



OREGON SENATE DEMOCRATS

State Capitol
Oregon State Legislature

PRESS RELEASE

September 1, 2022

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Dembrow Applauds Agency Efforts to Improve Graduation Standards

Senate Bill 744 Report Will Help Improve Outcomes, Equity for Oregon Students

SALEM – Today, the Oregon Department of Education released recommendations to the Legislature to improve graduation standards for Oregon students. This report follows up on [Senate Bill 744](#) from the 2021 Legislative Session, which required the Department to conduct an extensive public review of state high school graduation standards to reduce educational inequities. The report contains recommendations to better prepare students on their path to graduation and beyond, including entering the workforce or higher education.

“In keeping with Senate Bill 744, the Department’s report focuses on one central issue – aligning Oregon high school graduation requirements with the skills that will help our kids succeed,” said [Senator Michael Dembrow](#) (D-Portland), Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, who carried Senate Bill 744 to passage on the Senate floor. “The report confirms that certain past requirements were not leading to better outcomes for young adults preparing for college or entering the workforce. The report found that past requirements were actually harming certain student groups.”

Senate Bill 744 suspended “Assessment of Essential Skills” graduation requirements while the Department compiled their report. The Department’s review of statewide data in the report showed that “Assessment of Essential Skills” graduation requirements were inequitable and did not ensure that Oregon students would be prepared for life after high school. The report also found that most other states have moved away from these types of requirements.

“The Senate Committee on Education will be holding a hearing on the report on September 21,” continued Senator Dembrow. “We’ll hear more about the findings, about the extensive outreach efforts made by the Department over the last year, and about the State Board of Education’s plans for future rule-making based on the report. It’s not clear yet whether any additional legislative action is needed. That’s a discussion that will begin at the hearing.”

A copy of the report is [available here](#).

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