



Grant Consolidation Project

Presentation to
Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Budget Note in House Bill 5015



The Oregon Department of Education is instructed to:

- Study the K-12 Grant-in-Aid programs
- Determine if programs can be combined or eliminated
- Identify barriers or statutory changes
- Consult various K-12 interest groups
- Develop final report for the Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education by February 2022

Note: report and presentation dates extended due to pandemic.

ODE is committed to responding to the Budget Note in order to better serve Oregon educators, create conditions for educational equity, and strengthen systems that improve outcomes for students.



\$4.8 Billion Per Biennium in ODE Grants for K-12 Education

The Grant-in-Aid (GIA) portfolio has significantly grown and shifted in the past 10 years

- Approximately **\$4.8 billion per biennium** in Oregon's K-12 education
- ODE had **34 grants in 2003 growing to 108 grants by 2021**
- ODE administers grants for **four divisions** (ODE, EAC, YDD, ELD)
- **Broad range of recipients**, including school districts, ESDs, community-based organizations, Oregon Tribes, early learner providers, and higher education
- From 2011 to 2021, ODE's GIA portfolio shifted from:
 - About $\frac{1}{3}$ **state grants in 2011 to about $\frac{2}{3}$ state grants in 2021**
 - **Mostly competitive to mostly formula allocation** for state grants

Project: Three Phases

ODE organized the grant alignment project into three phases.

Phase 1: Grant data collection and analysis (May 2021 to Aug 2021)

- Quantitative data review and longitudinal analysis for all current grants
- Focus groups with small, medium, and large school districts
- Surveys, interviews, and feedback sessions with ODE leadership and grant managers

Phase 2: Develop recommendations and the legislative report (Sept 2021 to Feb 2022)

- Iterative process drafting and revising recommendations
- Reflects feedback from education partners and ODE leadership

Phase 3: Implement recommendations (After February 2022)

- Formal implementation to begin upon Legislative approval
- ODE work underway to consolidate grants and align process, where it has authority to do so

Key Findings: Consolidation of Grant Programs

- **Consolidation and elimination of grant programs remains important** and will be a critical part of the budget request process
- Large-scale consolidation and elimination of grant programs **may pose significant policy challenges.**
 - Limited authority to consolidate federal programs.
 - Individual state grant programs are created to address a specific concern or goal and thus often have strong support within communities and the Legislature.
- **Optimizing and integrating grant processes** will reduce administrative burden across grant programs
- **Including this alignment process in ODE's legislative concept and bill analysis** structure will ensure that new grant programs are integrated into the existing grant portfolio without unnecessarily increasing administrative burden on school districts.

Key Findings: District Focus Groups

Focus groups coordinated by COSA and OASBO, and included Hillsboro, North Clackamas, Baker, Coquille, Lake County, and Umatilla

- Different grants require similar data without standardized reporting formats or timelines.
- Reporting requirements are not made clear from the start of the process.
- District "workflow" can directly conflict with ODE deadlines (e.g., due dates in August when district is engaged with professional development, student registration, training of administrators, etc.)
- Small districts have unique challenges: "Time, time, time. I am one person and I'm the sole licensed admin at the district level in my district."
- From the district perspective, expectations are not always the same across reviewers, or from year to year when a new reviewer is assigned.
- Data collections vary by ODE point of contact and interpretation is not consistent.
- It is not always clear to districts how some data that ODE requests is used.

Key Findings: Summary

- Challenges stem from a combination of policies, people, systems, and practices
- Practices and systems designed for compliance with a need to improve customer service and efficiencies
- Rapid expansion of grant program without coherent systems in place to administer them
- Formal shifts in agency alignment, major funding, and operating structures create compounding factors for absorbing, transitioning, and aligning grant programs

(For example, both YDD and ELD joined ODE in 2013, which significantly broadened the scope of ODE's customer base. ELD is now transitioning back to an independent agency by 2023, which will result in further shifts.)

