



# Oregon Department of Education

## Agency Overview

### Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Dr. Charlene Williams  
Director

Dr. Tenneal Wetherell  
Chief of Staff



# Agency Overview

Presented to:  
Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

# Today's Agenda

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- **About Us**
  - History & Overview
  - Mission, Vision & Values
  - Who We Are & What We Do
- **How We Serve Oregon Students**
  - Student Demographics
  - Current Landscape
  - Data Highlights
- **Agency Priorities**
  - Academic Excellence
  - Belonging & Wellness
  - Accountability
- **How to Reach Us**





# About Us

# History & Overview

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- Established by the Legislature in ORS 326.111.
- Led by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (the Governor).
- The Governor appoints a Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction to perform duties and serve as executive head of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE).
- The Governor appoints (and the Senate confirms) a seven-member State Board of Education (SBE) that sets policies for operating K-12 public schools.
- Includes the Youth Development Division (YDD) and Educator Advancement Council (EAC).



# Mission, Vision & Values



**Mission:** The Oregon Department of Education fosters equity and excellence for every learner through collaboration with educators, partners and communities.

**Vision:** Every student will have access to and benefit from a world-class, well-rounded and equitable education system.

**Values:** Integrity. Accountability. Excellence. Equity.

# Who We Are

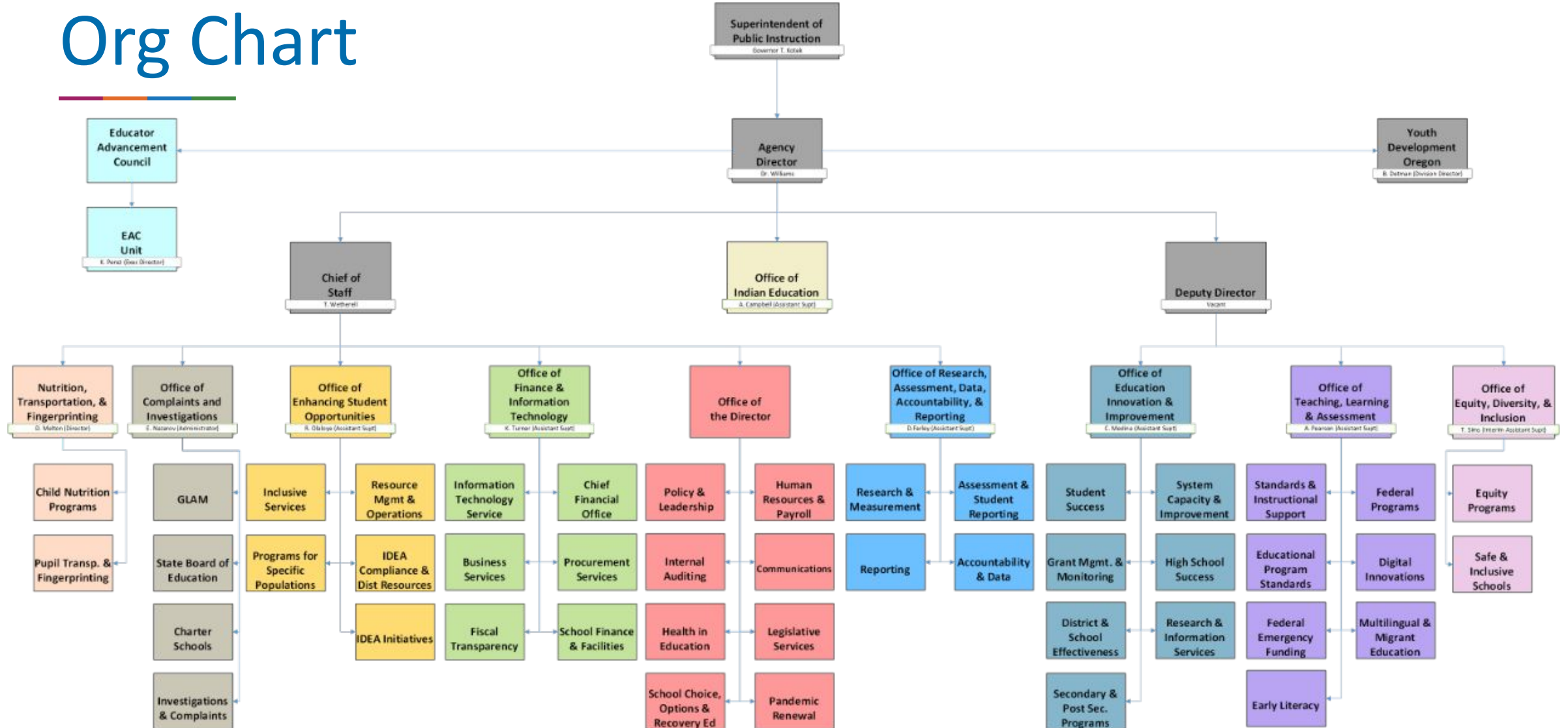
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ODE is a team of 600+ staff who carry out the responsibilities below and includes the state School for the Deaf, Educator Advancement Council, and the Youth Development Division.



