

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **U.S. Department of Education Approves Oregon Plan under ESSA**

*More than a year in the making, Oregon's State Plan represents statewide, collaborative effort*

(Salem, Ore.) – The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) today announced that the U.S. Department of Education has [approved the Oregon Plan](#) to implement the federal [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#). Oregon's plan, which details the values, goals, and strategies that will guide the state's education system going forward, is among the first in the nation to earn this endorsement.

Oregon's approved plan is founded on a statewide vision that ensures each and every Oregon student has access to and benefits from a world-class, well-rounded and equitable education. It outlines four commitments to enact the statewide vision and further improve and strengthen Oregon's schools:

- Prioritizing and advancing equity
- Extending the promise of a well-rounded education
- Strengthening district systems
- Fostering ongoing engagement

Since ESSA was signed into law in December 2015 to replace the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, ODE staff have worked with partners to help create the plan, consulting with tribal leaders and conducting more than two dozen community conversations around the state. The result of this collaboration with students, families, teachers, administrators, school boards, tribal leaders and community members is a document that represents Oregonians' hopes, dreams, aspirations and values for our students and schools.

"Education provides a pathway for every Oregonian to fulfill their potential," Governor Kate Brown said. "Oregon's ESSA State Plan supports a seamless system of education that ensures all students have the tools and opportunity to become lifelong learners, to graduate from high school and pursue rewarding careers."

ESSA provides more flexibility to states than did NCLB, encouraging innovation while maintaining a focus on accountability and improving underperforming schools. This allowed Oregon to develop its own plan that reflects its citizens' priorities.

“Today is a tremendous milestone for Oregon. Oregon’s State Plan is founded on equity and represents the voices and communities we serve,” Deputy Superintendent Salam Noor said. “We want to put every one of our learners on a path to success from birth through high school, and beyond. And whether our students choose to attend college or go straight into the workforce, it’s critical that their school experience is full of opportunity and ensures they are college and career ready.”

ESSA provides an opportunity for states to select specific school quality and student success indicators. For Oregon, those indicators include chronic absenteeism rates and ninth grade on-track figures, two areas that received broad statewide support as a part of the effort to increase the number of students graduating from high school.

The Oregon Plan represents the voices of Oregonians and is deeply rooted in advancing educational equity and truly building systems that eliminate systemic and historical barriers to student success. ODE ensured that tribal consultations and engagement with communities of color and organizations representing students with disabilities were a key part of the development process.

To enhance individualized and personalized learning, Oregon’s Plan reinforces the commitment that every student in Oregon schools receives a well-rounded education. The Oregon Department of Education will provide supports to educators and districts so they may break down barriers that prevent students from being successful.

Implementation of the Oregon Plan under ESSA will be phased in, starting with the 2017-18 school year. ODE will conduct regular and broad stakeholder engagement in its implementation of ESSA, and is already engaging in outreach to redesign the school report card and develop systems to support low-performing schools and educator effectiveness.

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