Grantees

- 2021-23 District Grantees
 - 61 grants are currently distributed to one or more of the 190+ school districts
 - 26 require engagement
 - 33 require a plan
- 2021-23 ESD Grantees:
 - 29 grants are currently distributed to one or more ESDs
 - 20 require community engagement
 - 19 require a plan
- 2021-23 Other Grantees
 - 40 grants are currently distributed to qualifying other grantees
 - 10 Grants for Non-Profit/Community-Based Organization (CBO)
 - 10 Grants for Cities/Counties
 - 7 Grants for Post-Secondary
 - 6 Grants for Oregon Tribes
 - 4 Grants for YCEP/JDEP
 - 2 Grants for Early Learning Providers
 - 1 Grant for IAA with Other Agency



Work Underway

District Supports in Progress

Where ODE has the authority to do so, we started work in direct response to grantees' needs

- Advancing a **limited-duration position** and increasing **resources for ESDs** to provide differentiated grant management **supports to small districts**. (Approved with GEER funds.)
- Working with grantees to **phase out three grant programs**: Regional Promise, Accelerated College Credit Instructor Program, and For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST).
- Implementing a **new electronic submission, approval, and tracking process**.
- Laying the groundwork for an **RFP for a new grant management system**.
- **Launching Integrated Guidance** for districts and grantees to operationally align requirements for six programs (*Continuous Improvement Planning, High School Success (HSS), Student Investment Account (SIA), Early Indicator & Intervention System (EIS), Every Day Matters (EDM), and Career and Technical Education - Perkins V. (CTE)*)

Spotlight Example:

Integrated Guidance for 6 Programs

- ODE is operationally integrating **six aligned programs and district responsibilities:**
 - High School Success (HSS)
 - Student Investment Account (SIA)
 - Continuous Improvement Planning (CIP)
 - Career and Technical Education - Perkins V (CTE)
 - Every Day Matters (EDM)
 - Early Indicator Intervention Systems (EIS)
- Streamlined/integrated monthly communication launched [December 2021](#)
 - Consolidates multiple communications from programs
 - Provides updates on key due dates and deadlines
- Finalizing guidance to be released in February 2022
 - Provide districts with requirements and expectations for an integrated application process for 2023-25
 - Allows a year for districts to plan and engage community prior to the application submission
- Working towards significant efficiencies in reporting

Spotlight Example:

Integrated Guidance for 6 Programs

Timeline

- February 2022: Guidance released to learn & prepare
- Fall 2022: Community engagement and needs assessment
- Fall/Winter 2022: Plan development, Equity Lens, and work through process requirements
- Jan-Feb 2023: Finalized Budget, Plan, and Integrated Application posted for community feedback and Board approval.
- March 2023: Integrated Application Window open
- April-June 2023: ODE review process
- July 2023: Grant agreements and implementation begins



Recommendations

Project Outcomes

Overarching outcome: Create conditions for educational equity and strengthen systems that improve outcomes for students.

- **Center equity** and use an equity lens to shape and improve protocols, practices, and programs.
- **Improve legislative design and guidelines** to align current grants and develop new ones.
- **Reduce districts' administrative burden.**
- Develop **well-trained and supported grant managers** who deliver **high-quality service** to districts, especially small districts.
- **Modernize the technology and systems** for grant applications and reporting.
- **Improve data analysis practices and tools** to more effectively monitor progress and support student investments.

Recommendations for 2021-2026



Partner with the Legislature (Policy)

1. Provide Guidance for the Legislature to Align and Develop Policy for Grant Consolidation and New Grant Programs
2. Legislature Aligns Policies to Support Grant Consolidation and New Grant Programs

Build System Coherence (People and Practices)

3. Consolidate and Integrate District Grant Applications
4. Streamline ODE Grant Practices and Processes
5. Improve ODE Technical Systems for Grant Management and Reporting
6. Improve Access to Grant Information and Support
7. Align Grant Requirements, Standards, and Practices for Community Engagement

About the Recommendations

- Reflect ODE's continued shift towards a high-quality service model
- Address improvements to grant policy, practices, and systems
- Represent themes and areas for improvement surfaced through engagement and analysis
- Have been vetted and approved by:
 - ODE leadership
 - ODE grant managers
 - A representative group of statewide partner districts and K-12 education leaders (e.g., COSA, OASBO, Oregon Small Schools Association, Hillsboro School District, North Clackamas School District, Baker School District, Coquille School District, Umatilla School District, and Lake County School District).

