

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**CARRIER:**

Senate Committee on Education

REVENUE: No revenue impact**FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:****Prepared By:** Gretchen Engbring, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 5/19, 6/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires school districts to report to Oregon Department of Education (ODE) on strategies and activities used to increase high school graduation rates or reduce chronic absenteeism. Requires ODE to report to Legislative Assembly each even-numbered year. Describes manner of report. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Low graduation rates in Oregon
- Negative impact that chronic absenteeism has on graduation rates
- Need for additional information to document current strategies, identify best practices and address low graduation rates and absenteeism
- Potential time and resources needed to complete reports
- Concern that school districts are already burdened with too many reporting requirements

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

-2 amendments (proposed) require ODE produce report on best practices used by Oregon school districts to reduce dropout rates. Require report include strategies or activities used to increase graduation rates or reduce absenteeism. Require ODE make report available to public through website. Require ODE request from school districts description of practices used to reduce drop rates and increase graduation rates. Provide that school districts' response to request is voluntary. Require districts choosing to provide information submit responses by December 31, 2015. Require ODE submit report to legislative committees and post to website by February 1, 2016. Declare emergency, effective on passage.

BACKGROUND: ODE defines a dropout as “a student who withdrew from school and did not graduate or transfer to another school that leads to graduation.” Dropout data is collected in the Annual Cumulative Average Daily Membership (ADM) Data Collection at the end of each school year, which identifies students' enrollment dates and status as of the last day of enrollment for the year.

The graduation rate for students in Oregon public schools has been a topic of public debate recently. In April, 2014, the Office of the Secretary of State issued an audit report titled, “Oregon Department of Education: Efforts to Close Achievement Gaps.” That report indicates that, “Oregon has struggled with student achievement and graduation rates,” reporting that one study, “ranked [Oregon] 40th in student achievement compared to other states.” In January and February of 2015, multiple news outlets reported that Oregon posted “the nation’s worst” or “second-worst” graduation rate for class of 2013.

House Bill 3319-A requires school districts to report to ODE on strategies and activities used to increase high school graduation rates or reduce chronic absenteeism, and further requires ODE to report to the Legislative Assembly each even-numbered year.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.