

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S Pipeline

March 2002

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From My Desk to Yours

A Message from Stan Bunn
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



As you have followed the progress of the special sessions of the legislature and the recent economic forecasts, I am sure that you have become concerned about the potential for serious budget cuts to K-12 education.

I want to reassure you that the combined efforts of the Department of Education and our partners, OEA, COSA, and OSBA continue to press legislators to preserve K-12 education. At this point it looks like \$112 million, the second year of school improvement grants, could be in jeopardy.

However, your education advocates continue to remind legislators that K-12 education remains as the top public funding priority. In addition, legislators are hearing from their own constituents that preserving Oregon's school system is of paramount importance. These are powerful reasons for us to continue to take a positive and proactive approach to the budget process in the legislature.

At the same time, I know many of you are in the throes of making difficult decisions that will have painful consequences for the children you serve and the programs that have contributed to their success. I recognize the necessity to prepare worst-case scenarios as you look at local budget constraints.

Here at the Department, we have work underway to help ease the severity of the K-12 budget shortfall, if it occurs. We are examining areas such as the reduction of some district reporting requirements as well as waiver options to see if there are possibilities for reduction of work at the district level. We're closely examining our own practices and the effects of everything we do to determine where we can provide better cost-saving services or ease state or federal requirements to allow more flexible use of funds.

Already, class size reduction funds may be used in more flexible ways to meet local district needs. Over the next few weeks and months, additional opportunities will be identified. Hopefully, among the various options, you will find something that will help your district in some way.

I have challenged Department staff to work with the new ESEA legislation to develop ways in which we can reduce, rather than increase, the workload imposed at the district level. I am interested in your thoughts on possibilities in this area. Please e-mail your comments to stan.bunn@state.or.us.

These are tough financial times. It is even more important that we all continue our efforts to keep education at the top of the agenda for legislative support.

Sincerely,

Stan Bunn

English Language Learner (ELL) Assessments

PLAIN LANGUAGE AND SIDE-BY-SIDE MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENTS

All ELL students who have been in a district for one academic year or more are required to participate in the spring Knowledge and Skills Test. Test options include the Side-by-Side Spanish/English and Russian/English Mathematics tests and the Plain Language Mathematics Knowledge and Skills pilot tests. These tests for grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 will be administered during the operational testing window of Mar. 16-April 20. See the spring administration manual and field coordinators' guide for more information. Go to www.ode.state.or.us/asm/administration/manuals/.

The Plain Language and Side-By-Side Mathematics Assessments will be available for secure download through your district test coordinator on Educational Data Systems' (EDS) password-protected web site. These secure tests may be downloaded for printing/distribution for each student needing the test. Districts are asked to print the appropriate number of tests and then will be reimbursed for printing costs (\$0.05 per page) based on completed, returned answer sheets. The assessments will be available for downloading the first week in March.



Please return the pilot test answer sheets along with all other answer sheets to EDS.

Students with sufficient English proficiency take an operational mathematics knowledge and skills level test.

SPANISH/ENGLISH SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TESTS

There will be no Spanish/English Side-By-Side Science Knowledge and Skills tests this year due to budgetary constraints.

Contact [Elaine Hultengren](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2345, or [Kathleen Cook](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2342.

Report Cards Status Report



PURPOSE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The purpose of the school and district report cards is to communicate information to parents about school progress and achievement while meeting the legislative expectation for school and district accountability.

The report card should:

- be clear, concise, well defined, and understandable.
- use information that is valid, stable, and reliable.
- include all students.
- report current levels of performance, and continuous improvement over time.
- rate school effectiveness not individual student performance.
- provide an opportunity for schools and districts to define unique characteristics through local information.
- be viewed as one part of a larger accountability system.

STATUS UPDATE

On Jan. 24, the Department issued 1,217 school report cards and 198 district report cards. All report cards are available in both Spanish and English. Districts have until the end of March to distribute them.

Schools showed generally higher ratings in 2002 than in 2001. The increase is due to several factors: attendance is up; dropout rates are down; assessment scores are up; teachers have focused on improvement; and the target has remained the same for three years, allowing schools to focus on specific areas for improvement.

