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Educational Equity for All Students

Experts predict that, by the year 2036, one-half of Oregon's workforce will be people of color. Yet today, a stark and growing academic achievement gap exists for students of color and English Language Learners and their white peers.

- Only 1 out of 2 Hispanic students met or exceeded 3rd grade reading benchmarks compared to 77% of white students.
- Only 12% of English Language Learners (ELL) students met or exceeded 8th grade science benchmarks compared to 73% of white students.
- Only 22% of ELL students met or exceeded 8th grade math benchmarks compared to 69% of white students.
- Only 1 out of 2 Black, Native American and Limited English Proficient students will earn a high school diploma in four years compared to 70% of white students.

The state of Oregon is at a critical juncture with our ability to deliver an equitable education system to all students in the state. If Oregon is to have a competitive workforce that supports our economy this achievement gap must be addressed today.

Strategic Plan

At the Oregon Department of Education, we are committed to reversing these sobering statistics so all of Oregon's students can be successful and graduate to family-wage jobs. Within the newly created strategic plans for the Department of Education and the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB) is a set of aggressive goals and metrics focused on closing these achievement gaps for students in Oregon:

- Number of 3rd graders reading at grade level increases 15% and the achievement gap decreases 5%.
- Number of ELL students reading at grade level by 5th grade increases 75%.
- Number of students who demonstrate proficiency in math and science in middle school increases 15% and the achievement gap decreases 5%.
- At least 50% of students who graduate from high school earn nine or more college credits and the achievement gap decreases by 5%.
- At least 75% of students will be on track for graduation by the end of 9th grade with no gaps greater than 10%.
- Five-year cohort graduation rate increases 5 percentage points and achievement gap decreases 5%.

Key education strategic investments proposed by the OEIB in HB 3232 and HB 3233 will improve outcomes for all children, especially those for students of color who have been historically underserved.

In addition, Oregon's Chief Education Officer Dr. Rudy Crew has enlisted the support of practitioners from across the state to propose a statewide plan to address the unique needs of ELL students in Oregon. At the same time the Oregon Department of Education has partnered with the Confederated Oregon School Administrators to deliver the first statewide ELL conference this spring, with more than 500 education professional attendees.

To most effectively leverage the momentum, expertise, and combined efforts of educators, lawmakers, and leaders in the state, we must ensure that the Department of Education has a skilled and dedicated set of equity and ELL experts focused on achieving these important goals, in conjunction with school districts and other education partners.

Oregon cannot afford to fail these students - they are our future. The practical need to deliver equitable education outcomes to all students in Oregon is only outweighed by the moral imperative. We must not delay and we cannot fail.

Gap Analysis

There are approximately 78,000 ELL students and 198,000 students of color in the state. Currently, the Department of Education has only 2.5 federally funded employees dedicated to improving outcomes of English Language Learners, Native Americans, migrant children, and enforcement of civil rights law. The state provides no General Fund for these activities.

Proposal

The department is seeking \$2 million to support the staff needed to work directly with school districts and other education partners to collaboratively achieve educational equity for all students. Services to districts will include dissemination of best practices through professional development and technical assistance on implementation of data-driven decision making and culturally-competent practices. Part of this work will be done through the Network of Quality Teaching and Learning established by HB 3233.

A newly-created Office of Education Equity will put renewed focus and emphasis on this critical work and facilitate efficiencies within the department. Help us invest in a strong Oregon by supporting the Office of Education Equity.

**The Oregon Department of Education
fosters excellence for every learner through innovation, collaboration,
leadership, and service to our education partners.**