- Nutrition, Transportation, & Fingerprinting
- Complaints and Investigations
- Finance and Information Technology
- Innovation & Improvement
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Government & Legal Affairs
- Human Resources
- Communications, Policy and Strategy
- Students Experiencing Disabilities
- Teaching & Learning
- Research, Assessment, Data and Reporting

# Org Chart





# What We Do in Service to Scholars

- Develop **education policies and standards**.
- Oversee K-12 **public schools and public charter schools**.
- Ensure schools provide **nutritious school meals**.
- Ensure **safe and inclusive schools**.
- Support **facilities maintenance**, student **transportation**.
- Transfer **State School Funding** and other resources to school districts.
- Administer **141 state and federal grants\***
- **Collect data and reports** from school districts.
- Support **improvement** efforts through **technical assistance and monitoring**.
- Collaborate with **Tribes, ESDs, CBOs and partner organizations**.
- Celebrate **teachers and staff** with recognition programs.
- Conduct and publish **research**.
- Share and **help districts implement best practices**.
- ...and so much more!





# How We Serve Oregon Students

# Who We Serve

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**547,424 Students\***

More than 360 languages spoken

**197 School Districts**

1,270 Schools

131 Charter Schools

19 Education Service Districts

**89,249 Educators**

14% Teachers of Color

14% Administrators of Color

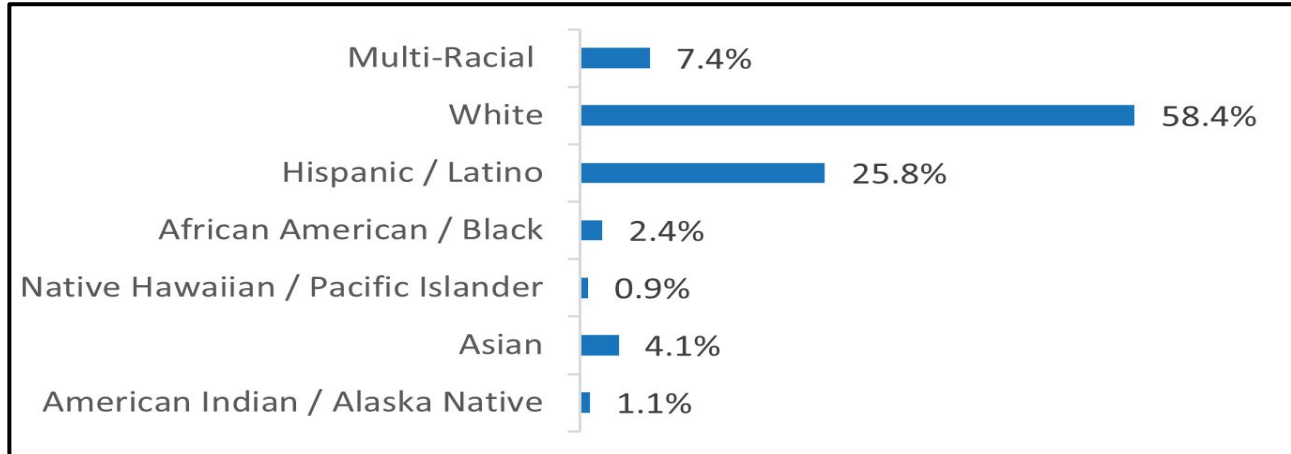
20% Counselors of Color

25% Educational Assistants of Color

# Oregon's Student Demographics



Oregon Department of Education



- Students Experiencing Poverty: **33.0%**
- Ever English Learners: **19.0%**
- Students Navigating Housing Insecurity: **4.0%**
- Mobile Students: **11.8%**
- Students with Disabilities: **16.0%**
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, something else, or questioning: **28.9%\***
- Transgender, gender expansive, or unsure: **12.0%\***