RATING	REPORT CARDS	
	2001	2002
Exceptional	43	50
Strong	459	563
Satisfactory	580	485
Low	43	14
Unacceptable	2	0

FEEDBACK

The Department has been receiving feedback that has centered around three themes.

The 2002 format, particularly the continuum on the front which informs schools how close they came to the category on either side of their current rating, was well received and helped to clarify the overall rating. This year's format in general seemed to be cleaner, clearer, and much easier to read than previous cards even though many new elements were added.

The formula continues to be complex and difficult to understand. It should be more transparent and clear. Some changes which would clarify the formula are to separate the category of improvement from student performance, student behavior, and the overall rating.

Although complicated, the formula has remained the same since the first year of the report cards. Because of the factoring of improvement, some schools with a relatively low percentage of students meeting the standard have been rated as satisfactory due to improvement. This has been raised as a concern for future consideration.

Currently, in exceptional schools, on average, more than 78 percent of students met or exceeded state standards. In strong schools, on average about 69 percent of students met or exceeded state standards. In satisfactory schools, on average, about 52% of students met or exceeded state standards. In low schools, on average, fewer than 27% of student met or exceeded state standards.

The Department is continuing to receive feedback. The best way to comment on the report cards or recommend changes is to e-mail the report card mailbox at report.card@state.or.us.

Contact [Nanci Schneider](#) at 503-378-3600 ext. 2353.



Anne Frank Exhibit in Portland

Portland will be the only Northwest site for the new and updated Anne Frank exhibit April 8-May 5.

Free week-day, docent-led tours are available for middle school and high school students 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday through Friday. The tour takes about 90 minutes. Grant money is available to assist schools with transportation to the exhibit.

A web site, www.annefrankinportland.org, contains information for teachers, including a teacher workshop and opportunities to connect the exhibit visit with a production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* at Northwest Children's Theatre.

Charter School Grants Available

Charter schools and their sponsoring school districts are each eligible for a \$10,000 supplemental grant. These funds can be used for school district staff, school board members, charter school developers, operators, and board members to attend the National Charter School Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 19-22.

Contact [Joni Gilles](mailto:Joni.Gilles@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2276.

Juried Assessment for Spring Review



The Office of Assessment and Evaluation offers a way for students who have been unsuccessful on state tests to demonstrate performance at the CIM level using one of three "juried" forms of assessment.

Any student (seniors have priority) requesting a Juried Assessment for the May review must have the school district send an Intent to Submit form to the Department on or before April 15. To download a complete Juried Assessment Manual, go to the Department's web site www.ode.state.or.us/asmt/administration/manuals.

For further information, contact [Leslie Phillips](mailto:Leslie.Phillips@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2317.

Oregon Statewide Assessment Test Materials for March Testing Windows

Test materials for all knowledge and skill assessments (reading/literature, mathematics, and science) should arrive in your district by Mar. 8. The reading/literature and mathematics knowledge and skills tests for benchmarks 1, 2, 3, and CIM and science knowledge and skills tests for benchmarks 2, 3 and CIM will be administered Mar. 16-April 20.

Test materials for the writing and mathematics problem-solving assessments will arrive by mid-April. These performance assessment tests will be administered April 27-May 11.

The test administration manual and field coordinators' guide for the March testing window are available on the Department's web site, www.ode.state.or.us/asmt.

If you need additional test materials and/or have questions regarding test materials contact your district test coordinator. District test coordinators can contact the Department or the testing contractor for additional statewide assessment materials or information.

RE-TEST OPPORTUNITIES

Students in grades 10, 11, or 12 may participate in these assessments as a re-test. Re-tests are not mandatory, but districts should have some tests available for those students who wish to re-test. Students who request a re-test must be given the opportunity to take the test. Schools should notify students of the opportunity.

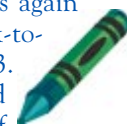
Contact [Elaine Hultengren](mailto:Elaine.Hultengren@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2345.

Use of School Food Service Funds

Districts are reminded that school food service revenues received by the nonprofit school food service may be used only for the operation or improvement of the food service programs. School food service funds cannot be used to support other school programs. Contact [Terri Lloyd-Jones](mailto:Terri.Lloyd-Jones@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2621.

