

## SB 755 Oregon Minority Teacher Act

### Background

In 1991, the Oregon Legislature, recognizing the disparity between its diverse student population and predominantly European-American teacher workforce, drafted the Minority Teacher Act. The goal set forth by the Act states that by the year 2001, the number of minority teachers, including administrators, employed by school districts and education service districts shall be approximately proportionate to the number of minority children enrolled in the public schools of this state.

In 2011, at the request of the Portland African American Leadership Forum, the first report in six years was produced. It concluded that despite some growth, the proportion of minority teachers to minority children in public schools continues to fall far short of the goal set by the 1991 Act. The increase of minorities in the teaching profession has not been able to keep pace with the increasing minority population of school-age children. Minorities constitute 8% of the teacher workforce in Oregon and 34% of the population of school-age children in Oregon, with several school districts reporting the number of minority students at over 50% of the total student population for their districts. Between 2001 and 2011, the discrepancy between Oregon's minority students and minority teachers has grown from 15% to 27%.

Part of meeting that commitment includes having a teacher workforce that represents the ever-growing diversity of cultures and languages in our schools. Minority teachers make significant contributions to the schools that employ them. They are a link to parents and communities and they serve as role models - positively impacting the outcomes of the students they teach.

Given that Oregon has not met the goal set forth by the Minority Teacher Act of 1991 and has reaffirmed the commitment to equity in education, the intent of the Act remains even more critical.

### SB 755

- Amends the goal set forth in the 1991 act to align with the Governor's priority to increase by 10% by 2015 the number of minority teachers, administrators and students enrolled in teacher preparation programs.
- Adds persons whose first language is not English to the definition of minority.
- Requires a report be completed by July 1, 2014 that includes the most recent data collected, plans currently implemented, recommendations for meeting the goal, a description of best practices, and placement of best practices on agencies websites.

### SB 755-3

- Makes the Oregon Education Investment Board the entity responsible for producing the required report rather than the Education & Workforce Policy Advisor.

