



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



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Colt Gill

Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

DATE: March 10, 2021

TO: Senator Lew Frederick, Co-Chair
Representative Susan McLain, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Education Subcommittee

FROM: Colt Gill, Director

RE: Ways and Means Follow Up Response - March 8, 2021

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) presented its agency overview and a portion of its agency Operations budget overview on March 8, 2021 to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Education Subcommittee. During the presentation, members of the committee asked one question that required clarification and follow-up. The question and answer is provided below.

- 1. Would like to understand the differences between the Oregon Digital Learning Program and the proposal in the Governor's Budget for Digital Teaching and Learning Innovation Program. Want to be thoughtful about creating another grant program. (Representative McLain)**

ODE's Response:

The Oregon Digital Learning Program (ODL) is part of the Department's 2021-23 CSL Budget, while the Digital Teaching and Learning Innovation Program is proposed as an additional program in the Governor's Budget through Policy Package 107. The two programs serve different needs due to the limitations placed on ODL within statute. The current statutory limitation within the ODL statutes would greatly reduce the ability to impact digital teaching and learning through the strategies outlined in Policy Package 107, included in the Governor's budget. The key differences in the program are as follows:

- Oregon Digital Learning (ODL) provides online course access, currently for small, rural students. This funding was established in 2005 as the Oregon Virtual School District. The ODL operates within the following limitations:

- ✓ Funding use is limited by statute: it must provide online course access and professional learning relating to online learning, only: ORS 336.851 : (2)(b) Oregon Digital Learning shall provide professional development to support school districts that provide online learning, including professional development that will help school districts to identify and support students who would benefit from online learning opportunities.
 - ✓ Provides course access to students in school districts that would otherwise not be able to offer a wide variety of course options. Course access currently increases options for students in our small, rural schools.
 - ✓ Is primarily a course access program that expands flexibility and course access to students while the students remain in their resident school district. ODL does not receive ADM for the students enrolled in ODL courses.
- The Digital Learning and Teaching Innovations Program identified in this Policy Package 107 is designed to provide leadership across all forms of digital learning beyond only online or distance learning, specifically:
 - ✓ Applying digital tools to instructional practice in all instructional models, including in-person and hybrid learning.
 - ✓ Leveraging technology and digital tools to ensure equitable outcomes, access to digital learning opportunities, and accessibility for all students, especially those currently and historically marginalized.
 - ✓ Computer science
 - ✓ Supporting families in using the digital tools that schools are likely to use beyond this year (i.e. Learning Management Systems)
 - ✓ Increasing the number of teachers with the ability to use existing and emerging technology skills and resources to amplify teaching and learning.
 - ✓ Sharing expertise across the state to leverage and maximize resources and expertise.
 - ✓ Supporting the expansion of the Oregon Open Learning online hub, promoting equitable access and creation of high quality open educational materials to support instruction across any instructional model.

There are also differences in the programs in the approach to professional development as a means to improve teaching and learning.

- Oregon Digital Learning funding is limited to “...professional development to support school districts that provide online learning, including professional development that will help school districts to identify and support students who would benefit from online learning opportunities.”
- The Digital Learning and Teaching Innovations Program professional development is specifically designed to leverage the success of the Oregon EdTech Cadre that was established in 2001 and continues to connect educators across the state. Much like the goals of the Cadre, this professional development would:
 - ✓ Provide coherent, high-quality professional learning addressing effective digital learning instructional practices.

- ✓ Establish a system that will connect educators across the state that provides a vehicle for sharing insights, strategies, research, and resources.
- ✓ Provide regular updates on emerging technologies, research, national, and international trends.
- ✓ Connect rural educators who often lack teaching partners for their grade level and/or content areas.

While these two programs would have separate focuses, it would be operated under one Team that is established with the Governor’s Budget - the Digital Learning Team. Below is a summary of the two different programs that would be administered by the Team.

Summary of Main Distinctions

Oregon Digital Learning Fund		Digital Learning and Teaching Innovations Program (POP 107)	
Provides online course access.	Provides professional development specifically for online learning , including identifying and supporting students who would benefit from online learning.	Professional development for digital learning to support equitable outcomes for students across all instructional models .	Provide increased access to high quality open educational resources through Oregon Open Learning

- 2. There was some concern expressed in the Governor’s Budget proposal to reduce funding for the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) and what this impact would have on getting the needed student data the system produces (Representative Alonso Leon).**

ODE’s Response:

As mentioned in the hearing, while funding for SLDS is part of the ODE budget, it is represented as a transfer to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) who is the administrator of the SLDS. The funding source for this transfer is the Corporate Activity Tax. The Governor’s Budget proposal for this reduction reflects the roll up impact of the decision made by the 2020 Legislature (Second Special Session) to reduce funding for SLDS. ODE has communicated this concern to HECC so that they may address during their budget presentation to the committee.