Back-to-School Week Set for Spring

The SOS Foundation (Statewide Organization for Schools) is again sponsoring a statewide Back-to-School Week, April 29-May 3. Each year has seen increased participation on the part of schools and community members.



Last year:

- 147 communities had Back-to-School-Week events.
- Half of the schools in Oregon participated.
- Civic groups that participated reported a great time!
- At least 40,000 adults went back to school in Oregon.
- 65 newspapers and 11 TV newscasts covered BTSW events.

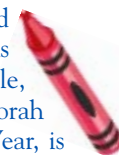
Additional information on Back-to-School Week is available on the SOS web site at www.sosoregon.org/.

Contact [Karyn Phillips](mailto:Karyn.Phillips@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2215.

Oregon Reading Summit—Not Just for Reading Teachers Any More

The Department is sponsoring the Fourth Annual Oregon Reading Summit April 19 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland. The theme is *Reading to Learn*.

A number of researchers and reading experts will offer sessions designed for elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Deborah White, 2001 Teacher of the Year, is one of the speakers.



The summit is free of charge. Registration is open and closes March 29 or sooner if capacity is reached. Register electronically through the web site, www.ode.state.or.us/events/.

Contact [Kayla Barstad](mailto:Kayla.Barstad@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2308.

Science and Mathematics Opportunities for Students and Teachers

A variety of opportunities in the fields of math and science for teachers and one opportunity for students will be available over the next several months. Information can be accessed at each web site.

TEACHERS

- Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Program www.her.nsf.gov/pres_awards/
- Science State Leadership Conference www.ode.state.or.us/events/
- Mathematics Leadership Conference www.octm.org
- National Science Teachers Association's Western Regional Conference www.oregonscience.org/
- Northwest Mathematics Conference www.octm.org/

STUDENTS

National Science Foundation Scholars Program—Summer Camp for Students. Applications due by March 20 <http://blackwood.wvutec.edu/nysc/stateagent.htm>.

For more information on science, contact [Kathleen Vanderwall](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2288. For more information on science, contact [Ginger Reglinger](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 4419.

Helpful Tools for Science Instructors



A helpful tool to assist educators in reviewing science instructional materials and provide input on the Draft 4.0 Science Grade-Level Mapping can be accessed at www.ode.state.or.us/cifs/science. For more information, contact [Kathleen Vanderwall](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2288.

Help Available for Elementary Instrumental Music Programs

AT&T Broadband has partnered with VH1 Save the Music Foundation to help elementary music programs throughout the Oregon market area. Since its inception in 1997, VH1 Save the Music has donated more than \$17 million worth of musical instruments to 750 public schools in 70 cities, improving the lives of more than 250,000 children.

VH1 Save the Music Foundation is a nonprofit initiative with two primary missions: To restore music education programs in America's public schools, and to raise awareness of the positive impact music participation has on students.

VH1 Save the Music purchases new musical instruments to restore music education programs that had been cut due to budget reductions in the past or to save programs at risk of elimination due to lack of instruments. The foundation also conducts awareness campaigns, musical instrument drives, and fundraising events.

To be eligible to participate in the program, schools must meet certain criteria related to an instrumental music program. In addition, the school must be located in an area serviceable by AT&T Broadband which includes Portland, St. Helens, Milwaukie, Tualatin Valley, Vancouver, McMinnville, Salem, Corvallis, and Eugene. A full

explanation of the criteria, applications, and the service areas is available on the Save the Music web site at www.vh1.com/insidevh1/savethemus/school-application.html.

Applications are due by April 15. Contact at AT&T Broadband is [Deborah Pleva](#) at 503-963-5177.

Review of Social Science Grade Level Document

The Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Field Services is conducting a public review of Draft 1.0 of the Social Science Grade-Level Mapping material.

The grade-level mapping provides teachers and districts with a model of one way to organize curriculum to help students meet state standards and benchmarks in social science.

A review document is available on the web at www.ode.state.or.us/cifs/socialsciences/socscigradelevelmap.pdf to aid those wanting to send in comments, which will be accepted through March 15. This round of comments will be used to inform Draft 2.0, due out March 31.

Contact person is [Andrea Morgan](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2289.

If you have questions or comments about this publication, please contact [Barbara Wolfe](#), communications team, at 503-378-3600 ext. 2219.