



Memorandum

*The Oregon Legislature and Education:
Highlights of the 2007 Legislative Session*

K-12 Education: Legislative Highlights:

- A \$6.245 billion dollar budget was passed for K-12 education. It has a \$6 billion base, and a \$245 million “school improvement fund” intended to help schools recover from past budget cuts.
- Full funding of Head Start was implemented this legislative session. Funding was originally tied to increase in corporate minimum, but it ended up being funded out of DOE budget for approximately \$40 million dollars.
- A Health Care pooling bill was passed for public educators. The intent is to reduce and stem the rising costs of health care. OEA supported the bill, but OSBA opposed it. However, it remains to be seen if it will reduce the costs of healthcare.
- SB 318 was passed which provides a basis for recommended areas of investment, such as literacy and class size reduction.
- A construction excise tax was passed which allows school districts to impose a tax of .50¢ per square foot on new construction and development to help fund schools.
- A Teacher Mentoring bill, HB 2574, was passed. It hopes to target young teachers to prevent high turnover rates.
- The School Improvement Fund directs additional funds to key proven school reforms such as K-1 class size as well as for a wide variety of other purposes. However, a budget note requires schools to specify how expenditure of these funds will improve school and student performance.
- \$300,000 was reserved by the legislature for an interim study of school transportation systems in the state.
- A bill to reduce/eliminate junk foods in schools was passed in the legislature.

- A Rainy Day Fund was created to help the state during hard economic times.
- A School Audits bill was passed this session, and while voluntary, will create some data on performance and efficiencies for school districts to help track the effectiveness of funding.

Higher-Ed: Legislative Highlights

- The final operating budget that the Legislature approved for higher education was \$1.4 billion for universities and community colleges combined, an 18 percent increase over current spending.
- A bill to double the amount of student aid Oregon's students can receive was passed.
- Capital construction for Oregon colleges and universities totaled \$275 million for maintenance and new construction needs.
- A bill to limit the ability of the State Board of Higher Education to raise fees never made it out of committee.
- A bill to provide immigrants who live in Oregon the ability to pay in-state tuition rates never made it out of committee.
- A bill that would have set mandatory minimum requirements for full-time faculty at Oregon's universities never made it to a vote.
- A bill that directs the Oregon Student Assistance Commission to base its method of determining the state share of education costs on a calculation of the student share, family share, and aid amount expected from federal government, passed the legislature.
- An effort to fund the Oregon Skill Up Fund failed to gain traction. This fund would have awarded grants to local and regional workforce investment boards to provide workforce training to individuals to become employed in high-demand occupations.