contest is open to all Oregon middle school and junior high students. Teachers may choose to integrate the contest into existing curriculum or encourage students to submit entries on their own. The deadline for submissions is May 1, 2014. For additional contest rules and information [click here](#).

### Reading is an Investment

There is still time to participate in this year's Reading is an Investment program, which runs through April 30. This program aims to promote literacy and financial education among K-5 elementary students in Oregon. Participants have a chance to win one of 50 Oregon College Savings Plan accounts, worth \$529 each. All entries must be postmarked by **April 30, 2014**. For more information please visit [ReadingIsAnInvestment.com](#). If you have any questions please contact [Stephanie Swetland](#) at 503-373-1903.

### Grant Proposals for Outdoor School

Since 2007, the [Gray Family Foundation](#) has supported students and teachers in connecting with the outdoors through a variety of environmental literacy experiences. Funding goals for the Outdoor Program are to provide Oregon 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade students with a meaningful overnight outdoor school experience that addresses environmental issues both locally and globally, foster improved understanding of our natural systems, and encourage programs that integrate boundaries between art and science. The deadline for grant proposals is Monday, May 5, 2014, and grants will be awarded by August, 2014. For complete information [click here](#), or contact the [Gray Family Foundation](#) at 503-552-3500.

### Tell Survey Extension

The [TELL survey](#) will be open through 10 pm on Monday, April 7, 2014. We encourage all Oregon teachers and administrators to take the survey and tell us about the teaching and learning conditions in their school. Feedback will help inform local school improvement efforts, district planning, and state-wide policy discussions. Current participation rates by school and district can be found [here](#).