



Monday, August 31, 2009

## Vernonia School District to receive CLASS Program grant

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With the expansion of the Creative Leadership Achieves Student Success Project, the Chalkboard Project's largest initiative to date, a total of 12 Oregon school districts, including Vernonia and Tillamook, will be engaging in work to support high quality teaching and learning.

The CLASS Project was developed with the knowledge that teachers are the most important factor in raising student achievement. It leads districts on a path to empowering educators through a focus on four components; career paths, professional development, performance evaluations, and incentive pay.

This expansion comes at a time when the federal government is promising stimulus funds to states and individual districts if they can prove that they are driving achievement with innovative and research-driven practices. The Obama administration is specifically looking to fund those practices that encourage and support highly effective teaching.

In high-needs districts, having a highly effective teacher in each classroom can make a difference in the yearly progress of students. With 53 percent of the teaching workforce being older than age 50, recruiting and retaining new high quality teachers is essential to the future health of Oregon schools. CLASS is designed to make sure there is an effective teacher in every classroom and every student in Oregon has the opportunity to succeed.

Vernonia is one of the nine new districts participating in the CLASS Project, and will be awarded a planning grant ranging from \$6,000 to \$28,500. Tillamook has already begun implementing its district-created CLASS Projects. Researchers at Portland State University are working with the districts to develop individualized scorecards that will provide extensive data including key indicators of success such as student achievement, college preparedness and teacher recruitment and retention rates.

For information about Chalkboard and to learn how to get involved, call (877) YOUR-K12 or go to ([www.chalkboardproject.org](http://www.chalkboardproject.org))

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