\*Numbers represent survey data from 2022 of 6th, 8th and 11th graders

# Working in Support of Schools & Communities

## Key Boards, Commissions, Advisory Committees & Councils staffed and supported by ODE



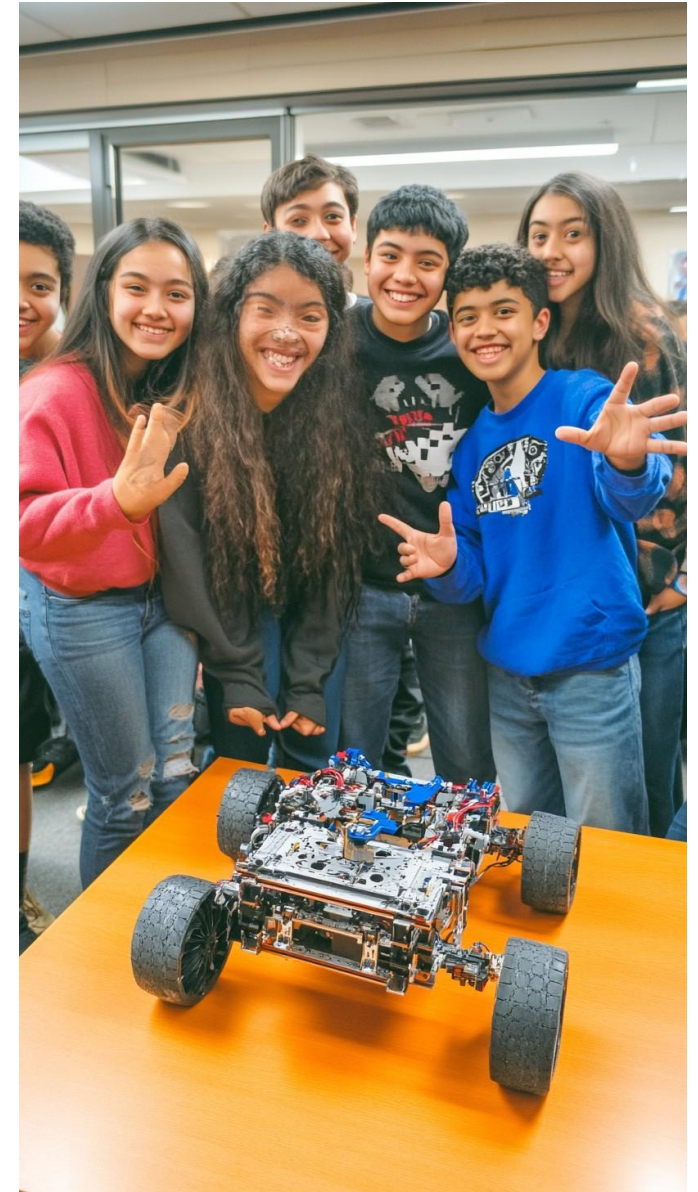
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- State Board of Education
- Youth Development Council
- Educator Advancement Council
- STEM Investment Council
- Fair Dismissal Appeals Board
- Quality Education Council
- Government-to-Government Education Cluster
- Rules Advisory Committee
- Statewide CTE Advisory Council
- State Interagency Coordinating Council
- State Advisory Council for Special Education
- Oregon School for the Deaf Advisory Board of Directors
- Student Success Advisory Groups:
  - American Indian/Alaska Native
  - African American/Black
  - Latino/Latina/Latinx and Indigenous Peoples of Central and South Americas
  - Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
  - LGBTQ2SIA+
  - Refugee and Immigrant
  - English Language Learner

# Current Context

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- **Federal COVID-19 Relief funds expired.**
- **School districts experiencing budget shortfalls and staffing shortages.** Resulting in layoffs, bargaining and contract negotiations.
- **Decrease in student enrollment.** Approximately 30,000 fewer students enrolled in Oregon's K-12 public schools since 2021.
- **Regular attendance is a challenge statewide.** On average, 66% of students attend 90% of the school year. One third of students are absent 16 or more days of 160 day school year.
- **Increase in student and staff social, emotional needs.**
- **Federal administration transition and policy changes.**



# Key Efforts to Support Students & Schools

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- Community Engagement & Tribal Consultation Toolkits
- Integrated Guidance & Regional Support Structure (increased collaboration with ESDs)
- Early Literacy Grants
- Summer Learning
- Attendance awareness & resources
- School Safety & Prevention Systems
- Innovative Programs to support student wellness & holistic education:
  - Social Emotional Learning Standards.
  - Supporting school districts in developing school-based mental health systems.
  - Expanding access to well-rounded education.



# Agency Programs & Big Picture Budget Context



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**Since 2013, ODE has experienced significant growth in its programs (including grant-in-aid) and its responsibilities:**

- ODE's budget, not including the State School Fund, has grown by 163% in General Fund and 195% overall.
- Increase from 34 distinct grant-in-aid programs to over 141 today (2025).

