

Students & Families [arrow_drop_down](#)

Educator Resources [arrow_drop_down](#)



Schools & Districts [arrow_drop_down](#)

Learning Options [arrow_drop_down](#)

Search

Data & Policies [arrow_drop_down](#)

About Us [arrow_drop_down](#)

EDUCATION

[home](#) [About Us](#) [October 2019 Education Update](#)

menu [Site Navigation](#)

October 2019 Education Update

Oregon Achieves... Together!

[A Message from the Director of the Oregon Department of Education, Colt Gill](#)



Colt Gill

Why Assessments Matter

The fact that more students took the English language arts and mathematics summative assessments in 2018-2019 means there is more data to better understand the needs of our students.

The [higher assessment participation](#) will improve and inform our implementation of the Student Success Act over the next few school years.

The more data we gather on our students' needs, the better we can advance implementation of the Student Success Act by helping school districts and the state target funds where they are needed most. When students opt out of assessments the overall results and our statewide understanding of student performance in these subject areas can be misinformed, especially if specific student groups are overrepresented in the opt outs.

Overall, nearly one percent more students took the English language arts and mathematics summative assessments in 2018-19 than in the previous school year. The assessments are taken by students in grades three through eight, plus high school.

Putting Assessments Into Context

Assessment data is a partner in our mission to foster equity and excellence for every learner. As a state we should know how our students are doing in reading, writing, and math and we should strive to improve these outcomes for all student groups. This is especially true where the data shows our schools are not addressing disparities between student groups. Literacy and math are gateway skills that allow students to access other learning and succeed in

life. But, we need to emphasize that this does not describe the whole of our children’s skills or assets.

It is important to keep this assessment information in context. This is a snapshot in time of student performance, narrowly focused on two important subjects taught in our schools. These assessments do not measure or reflect the breadth of student learning and well-being in our schools. They do not measure what Oregon has named as [Essential Skills](#): the ability of students to think critically or analytically, use technology effectively, understand civic responsibility, or demonstrate the personal management or teamwork skills we know are vital for lifelong success. These assessments also do not provide a measure of the social and emotional well-being of our students.

We must be careful to ensure this incomplete data does not skew our thinking or our actions. It can cause us to overemphasize what little data we have both when it is released and later as it is applied to our accountability systems. Having data limited to only a few subjects can send the wrong message to local educators that these tested subjects are the singularly most important subjects, when we know Oregonians value a well-rounded education.

Doctors do not diagnose after learning about one symptom or with just one medical test. They seek information regarding multiple symptoms and they order multiple tests, sometimes repeating tests over time to check for false-positives. This education assessment data should be used the same way. It is an important signal, it is not all the information we need to make decisions.

Where We Go From Here

Solutions to better support teaching and learning in the classroom, where it matters most, include a statewide interim assessment system and formative assessment practices for all of our teachers.

The data from these assessment sources would help drive day-to-day instructional decisions and can improve outcomes for students. Some districts do provide these resources; however, the state does not yet provide funding to offer these important instructional tools statewide.

For More Information

We’ve developed initial guidance on assessment literacy, called [The Right Assessment for the Right Purpose guidance document](#), that we hope will lay a foundation for clear communication and understanding about a balanced approach to assessment in Oregon. We’re continuing to support districts in implementing high leverage instructional practices, also known as [formative assessment practices](#). We are working with districts to appropriately select, administer, and interpret interim assessments that are aligned with our summative approach.

We’re also increasing understanding of the utility of our statewide summative assessment data, working with districts and schools to review their Target Reports. These reports show them where student learning sits relative to our standards and proficiency expectations, where they are strong and where there is room to grow - connected directly to our standards. Our educators are realizing the utility of a balanced approach to assessment that appropriately leverages the strengths of each type of assessment to inform instruction and systems change.

Our assessment system will be complete when it includes a mixed set of accessible assessments in a variety of content areas (including school climate and social emotional learning) that serve students and teachers as well as district and state decision makers.

[Welcome, Dr. Chavez!](#)

[Equity Focus](#)

The Oregon Department of

By: Dr. Juan Carlos Chavez



Education (ODE) is pleased to introduce Dr. Juan Carlos Chavez as our new Assistant Superintendent for our Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). In working to dismantle and restructure systems and institutions that create a dichotomy of

beneficiaries over oppressed & marginalized peoples, it is imperative that ODE leads for change toward education equity in both the specific work of EDI and also across offices and teams. Under the guidance and direction of Dr. Chavez, EDI will continue to lead, bolster, and drive this work within the agency.

