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Background Brief on ...

# K-12 Education Reforms

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## Education Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Oregon's K-12 education is a product of the Education Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century under the original bill, House Bill 3565 which was enacted in 1991. During the 1995, 2001 and 2003 Legislative Sessions the Act has been amended to address higher content standards, expectations of student learning, and defined uniform assessments.

The most recognized elements of the Act have been the Certificate of Initial Mastery (**CIM**) and the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (**CAM**). The CIM represents standards of knowledge and skill proficiencies that students can demonstrate in English, mathematics, science and are benchmarked to the tenth grade level. The challenge for educators is demonstrating the value of the CIM for a graduating student. The CIM standards appear to have little or no bearing on university admissions, community college program placement or employment opportunities. The chart below tracks the number of students who have obtained the CIM upon graduation:

YEAR	White	%	African American	%	Hispanic	%	Asian/Pacific Islander	%	Native American Alaskan Indian	%	Multi-Race Ethnicity	%	Unknown	%	Total	%
2003-2004	9,667	35.8	84	12.1	321	12.4	643	41.1	112	19.5	53	45.7	117	26.2	10,997	33.4
2002-2003	9,487	35.0	81	11.8	279	11.7	483	32.9	94	18.7			70	21.6	10,494	32.3
2001-2002	8,873	33.5	65	10.9	213	10.7	408	31.8	111	22.7			95	28.6	9,765	31.3
2000-2001	7,109	27.6	55	9.1	167	10.3	314	24.7	67	15.0			35	16.9	7,747	25.9

Percents are the number of regular diplomas with a CIM for each race/ethnicity, divided by the total number of regular diplomas for each race/ethnicity.

The CAM combines achievement of the CIM with additional academic proficiencies and career-related proficiencies achieved through a variety of hands-on, real world learning experiences. During the 2003 Session was passed and One element of House Bill 2744 was to delay the implementation of the CAM to September 2008 but would not affect the programs currently in place.

## State Board of Education

Starting in 2005, the Oregon State Board of Education began a focused review of Oregon's current academic content standards, credentialing requirements and statewide student assessment system. The State Board produced a white paper requesting comments to five questions:

1. What knowledge and skills do all Oregon students need in order to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

2. What should be included in high school diploma requirements? What can we do to improve Oregon's high school credentials (Diploma, Oregon Honors Diploma, CIM, CAM, GED, others)?
3. What can we do to improve Oregon's standards and assessments?
4. How can you or your organization contribute to the success of this initiative?
5. After reading the white paper, what other comments are there?

Issues under discussion by the State Board include whether to raise math requirements, add a year of science, whether to allow credit by proficiency, and whether to require students to demonstrate "essential skills" such as being able to read and interpret a variety of texts. The State School Board may vote on its final proposals in mid-January 2007.

### **2005 Legislative Session**

The following education bills were passed:

- House Bill 3129, which will require a student who receives a diploma to complete three years of mathematics and four years of English prior to high school graduation for students on or after July 1, 2009.
- Senate Bill 300, also known as the "Expanded Options" bill, which is intended to increase high school and college completion rates by creating alternatives for students who need advanced or technical course work that is not offered by their high schools. The bill caps the number of quarter hours awarded and priority is given to at-risk students.
- Senate Bill 1071 creates the Oregon Virtual School District (**OVSD**) within the Department of Education to provide on-line course to K-12 public school students. The OVSD is intended to address the lack of statutory and administrative guidance for school districts that currently offer on-line courses.

### **The Chalkboard Project**

The Chalkboard Project was started in March 2004 and based on their web-site ([www.chalkboardproject.org](http://www.chalkboardproject.org)) they have conducted opinion polls, meetings with stakeholders and focus groups designed to guide their work. In June 2006 the Chalkboard Project started the Open Book\$ project ([www.openbooksproject.org](http://www.openbooksproject.org)), which tracks spending of Oregon's 198 school districts and allows comparison of similar size school districts. The base information for Open Book\$ is obtained from the Department of Education's Data Base Initiative (**DBI**). The Chalkboard Project is currently preparing legislative action items for the 2007 Legislative session.

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