

2009 LEGISLATURE:

Forward Progress on Quality Teaching

Measures fostering effective teaching found success in the Oregon legislature this session, despite some of the most challenging economic circumstances in state history. Here's a recap of what legislators accomplished on Chalkboard Project®'s policy priorities—and a look at what's next.



GOOD PROGRESS

★ Educator professional development

A bill supported by Chalkboard, Stand for Children, Governor Kulongoski and the Oregon Education Association, among others, creates a Professional Development Commission and provides a Web-based clearinghouse listing high-quality professional development programs for educators. Educator PD in Oregon will now be aligned with quality standards.

SOME PROGRESS

★ Teacher/Administrator mentoring

New teachers, principals and superintendents will continue to receive high-quality mentoring via the statewide Beginning Teacher/Administrator Mentor Program, which was renewed at a \$5.07 million level. The need is much greater: schools have already submitted applications requesting mentoring grants for 962 new teachers in the coming school year.

★ More efficient school business reviews

Chalkboard advocated for more cost-effective operations reviews for schools wishing to evaluate their business functions, share best practices and identify savings. As a result, \$800,000 which was to be allocated for government-funded performance audits was eliminated from the state spending plan, and school districts can now conduct business evaluations through a fee-for-service program at far lower cost by using nonprofit and private groups. Chalkboard funded six voluntary reviews for school districts around the state to build and demonstrate this model. The Oregon Association of School Business Officials will continue to offer the program.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT



Stable, adequate school funding

The erratic funding of Oregon public education continued this year as legislators struggled to maintain K-20 support levels in a nationwide economic downturn. Comprehensive, fair reform in the way the state supports schools is not in sight.



Transportation savings

An effort to create incentives for schools to use their transportation grants more efficiently went astray. The original concepts devolved into a legislative proposal that would not have stimulated meaningful cost savings for schools. Transportation efficiencies should remain a priority, so school districts can redirect savings to the classroom.

Continuing the drive for higher student achievement

Going forward, one of Chalkboard's top priorities is the CLASS™ Project, to support more effective teaching and learning in Oregon schools. CLASS supports educators with expanded career paths, effective performance evaluation, relevant professional development, and accelerated pay options. Chalkboard is pleased to be adding new school districts to the CLASS™ Project for the 2009-2010 school year.



To learn more: ChalkboardProject.org