

NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact: Tricia Yates, tricia.yates@state.or.us**Regular Attenders Report Shows Need for Action on Chronic Absenteeism***Chronic absenteeism rate ticks up across the board*

(Salem, Ore.) – The number of chronically absent students, defined as missing ten percent or more of school days per year, is up again according to [data released today](#) by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). The Regular Attenders Report (formerly the Not Chronically Absent Report) shows that 80.3 percent of students are considered regular attenders, down from 81.3 percent the year before. That means the chronically absent percentage increased from 18.7 percent to 19.7 percent.

“We know that students who attend school regularly have more opportunity to learn, so tracking chronic absenteeism is critical,” Acting Deputy Superintendent Colt Gill said. “There is a direct link between high instances of chronic absenteeism and low graduation rates; this is why chronic absenteeism is one of our school accountability measures in our Oregon Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act and why Governor Brown and the Legislature have invested in programs to address the issue.”

ODE is implementing a [statewide chronic absenteeism plan](#) focusing on:

- State-level support for local districts and communities to decrease chronic absenteeism and improve high school graduation. (Legislature appropriated \$7.4M for current biennium)
- Effective use of data with key local partners to engage in collaborative decision making to decrease chronic absenteeism and improve high school graduation.
- Creating inclusive, welcoming, and engaging learning environments that support every student.
- Statewide Professional Development and support for educators to reduce chronic absenteeism and improve high school graduation.
- Establishing learning environments that address health-related barriers and opportunities to decrease chronic absenteeism and improve high school graduation.

Measure 98, approved by voters almost a year ago, aims to improve graduation rates through dropout prevention, dual credit options and career technical education. Lawmakers approved \$170-million in funding to the High School Graduation and College and Career Readiness Fund for the current biennium to implement Measure 98. Addressing chronic absenteeism is one possible use for these funds as part of dropout prevention.



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Colt Gill

Acting Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

An additional \$300-thousand has also been earmarked for the Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP) which aims to improve attendance among American Indian/Alaska Native students in collaboration with the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon. Now in its second year, TAPP showed significant improvements in attendance in many of the participating schools.

“As we implement these programs, it’s important to remember that this is long in the making in Oregon and won’t be fixed overnight,” Gill said. “However, we can make substantial progress by supporting districts, schools, families and communities in working together by highlighting the importance of attendance and its impact on key outcomes like graduation.”

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