Dr. Chavez, in his work in K-12 and higher education pathways, has increased student engagement and success, specifically among the 56 American Indian Northwest Tribes and Alaska Native Communities, multilingual, and underserved communities across Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. His career has focused on increasing persistence and retention among underserved and underrepresented students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields using a data-driven approach to budget allocation and program evaluation, and a community engagement approach to ensure decisions made include all voices from the community.

Dr. Chavez is affiliated with the Sonora Yaqui Tribe, was raised in Seattle, Washington and attended Seattle Public Schools where he experienced the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion of all peoples. He completed a doctorate degree in Information Science from the University of Washington with research interests in bridging the digital divide through small satellite technologies. He is a military veteran and for the past 12 years has conducted NASA STEM education and outreach for underserved and underrepresented communities via the Northwest Earth and Space Sciences Pipeline (NESSP) and Washington's NASA Space Grant Consortium (WSGC).

With Dr. Chavez on board, we are now hiring for the vacant EDI Director position. You can see the requirements for that position and all other openings at ODE on our [Career Opportunities web page](#).



I am pleased to join the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) as the Assistant Superintendent for Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI). I look forward to celebrating many achievements like the one

highlighted below with the diverse communities we serve: Congratulations to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation on the grand opening of Nixyáawii Education Center on Friday, September 27, 2019.

Nixyáawii Education Center represents the enduring commitment to education held by current and past generations of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR).

The education center prioritizes Umatilla culture within the school through the use of Umatilla language within the building sections. Moreover, the building is designed in an "H" configuration with the center of the H serving as a gathering place for students.

Nixyaawii Education Center houses all education programs including early learning Cay-Um-Wa Head Start, high school and adult education. The education center also houses Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's education and language departments.

The school increased capacity by approximately 20 percent, or from 85 to 105 students. At last count there are 93 students enrolled for the 2019-2020 school year.

The education center was designed to ensure appropriate broadband for students, spacious classrooms and electronically controlled doors for security. Students will now have better access to online resources to inspire curiosity and research.

ODE Director Colt Gill, Indian Education Specialist Ramona Halcomb (an enrolled member of CTUIR) and English Learner Education Specialist Taffy Carlisle presented a plaque to the tribe during the grand opening that commits Oregon Department of Education to collaborate and support The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's education priorities.

[Mercedes Muñoz Named 2020 Oregon Teacher of the Year](#)



On Friday, October 4 during an all-school assembly, Franklin High School (FHS) special education teacher Mercedes Muñoz was surprised with the honor of 2020 Oregon Teacher of the Year for the encouragement, equity and voice she offers to her students every day.

In a letter of recommendation, Muñoz was referred to as “a force of nurture.” In her role as department lead for special education at FHS, Muñoz is seen as a champion in advocating for the learning needs of all students and ensuring they are seen, heard and prepared for the transition from high school. She is highly involved in the recruitment of historically underserved students in Franklin’s Advanced Placement Program, and serves as a member of the FHS Equity Team, Safety Committee and Poetry Slam Committee.

“Teaching requires excellence and grace, which means staying up to read the article that will inform your instruction for weeks to come,” said Muñoz. “Teaching is so much more than issuing a grade or collecting an assignment. Teaching is a revolutionary act of social justice that empowers children to evolve and grow.”

The [Oregon Teacher of the Year program](#) is sponsored by the Oregon Department of Education in partnership with the Oregon Lottery. As the 2020 Oregon Teacher of the Year, Muñoz will serve as a spokesperson and representative for all Oregon teachers. She will attend the Washington Recognition Week for Teachers of the Year in Washington, D.C. this spring in addition to receiving year-long professional development and networking with other state Teachers of the Year.

ODE In the News

Here is some of the coverage of the 2020 Oregon Teacher of the Year announcement:

- [Surprise for Oregon teacher of the year](#)
- [Meet Oregon's Teacher of the Year 2019: 'That](#)

[My Journey as 2019 Oregon Teacher of the Year](#)

By: Keri Pilgrim Ricker, Churchill High School, Eugene 4J



I expected a plaque and a handshake. I expected to walk back into my classroom and resume business as usual. What I experienced was one of the most challenging, inspiring, and rewarding years of professional growth in my career.

Let me start by saying it is hard to accept an award like this. Teachers are not used to public recognition of the work that they do, and they do tremendous, phenomenal, work. When they announced my name as 2019 Oregon State Teacher of the Year I immediately thought of the many educators I knew who could and should be recognized for their unwavering commitment to students. As one of 56 state and territory Teachers of the Year we are tasked with sharing our best practices, our most compelling stories, and passions with an audience much broader than our departments and more diverse than the districts we serve. We are asked to name and speak to issues of importance in education to educators and non-educators alike with the hope that in doing so we will contribute to better learning environments for students both in and beyond our classroom walls.