Partner with the Legislature

ODE recommends a two-way communication between ODE and the Legislature that ensures new grant programs:

- Meet the intent of the policy
- Avoid duplication of efforts and unintended administrative burden
- Are developed with a shared understanding of what measures are needed to determine program efficacy and accountability

Said more simply, we want to make the right work easier to do.

Recommendations for 2021-2026

Policy

1. Provide Guidance for the Legislature to Align and Develop Policy for Grant Consolidation and New Grant Programs

- Implement protocols for developing its agency recommended budget that considers the equity and administrative impact of recommended new grant programs. A summary of equity and impact will be shared with the Legislature.
- Provide grant guidelines the Legislature may use when developing new grant programs.
- Agency will continue to analyze current and future grant programs for additional consolidation and alignment.
- Include supports for districts in policy option packages (i.e., a small district initiative supports position).

Recommendations for 2021-2026

Policy

2. Legislature Aligns Policies to Support Grant Consolidation and New Grant Programs

- ODE recommends to the Legislature to consider the ODE grant guidelines when developing new statutes to amend or create new grant programs. Guidance may include due dates, administrative impact on grantees, accountability measures, and grant criteria.
- ODE will coordinate with COSA and other key partners to support the adoption and implementation of the recommendations.
- ODE supports the Governor's budget to assist the Legislature with consolidating redundant or outdated grant programs, as determined by the legislative process.

Build Coherence to Improve Grant Administration

Grants were added program by program without an internal coherent system in place.

ODE had 34 grants in 2003 growing to 108 grants by 2021.

To build system coherence, ODE recommends:

- Aligning and coordinating internal grant processes
- Streamlining and integrating district requirements
- Coordinating community engagement across grant programs
- Updating/modernizing grant management systems
- Improving training for grant managers
- Consolidating data requests

Recommendations for 2021-2026

Practice

3. Consolidate and Integrate District Grant Applications

Pilot, test, and implement streamlined and integrated grant applications for federal and state grants. Pilot programs include:

- Integrated application for the CIP plus five state grant programs: HSS, SIA, EDM, EIIS, and CTE
- Streamlined and consolidated federal grant application
- Integrated Child Nutrition Program Application

Recommendations for 2021-2026

Practice & People

4. Streamline ODE Grant Practices and Processes

- Create a workgroup to identify and significantly reduce redundancies in data and information requested from districts, including requests for data already available to ODE.
- Provide grant recipients and ODE grant managers with clear processes, procedures, timelines, expectations, and definitions (e.g, grant manuals).
- Continue to improve training and technical assistance for grant recipients and ODE grant managers.
- Request authority and funding for procurement staff to streamline grants, contracts, and IGAs.
- Set up structures for ODE cross-office grant coordination and alignment.

Recommendations for 2021-2026

Practice & People

5. Improve ODE Technical Systems for Grant Management and Reporting

- Procure a new end-to-end Grant Management System.
- Implement a revised IDEA General Supervision Framework and improvement system (to replace SPR&I) in order to improve supervision, compliance monitoring, and progress monitoring of key indicators for IDEA grant programs.
- Develop Internal Grant Data Dashboard for the ODE Intranet to analyze scope and contact of total grant portfolio.
- Develop a “heat map” to show how grants are disbursed, including the concentration of grants and grant investments by school district.

Recommendations for 2021-2026

Practice & People

6. Improve Access to Grant Information and Support

- Maintain easy-to-access contact lists for districts and ODE
- Consolidate and streamline communications
- Provide more intensive and differentiated support for small districts
- Provide easy to access information to manage grants

Recommendations for 2021-2026

Practice & People

7. Align Grant Requirements, Standards, and Practices for Community Engagement

- Develop ODE common standards and practices for community engagement.
- Create a clear and aligned roadmap for community engagements across grants.
- Provide resources, training, and support for districts to navigate and deepen community engagement to inform investment decisions.



Next Steps

Next Steps



Source: [Oregonlive](https://www.oregonlive.com)

- Continue work underway to deepen and improve supports for districts, especially small districts.
 - Implement recommendations with goal of completing them by 2026.
 - Design new policies to align with the learning and recommendations in this report.
- ★ Reduce administrative burden on school districts to improve student investment opportunities and outcomes.