

Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2015 Regular Session
STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
Senate Committee On Education

MEASURE: HB 3319 B
CARRIER: Sen. Roblan

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 06/04/15

Action: Do Pass With Amendments To The A-Eng Bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

Meeting Dates: 05/19, 06/04

Vote:

Yeas: 6 - Baertschiger Jr, Beyer, Gelser, Knopp, Kruse, Roblan

Exc: 1 - Hass

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Department of Education (ODE) produce report on best practices used by Oregon school districts to reduce dropout rates. Requires report include strategies or activities used to increase graduation rates or reduce absenteeism. Requires ODE make report available to public through website. Requires ODE request from school districts description of practices used to reduce drop rates and increase graduation rates. Provides that school districts' response to request is voluntary. Requires districts choosing to provide information submit responses by December 31, 2015. Requires ODE submit report to legislative committees and post to website by February 1, 2016. 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
- Amendments provide that school districts may voluntarily contribute, but are not required, to submit information to ODE for purpose of report

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

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-B requires ODE to produce and make available to the public a report that describes the best practices used by Oregon school districts to reduce dropout rates, including strategies or activities used to increase graduation rates or to reduce chronic absenteeism. To produce the report, the bill requires ODE to request information from school districts, but specifies that school districts may voluntarily respond.