It was this task and diversified audience that forced me and my colleagues to reflect more deeply on our practices than we ever had before. I started by unpacking the first of many challenging questions: “What do you teach?” I knew the answer most people expected, but as a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Health Occupations Teacher, I knew my subject was obscure enough to create looks of bewilderment on even the most seasoned educators. I quickly realized that a question about what I teach can set the wrong tone for a conversation about education, because teachers know our work is not about what we teach, the conversation should be about who we teach. To be a voice for education and the needs of all

[is a special joy'](#)

- [Oregon Teacher Of The Year From Franklin High School](#)
- [Portland educator is Oregon's 2020 Teacher of the Year](#)
- [Mercedes Muñoz, Franklin High educator, named Oregon teacher of the year for 2020](#)
- [Portland educator is Oregon's 2020 Teacher of the Year](#)
- [Franklin High School's Mercedes Muñoz Named Oregon Teacher of the Year 2020](#)

[Welcome Shadiin Garcia!](#)



The Educator Advancement Council is pleased to introduce Shadiin Garcia as its new, permanent Executive Director. Shadiin is Chicana and Laguna Pueblo from New Mexico and has lived in Oregon for 16 years. She has

worked for over 20 years as a teacher, public school administrator, researcher, policy analyst, Indigenous education leader and as a consultant. She has a Bachelor's Degree from Yale University in English with a specialization in education; a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and a PhD in Critical and Sociocultural Studies in Education from the University of Oregon.

Shadiin served as the Deputy Director of Policy and Research at Oregon's Chief Education Office where she helped develop a research agenda driven by culturally appropriate practices and Indigenous methodologies for improving key educational outcomes. She served as the Director of TeachOregon at the Chalkboard Project leading initiatives to diversify the educator workforce and improve teacher educator systems. With funding from Meyer Memorial Trust, she facilitates Oregon's statewide American Indian/Alaska Native Educational Professional Learning Community. Most recently, she worked with Education Northwest through her own consulting company to support ODE's implementation of Senate Bill 13: Tribal History/Shared History.

The EAC Board believes Shadiin will bring a spirit of partnership and excellence to the work of the council. EAC is an innovative public/nonprofit partnership

students we must elevate the voices, stories, and experiences of our students. I learned to tell the stories of my students and colleagues to create a much needed window into the world of education systems.

As educators we all have a duty and means to shift systems by sharing our stories and providing the evidence and currency of context needed to inspire understanding and change. Sharing student stories with legislators, community, and educators can gather collective momentum. In my case, I shared my voice with the Red for Ed Movement in Oregon raising support for the Student Success Act. Sharing our stories also helps to connect us as part of a global village of student advocates and educators.

The other question I grappled with this year was about how I teach. One of the most surprising realizations for me was that after a year of interviews and speaking engagements I never once found myself talking about science or medically themed pedagogy. In 11 years I spent what I thought was a lot of time refining my curriculum to make it more engaging and accessible. I had students running complex and exciting simulations of surgeries and patient care. I recreated laboratory, research, and medical environments and protocols to give students applied access to science and careers. Initially I found myself defaulting to these sorts of contextualized examples, examining my most successful units or lessons and trying to identify the strategies that worked best.

What I soon realized was that I needed to be thinking deeper. I needed to consider my instructional values. I needed to reflect on what I did beyond and behind the content I created that helped enable my student's success and make them feel loved and safe. It is an interesting exercise to think of sharing your best pedagogical frameworks free of content. I asked myself, "What strategies seemed to work best, who did they serve, and why do I gravitate towards certain strategies? What did they have in common? How could I share what I've learned in my classroom with a kindergarten teacher, a math teacher, a PE teacher? How could I learn best from them?" This practice has been the gem that has reframed and revitalized my already passionate fire for education.

I've found that I teach to diversify power structures both in the classroom and beyond. I seek to always offer

created by the Oregon Legislature through the passage of Senate Bill 182 (2017) to support the public educator profession. The EAC's goal is to ensure all teachers and administrators have access to high-quality, culturally-responsive professional learning and support throughout their careers. The EAC is charged with establishing a system of local educator networks that prioritize and enhance educators' access to professional learning and support services, combining state investment and other leveraged resources driven by educator need. In the past, the state has primarily offered competitive grants to school districts for professional learning and mentoring, which has resulted in sporadic efforts not reaching all educators and geographic areas.

The EAC Board also wants to take time to recognize the incredible work of Dr. Hilda Rosselli. Hilda has served the EAC as the interim Executive Director since its inception (and even before). Hilda is a primary architect of the EAC and its efforts to prioritize local educator voice in professional learning in Oregon. We thank Hilda for her tremendous dedication to this work!

[FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge Aims to Increase Financial Aid Applicants among High School Seniors](#)



The Higher Education Coordinating Commission, the Oregon Department of Education, and participating partners are pleased to announce the recent launch of the [FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge](#), a statewide initiative aimed to help students in Oregon's high school Class of 2020 to afford and achieve their college and career goals. The FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge goal is to increase the statewide rate of students completing the primary forms required for federal, state, and institutional financial aid—the Free Application for

student choice and voice in what we learn and how we learn it. I do what I must to create time to develop relationships and check in with every student providing a constant cycle of relevant feedback. I seek to challenge each student and inspire them. These values have always been central to how and why I teach.

I have been incredibly honored and humbled to be recognized as the 2019 Oregon State Teacher of the Year. I would like to once again thank the Oregon Department of Education, Council of Chief School State Officers, Oregon Lottery and former Oregon Teachers of the Year who create, sponsor, and support this amazing opportunity for student advocacy and growth in teacher leadership. Though my year is ending, I believe my work is just beginning. It is my belief that every educator deserves to be elevated and recognized for their service and my hope is that each one has the chance to grow through reflecting on and sharing their art with others. This year I hope to continue encouraging educators to collect and share their stories to reclaim the narrative on public education. What ignites your spark? Who do you teach, how do you teach, and what are the values underlying your success with students that you can begin to share with others?

[Student Success Act Stories](#)



It's heartening to see so many news reports about school districts starting the engagement process. Pro-active engagement by school districts with all the communities they serve is a key requirement for school districts to earn grant funds through the Student Investment Account (SIA).

The SIA is a grants program within the Student Success Act. The news reports are appearing all over the state, including [Roseburg](#), [Milton-Freewater](#), [Seaside](#), [Springfield](#), [Molalla River](#), and [Crook County](#).

We've also heard from Greater Albany Public Schools and the Gladstone School District:

Greater Albany Public Schools: We will be engaging in more than 20 focus groups and will hold two community forums in October in preparation for the

Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA)— by five percentage points during the upcoming year. **All Oregon public high schools are encouraged to [join this statewide challenge](#), and high school seniors are encouraged to seek the support of their schools in completing these important financial aid applications.**

The FAFSA and ORSAA are used to help students qualify for numerous forms of public and private financial aid for college; if students do not apply, they may miss out on thousands of dollars in federal, state, and private aid for which they may be eligible. Timely completion of financial aid forms is a challenge for many students and families, particularly first-generation students. Schools that participate in the Challenge receive free resources to help their seniors, including: posters in English and Spanish, monthly newsletters with training resources and tips, and data on completion rates to help schools set targets and monitor their efforts.

“Financial aid can change the arc of a student’s education, career and life,” said Oregon Department of Education Director Colt Gill. “We’re excited to partner with other organizations to support this challenge and help ensure students gain equitable access to financial aid.”

While state initiatives in recent years have improved the number of financial aid applicants, Oregon’s rate of completion remains low in national comparisons. Oregon’s Class of 2019 had a combined FAFSA/ORSAA completion rate of 59 percent, and Oregon education partners have set a goal to increase this rate to 64 percent statewide by June 2020. Since Oregon partners began inviting high schools to join the FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge in August, over 120 high schools have registered and additional schools are signing up each week.

Ben Cannon, executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, said, “We are excited to join in this partnership challenge to improve college affordability, a key strategic goal for our agency. When a student submits the FAFSA or ORSAA, they gain access to valuable financial resources they need to succeed in their academic and career goals, whether they are pursuing a certificate, training option, or degree program.”

Student Success Act as well as an updated district strategic plan. We have also created a survey with six questions focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of our schools and gauging how we are reaching and supporting all of our students, teachers, staff, and community members. The survey will be available in print form in all of our schools and at the community forums and will be accessible online. All of our forums and surveys will be available in both English and Spanish and will include demographic questions to insure that we are reaching a diverse sampling of our community.

The Gladstone School District: The school district is actively engaging parents across our community with a series of "Soup with the Superintendent" focus group events, providing a free meal, child care and interpreters. Each night includes information about the Student Success Act, a small group discussion of 4-5 topics and a live poll using smart phones or provided chromebooks. We are doing one focus group at each school level [including early childhood], with specific individuals personally invited in a proactive effort to include foster families, homeless families, low-income families and a diversity of cultures and races. We are also planning one affinity group for parents of children with disabilities and one group with Spanish, Russian and Arabic interpreters for parents of English Learners and Latinx families. Our equity consultant Daryl Dixon is helping us facilitate affinity focus groups with four groups: Black families, Asian families, Pacific Islander families and Multiracial families.

