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Background Brief on ...

# Database Initiative Project

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The Database Initiative Project (**DBI**) began in 1997 with the goal of standardizing the financial accounts of schools in order to generate reliable, comparable data on which to make policy decisions.

## Why Collect School District Data?

Historically, schools have been a local issue; money was raised locally and spending decisions were made by the locally-elected board. Consequently, accounting systems varied from district to district.

In 1990, passage of Ballot Measure 5 shifted the responsibility for funding education to the state. In 1991, the Legislature enacted the Oregon Education Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, a measure that authorized the Oregon Department of Education (**ODE**) to determine state standards and develop state assessments based on those standards. Suddenly, the state was deeply involved in both driving curriculum decisions and setting funding levels. Yet actual spending and curriculum decisions were still being made at the local level. Questions arose as to whether districts were using funds efficiently. The school-based data system could not answer those questions for policymakers for two reasons: inconsistent financial reports, and lack of automation and reliance on manual paper systems.

Frustrated by this lack of data, the 1997 Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 3636, which directed the State Board of Education to adopt, by rule, a budget accounting system for school districts and education service districts (**ESDs**) to produce comparable spending information and make the gathered data available to the public. Initially, 16 pilot districts were involved in developing the database system. Two years later, upon the successful completion of the pilot project, the department began statewide implementation of the DBI. Oregon is one of only a handful of states that has used the Internet to both collect and report comparable education data.

## How Will the Data be Used?

The data submitted to the ODE may be analyzed and used for a number of purposes, including:

- Legislators and other policymakers having consistent data for all school districts in the state
- School districts comparing their funding levels and student performance with other districts, driving improvements and

efficiencies

- Communities having access to information about their schools
- The ODE having information to analyze and determine student outcomes for those in Head Start pre-kindergarten programs
- Consolidating existing information and eliminating redundancies
- Incorporating data into the Oregon Report Card
- Modeling the impacts of different funding levels, in conjunction with the Quality Education Model, to show the effects of funding increases and decreases
- Meeting federal reporting requirements

The Chalkboard Project, a non-profit, non-partisan initiative of Foundations for a Better Oregon, uses data from the DBI for its Open Book\$ Project website, which tracks spending of Oregon's 197 school districts and allows comparison of similar-sized school districts.

### Data Available

A number of reports are available from the DBI web page, including:

- Funding Information: Revenue, expenditure, and budgeting information, by school district
- School District Profiles: A snapshot for the school year for each district with information on student enrollment and performance; community demographics; staffing; spending per student; average class size; instructional time; and infrastructure
- District Comparisons: A comparative snapshot for the school year for two selected districts with information on student enrollment and performance; community demographics; staffing; spending per student; average class size; instructional time; and infrastructure
- ESD Profiles: A snapshot for the school year for each ESD with information on student demographics; member district staffing; infrastructure; and schools directly administered by ESDs
- School Profiles: A snapshot for the school year for each school with information on

student enrollment, demographics, and performance; staffing; spending per student; average class size; instructional time; and infrastructure

- School Comparisons: A comparative snapshot for the school year for two selected schools with information on student enrollment, demographics, and performance; staffing; spending per student; average class size; instructional time; and infrastructure
- Average elementary class size, by school
- Hours of instruction for each grade within a school
- Student information, such as number of drop-outs; students that have completed high school; gender; ethnicity; and number of those eligible for free and reduced-price school lunch
- Staffing number and type by school
- Technology: Showing student access to a school's computers and the Internet

On the following pages, a partial sample report comparing two districts is shown.

### Staff and Agency Contacts

Oregon Department of Education  
[Oregon Database Initiative](#)

The Chalkboard Project  
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**District Profile Comparison for Medford and Oregon City 2005-2006 School Year**

	<b>MEDFOR D SCH DIST 549</b>	<b>OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62</b>	<b>MEDFORD</b>	<b>OREGON CITY</b>	<b>State</b>
Student Enrollment	12,853	8,100			
Average Daily Membership	11,969	7,787	95.5%	96.1%	94.8%
Special Ed Students	1,316	1,196	10.5%	14.8%	12.6%
ESL Students	1,027	324	8.6%	4.2%	10.3%
Students in Poverty	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teen Parents	50	8	0.4%	0.1%	0.2%
Neglected & Delinquent Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Home School Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Private School Students	n/a	n/a			
Minority Students	2,655	1,130	21.1%	14.0%	27.6%

**Dropout Rate**

1 Year Dropout Rate Grades 7-8			1.0%	0.1%	0.4%
1 Year Dropout Rate Grades 9-12			6.5%	5.7%	4.1%
4 Year Dropout Rate Grades 9-12			21.6%	18.6%	13.7%

**Staffing**

**Percent of Total Staff**

Licensed Staff	619.0	393.6	60.9%	50.8%	53.3%
Instructional Assts	142.5	122.0	14.0%	15.8%	16.5%
School Administrators	33.2	15.0	3.2%	1.9%	2.9%
Central Administrators	0.0	6.0	0.0%	0.8%	1.2%
Classified Support Staff	221.5	237.8	21.8%	30.7%	26.1%

**Spending per Student**

	MEDFORD SD	OREGON CITY SD	STATE
<b>General Fund</b>			
Direct Classroom	\$3,937	\$3,816	\$4,006
Classroom Support	\$983	\$1,174	\$1,215
Building Support	\$1,159	\$1,116	\$1,243
Central Support	\$428	\$262	\$328
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,507</b>	<b>\$6,368</b>	<b>\$6,792</b>

<b>All Operating Funds</b>			
Direct Classroom	\$4,590	\$4,224	\$4,006
Classroom Support	\$1,051	\$1,655	\$1,593
Building Support	\$1,422	\$1,430	\$1,618
Central Support	\$432	\$280	\$359
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,496</b>	<b>\$7,589</b>	<b>\$8,117</b>

**Classes**

Elementary Class Size	24.8	26.3	23.6
Student:Teacher Ratio	21.7	22.6	20.1
Open Enrollment	n/a	n/a	

**Infrastructure**

	MEDFORD SD	OREGON CITY SD	State
Number Students per Computer	5.8	6.1	n/a
Number of Students per Internet Connection	5.8	6.2	n/a

  

<b>Age of School Buildings as of December 2002</b>			
Age	MEDFORD SD	OREGON CITY	D
	n/a	n/a	

**Student Performance**

Percentage of Students At or Above State Performance Standards

Reading				Writing			
Grade	MEDFORD SD	OREGON CITY SD	State	Grade	MEDFORD SD	OREGON CITY SD	State
3	92%	92%	90%	4	73%	62%	68%
5	90%	89%	86%	7	64%	66%	69%
8	67%	67%	68%	10	78%	74%	77%
10	63%	62%	57%				

Math				Problem Solving			
Grade	MEDFORD SD	OREGON CITY SD	State	Grade	MEDFORD SD	OREGON CITY SD	State
3	90%	90%	88%	No data found for specified schools and year			
5	88%	89%	87%				
8	62%	68%	68%				
10	40%	48%	47%				