



PRESS RELEASE

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PORTLAND CITY CLUB EVENT TO ADDRESS SCHOOL REFORM FOR THE KNOWLEDGE AGE

Chalkboard Project and School Leaders to Showcase Teaching Quality Efforts

Efforts to support educator quality and raise student achievement in Oregon are resulting in innovations that can lead the way to 21st century schools. The Chalkboard Project and Oregon educators will give a joint presentation on the subject at a City Club program on Friday, June 5.

The presentation will also challenge the business community to partner with Oregon educators to win federal stimulus money grants, and create a stable funding structure for Oregon schools.

"Research has shown that having a great teacher raises student achievement more than any other in-school factor," explains Sue Hildick, president of Chalkboard. "Schools have to transform from teaching institutions to learning organizations, where both students and teachers are lifelong learners. If we want successful 21st century schools and successful graduates, educators need to lead the way. And we need to provide them access to the tools they need to get the job done."

Chalkboard recently announced it will double its support for a teacher quality initiative called CLASS. The CLASS Project - Creative Leadership Achieves Student Success - aims to empower Oregon teachers to advance professionally so students get what they need from their education to succeed.

CLASS puts resources behind educators' own ideas for new career options, fair but thorough performance evaluations, relevant professional development and new compensation models. Currently in its second year of school pilots, CLASS is an innovative template for school reform that can be rapidly expanded statewide. And, it sets up a framework for school change that is directly aligned with federal stimulus grant money goals, so schools are well-positioned for that money.

During the City Club presentation, Chalkboard President Sue Hildick will provide an overview of the education system challenges CLASS is addressing, such as teacher attrition, the cost of recruiting new teachers, student achievement, and educator quality. She'll describe strategies that are proving effective in tackling these issues -- and how adopting them may lead to increased federal funding.

Sherwood School District Superintendent Dan Jamison will describe his schools' experience with CLASS, and how the project is addressing teacher quality and student achievement.

Terrel Smith, a 30-year veteran teacher and union leader in Sherwood, will talk about the significant new opportunities CLASS is bringing to teachers in the district. He was recognized in 2008 as the Oregon "Technology Teacher of the Year."

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About Chalkboard Project

Launched in early 2004, Chalkboard Project exists to inspire Oregonians to do what it takes to make the state's K-12 public schools among the nation's best, while strengthening our school system's financial accountability to taxpayers. Chalkboard aims to help create a more informed and engaged public that understands and addresses the tough choices and tradeoffs required to build strong schools, and to enable statewide programs that can be applied at the local level to improve school quality, accountability, and funding. For more information about Chalkboard and to learn how to get involved, call (877) YOUR-K12 or visit www.chalkboardproject.org.