**To provide appropriate oversight for new programs, overall FTE has grown by 77.5%\***

**School Districts have called on ODE, the legislature & the Governor to:**

- Consolidate grant application processes and reporting.
- Align ODE's supports and services to bolster student improvement.
- Increase public transparency.
- Cultivate shared responsibility for improving student outcomes.
- Reduce administrative burden so they can spend their time and resources serving students.



# 2023-24 Graduation Rates

**81.8%** of Oregon Students Graduate On-Time

- This represents 1,000 more graduates than in the previous cohort.
- This is the second highest on-time graduation rate ever reported.
- It's important to remember that during their journey to graduation the class of 2024 endured the full, multi-year impact of COVID and its aftermath.

## Student Groups that made gains in overall graduation rates:

- Migrant students 82.7%
- Special Education students 68.8%
- American Indian/Alaska Native 70.1%
- Students Experiencing Poverty 69.2%
- Students experiencing houselessness 61.3%





# Agency Priorities

# K-12 Education Goals

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**By 2030:**



A statewide, on-time graduation rate of 90%

Supported by:

- Reading proficiency
- Math proficiency
- Successful post secondary transitions



# 3 Areas of Focus

## Priority #1

Academic Excellence



## Priority #2

Belonging & Wellness



## Priority #3

Reimagining Accountability



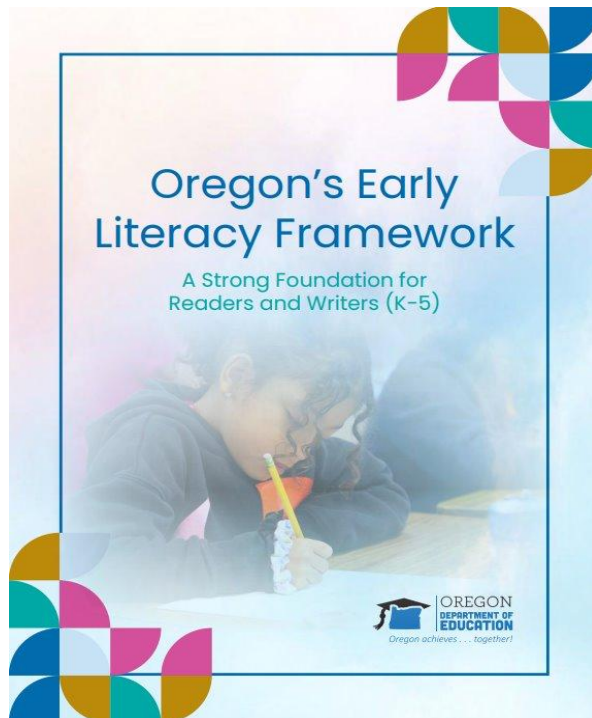
# Academic Excellence



The Oregon Department of Education, Education Service Districts, school districts, and public charter schools hold an **essential responsibility to ensure every child in Oregon has the tools and supports they need to learn, grow and thrive.**



# Early Literacy & Summer Learning



# Belonging & Wellness



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## Governor, education director, get on phones to call attention to importance of school attendance

The calls were part of a campaign to stem chronic absenteeism, which Gov. Tina Kotek said needs to be addressed “urgently”

BY: ALEX BAUMHARDT - OCTOBER 16, 2024 2:48 PM



Salem-Keizer School District Superintendent Andrea Castañeda (left) and Oregon Department of Education Director Charlene Williams (third from left) joined district employees at a phone banking event at Waldo Middle School in Salem Oct. 15 to praise the parents of students who were improving their overall school attendance. (Alex Baumhardt/Oregon Capital Chronicle)

# Cultivating Genius & Joy

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*Cultivating Genius & Joy* means creating learning experiences that celebrate and leverage students' unique cultural identities, strengths, and lived experiences.

We want all of Oregon's schools to foster an environment where **students can express themselves authentically, experience joy in learning, and develop a deep sense of pride and purpose** to enhance and accelerate learning outcomes.



# Reimagining Accountability



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- #1: Improve Public Transparency and Data Sharing.
- #2: Review Oregon's Approach to Funding and Investing in K-12 Education.
- #3: Reduce State Grant Requirements and Reporting.
- #4: Measure Impact & Take Action.