All district families will be invited to participate in two different surveys: One has questions from the focus group nights, and the other is the Youth Truth survey. We did an all-staff meeting with live polling and table facilitation, followed by teacher input events and surveys in each school. A follow-up session with classified staff is planned. Focus groups have also been conducted with the Cabinet and the full Administrative Team. All high school students will participate in a student survey in their College and Career Readiness group, and students in grades 3 to 12 will also participate in the student Youth Truth survey. Two student focus groups are planned at Gladstone High School.

Other community members will be included through presentations at the Gladstone/Oak Lodge Rotary Club;

By completing the FAFSA, students may demonstrate eligibility for federal aid such as Federal Pell grants and federal loans, state aid such as the Oregon Opportunity Grant and the Oregon Promise Grant, institutional scholarships, and more. By completing the ORSAA, students may demonstrate eligibility for these same state grant programs, as well as institutional and private scholarships. The FAFSA is available to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and certain eligible noncitizens, while the ORSAA is available to Oregon students who are undocumented, including those with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. For some financial aid programs, students must complete additional application requirements beyond the FAFSA or ORSAA.

Roberto Aguilar, a school counselor at Milwaukie High School who signed his school up to participate in the Challenge, explains why: “We must help students access affordable quality higher education to break the cycle of poverty, so that they can become the computer programmers, engineers, nurses and other industry leaders they aspire to become. Our school needs to support all students as they complete their FAFSA or ORSAA so that they can receive financial assistance to pursue advanced education and training.”

The FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge is organized by a collaborative group of organizations from across Oregon: Higher Education Coordinating Commission’s Office of Student Access and Completion, Oregon Department of Education, Oregon Goes to College, ECMC The College Place Oregon, and Oregon Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. Schools can [learn more and register online](#).

[Professional Grant Development Workshop](#)

Master the techniques of writing superior winning proposals

November 14-15, 2019, 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

This intensive two-day grant proposal workshop is geared towards those who wish to strengthen their grant writing skills, as well as beginners who wish to acquire and master the techniques of preparing and

a discussion at a joint meeting of the School Board and City Council; and multiple meetings of the Technology Committee, Nutrition committee and Measure 98 committee.

[Register Now for a Threat Assessment Workshop](#)



The U.S. Secret Service and the DHS-Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) invite you to attend a FREE [USSS National Threat Assessment Center \(NTAC\) Workshop on Individuals Exhibiting](#)

[Concerning Behavior](#).

This training is designed with audiences like K-12 administrators, school/campus safety officials, counselors and mental health specialists in mind. It will describe how a comprehensive threat assessment program can help to prevent mass shootings, school shootings, workplace violence and other forms of targeted violence that impact communities across the United States. Included is an overview of Secret Service methodologies for preventing assassinations, and a description of how this approach can be adapted to prevent other forms of targeted violence.

All content is based on the operational research conducted by the Secret Service’s National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC), and will highlight the proactive approach of identifying, assessing, and managing individuals exhibiting concerning behavior. Organizers say this NTAC workshop will not be returning to Oregon for an extended period of time. It is NOT training on active shooter response.

Date: Wednesday, October 23, 2019

Time: 8:15 AM – 12:30 PM (doors open 7:30 a.m.)

Location: Portland State University’s Viking Pavilion, 930 SW Hall Street

Parking: pdx.edu/transportation

To Register: [Click here for more information](#).

writing winning proposals to various funding agencies. The focus will be on how to effectively write proposals in times of keen competition and limited resources.

Participants will learn how to:

- Navigate the world of grant procurement
- Research and identify potential funding sources
- Address the guidelines of federal and foundation applications
- Find foundation and corporate giving for the state of Oregon
- Understand the new federal guidelines for writing winning grants
- Know the review process and how to address key points for reviewers
- Write winning grants that stand out against scores of competing submissions
- Develop focused and realistic budgets
- Demonstrate the merits, excellence and innovation of your proposal
- Package professional grant submissions

Our ultimate goal is for you to walk away with a product specific to your interests, which includes the grant design, abstract and budget.

[Click Here to Register](#)

Questions? Call us at (866) 704-7268

Workshop Fee: \$595.00 (includes a comprehensive directory, electronic workbook, certificate of completion, and continental breakfast)

Rebate of \$45.00 per person is given for two or more registrants from the same organization.

Space is limited, and since this class fills up quickly, it is on a first-come, first-serve basis.*

Can't make it? [Join us for an online version of this workshop.](#)

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