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Background Brief on...

# Database Initiative Project

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## Background

The Database Initiative Project 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 bill 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 remained 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 Legislature passed House Bill 3636. This bill directed the State Board of Education to adopt, by rule, a budget accounting system for school districts and education service districts to produce comparable spending information, and make the data gathered 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. It can be accessed from the department's web page, at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/>

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:

- School districts will be able to compare their funding levels and student performance with other districts, driving improvements and efficiencies.
- Communities and policymakers will have access to information about their schools, enabling them to make better decisions concerning them.
- ODE will have the information to analyze and determine student outcomes for those who attend Head Start Pre-kindergarten programs.
- Existing information gathering will be consolidated and redundancies eliminated.
- Data will be incorporated into the Oregon Report Card.
- Data will be used for modeling the impacts of different funding levels, in conjunction with the Quality Education Model, to show the effects of funding increases and decreases.
- Data will be used to meet federal reporting requirements

### Data Available

A number of reports are available from the DBI web page. Some of the information available is listed below.

- 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.
- Number of volunteer hours given a school.
- Student information, such as number of drop outs, high school completers, gender, ethnicity, number of those eligible for reduced school lunch.
- Staffing number and type by school
- School Buildings: For each school building, this report lists the year that the school was built, the year of the last major remodel, and building square footage in school districts.
- Technology: This report shows student access to computers and the Internet in the school.

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

### Staff and Agency Contacts

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**District Profile Comparison for Medford and Oregon City 2002-2003 School Year**

	<b>MEDFORD SCH DIST 549</b>	<b>OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62</b>	<b>MEDFORD</b>	<b>OREGON CITY</b>	<b>State</b>
Student Enrollment	13,014	7,662			
Average Daily Membership	12,492	7,572	96.0%	98.8%	95.8%
Special Ed Students	1,437	1,287	11.0%	16.8%	12.9%
ESL Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Students in Poverty	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teen Parents	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Neglected & Delinquent Students	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Home School Students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Private School Students	482	560			
Minority Students	2,334	860	17.9%	11.2%	23.7%

**Dropout Rate**

1 Year Dropout Rate Grades 7-8		0.8%	0.4%	n/a
1 Year Dropout Rate Grades 9-12		3.7%	1.6%	4.4%
4 Year Dropout Rate Grades 9-12		8.6%	6.2%	12.2%

**Staffing**

**Percent of Total Staff**

	<b>MEDFORD</b>	<b>OREGON CITY</b>	<b>STATE</b>
Licensed Staff	628.2	375.6	60.7% 50.1% 54.3%
Instructional Assts	138.5	108.8	13.4% 14.5% 15.2%
School Administrators	30.5	17.0	2.9% 2.3% 2.9%
Central Administrators	5.0	6.0	0.5% 0.8% 1.2%
Classified Support Staff	233.5	242.9	22.6% 32.4% 26.4%

**Spending per Student**

	<b>MEDFORD</b>	<b>OREGON CITY</b>	<b>STATE</b>
<b>General Fund</b>			
Direct Classroom	\$3,604	\$3,338	\$3,596

Classroom Support	\$1,022	\$1,135	\$1,194
Building Support	\$881	\$1,115	\$1,078
Central Support	\$302	\$221	\$334
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,809</b>	<b>\$5,809</b>	<b>\$6,201</b>
<b>All Operating Funds</b>			
Direct Classroom	\$3,954	\$3,677	\$4,171
Classroom Support	\$1,088	\$1,515	\$1,563
Building Support	\$1,080	\$1,374	\$1,398
Central Support	\$302	\$221	\$374
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,423</b>	<b>\$6,788</b>	<b>\$7,506</b>

**Classes**

Elementary Class Size	28.0	26.5	23.1
Student:Teacher Ratio	23.2	22.5	20.4
Open Enrollment	No	Yes	

**Infrastructure**

	MEDFORD SCH DIST 549	OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62	State
Number Students per Computer	8.8	6.1	6.3
Number of Students per Internet Connection	n/a	n/a	n/a

Age of School Buildings as of December 2002		
Age	MEDFORD SCH DIST 549	OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62
	n/a	n/a

**Student Performance**

Percentage of Students At or Above State Performance Standards

Reading			
Grade	MEDFORD SCH DIST 549	OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62	State
3	94%	91%	86%
5	85%	85%	80%
8	59%	66%	63%
10	60%	50%	54%

Writing			
Grade	MEDFORD SCH DIST 549	OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62	State
10	76%	77%	82%

Math			
Grade	MEDFORD SCH DIST 549	OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62	State
3	89%	86%	79%
5	83%	83%	79%
8	60%	61%	61%
10	43%	43%	46%

Problem Solving			
Grade	MEDFORD SCH DIST 549	OREGON CITY SCH DIST 62	State
10	66%	39%	51%