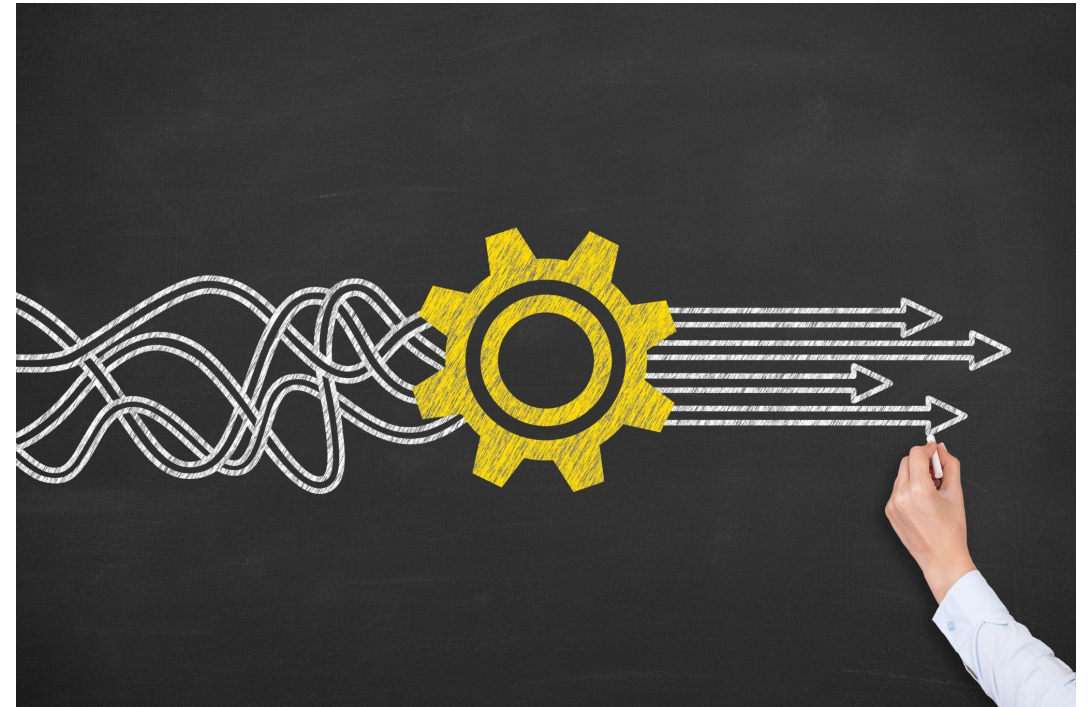
At the heart of this work is serving students. Accountability means ensuring resources are appropriately, effectively, and efficiently utilized to produce successful outcomes and experiences for students.



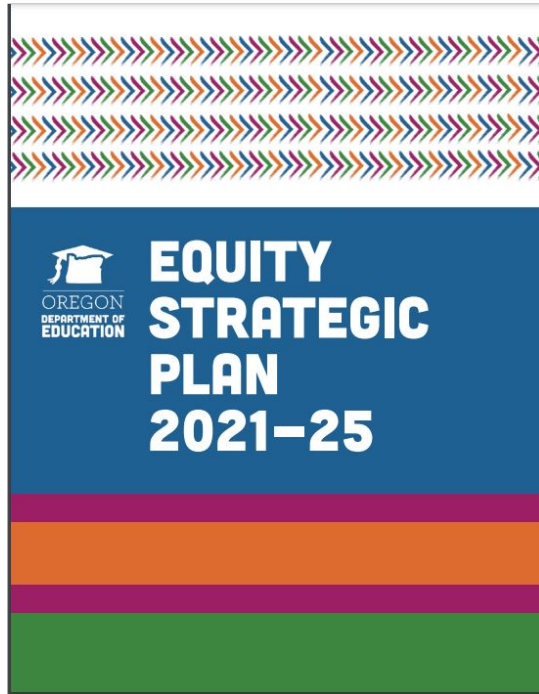
# Internal Operations & Alignment



- Reduce reporting requirements by 50%
- Align reporting to five Student Success areas named in the Accountability Report:
  - High-Quality Learning Experiences
  - Aligned & Focused Systems
  - Engaged Partners & Communities
  - Safe & Inclusive Schools
  - Committed & Supported Staff
- Holistic internal (ODE staff) review of reporting submissions



# ODE Agency Wide Strategic Refresh



## **ODE Equity Strategic Plan Vision**

The Oregon Department of Education will set a foundation for agency-wide culture change by building awareness, skill, and capacity throughout the agency to more consistently and effectively interrupt historical and current patterns of neglect and oppression in order to create and ensure educational equity in Oregon's school systems.

## **A Path Forward for 2025-2030**

- ODE's Equity Strategic Plan will be updated in 2025.
- Updates will cast a broad a strategic vision for alignment and coherence.



# LOVE & JUSTICE

Dr. Charlene Williams  
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Do the best you can until  
you know better.

Then when you know better,  
do better.

-Maya Angelou





Oregon Students  
THANK YOU!

# Questions?



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