OREGON GEAR UP: 2009–2011
A THREE YEAR EVALUATION

December 2011

Eve McDermott

education northwest
CREATING STRONG SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oregon GEAR UP

In August 2008, Oregon was awarded a six-year, statewide GEAR UP grant by the U.S. Department of Education. Directed and managed by the Oregon University System (OUS), 12 clusters, with a total of 20 schools and approximately 1,450 seventh-graders, participated in the first year (2008–2009) of the grant. Of these students, 58.1 percent participated in the schools' free and reduced-price lunch program. In 2011, the average percentage of middle school students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch program increased to 67.8 percent.

Oregon GEAR UP believes that postsecondary education is possible for all Oregon students, regardless of their economic background, and strives to empower them to realize that ambition. Oregon GEAR UP brings this message to middle and high schools, students, their parents, and the community through early college and career awareness activities, scholarships, financial aid information, and improved academic support to help raise the expectations and achievement of all students.

At Education Northwest (formerly the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory) an evaluation team worked with OUS staff members to develop an evaluation plan to meet the requirements of the Annual Performance Report (APR) for the federal government and to provide formative evaluation information for the programs.

Primary Findings

The Oregon GEAR UP grants are between $30,000 to $40,000 per year based on the number of students served. In spite of the many challenges Oregon schools are facing with budget shortfalls at the state level, every dollar received by a GEAR UP school is matched, tracked, and documented by local resources. These monies are not used by schools to supplant activities that may be cut due to budget shortfalls, but are used innovatively to promote the goals of GEAR UP.

In 2008, in Oregon GEAR UP high schools, the FRL average was 51.5 percent. By 2011, the GEAR UP average for FRL had increased to 61.7 percent—a 19.8 percent increase in students applying for assistance; that same school year, the Oregon state average grew to 50.5 percent, a comparable 20.5 percent increase.

The Oregon GEAR UP high school average one-year graduation rate remained higher than the state average in both 2008 and 2011. In 2008, these schools had an average

graduation rate of 87.4 percent compared to the statewide high school average of 84 percent. Likewise, the annual drop-out rate in the GEAR UP schools in 2008 and 2011 was lower than the statewide high school average in those years. The dropout rates for GEAR UP schools were 2.8 percent in 2008 and 2.4 percent in 2011; the statewide averages were 3.7 percent and 3.4 percent respectively.

In 2008, the average number of eighth-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency in reading was 58.9 percent, compared to the eighth-grade overall Oregon average of 65.3 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 66.3 percent and the Oregon state average had grown to 72 percent. Overall, from 2008 to 2011, the gap between the eighth-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and Oregon eighth-graders meeting benchmark closed slightly—from 6.4 percentage points in 2008 to 5.7 percentage points in 2011.

For 10th-grade, students, the story was similar. In 2008, an average of 62.4 percent of 10th-grade GEAR UP students achieved proficiency, compared to the tenth-grade overall Oregon average of 64.8 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 81.1 percent and the Oregon state average had grown to 83.2 percent. Overall, from 2008 to 2011, the gap between the 10th-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency and Oregon 10th-graders overall achieving proficiency closed slightly—from 2.4 percentage points in 2008 to 2.1 percentage points in the percentage of students meeting benchmark.

According to Oregon Department of Education, the cut score for meeting proficiency in math remained the same in 2008 and 2011 for 10th graders (236). The eighth-grade cut score for meeting proficiency was raised between 2008 and 2011, from 230 to 234. In 2008, the average number of eighth-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency was 57.7 percent, compared to the eighth-grade overall Oregon average of 68.7 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had decreased to 56.3 percent and the Oregon state average had decreased to 64.5 percent. Overall from 2008 to 2001, the gap between the eighth-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and Oregon eighth-graders meeting benchmark decreased—from 11.0 percentage points to 8.2 percentage points.

For the 10th grade students, the story was similar. In 2008, an average of 40.6 percent of 10th-grade GEAR UP students achieved proficiency, compared to the tenth-grade overall Oregon average of 52.2 percent. By 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 62.2 percent and the Oregon state average had grown to 68.3 percent. Overall, from 2008 to 2011, the gap between 10th-grade GEAR UP students and Oregon tenth-graders overall achieving proficiency, closed slightly—from 11.6 percentage points to 6.2 percentage points.

In 2008, the average number of eighth-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency in science was 60 percent; the overall Oregon eighth-grade student achievement average was 69.1 percent students. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 66.6 percent;

the overall Oregon state average increased to 71.4 percent. Overall, between 2008 and 2011, the gap between the eighth-grade GEAR UP students and Oregon eighth-graders overall decreased from 9.1 percentage points to 4.8 percentage points.

For the 10th grade students, the story was different. In 2008, an average of 56.6 percent of 10th grade GEAR UP students met benchmark, compared to an average of 57.3 Oregon tenth-graders overall who met benchmark. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 68.9 percent and the Oregon state average had risen to 70.1 percent. Overall, the gap between tenth-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and tenth-grade Oregon students overall increased to a minor degree—from .7 percentage points to 1.2 percentage points.

In 2008, the average number of 10th/11th-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark in writing was 52.3 percent; the average for 10/11th-graders overall in Oregon who met benchmark was 56 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 62.7 percent and the Oregon state average had risen to 68.2 percent in 2011. Overall, the gap between 10/11th-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and 10/11th-grade Oregon students overall, increased from 3.7 percentage points to 5.5 percentage points.

As reported through the National Student Clearinghouse (2011), for the class of 2008 graduating from the GEAR UP high schools, 43.5 percent of the students, on average, continued on to college. In 2010, this percentage declined slightly to 41.6 percent. The decreasing percentage of students entering college may be reflective of the 10.2 percent increase of students eligible for FRL in these same schools.

All of the clusters provide college site visits in a variety forms, and for a spectrum of grade levels. The younger the students, the more the activities are hands-on. College site visits are a very powerful experience for the students, and serve as a positive motivator for students to set goals for a postsecondary college experience.

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INTRODUCTION

In August 2008, Oregon was awarded a six-year statewide GEAR UP grant by the U.S. Department of Education. Directed and managed by the Oregon University System (OUS), 12 clusters, with a total of 20 schools and approximately 1,450 seventh-graders, participated in the first year (2008–2009) of the grant. The average free and reduced-price lunch participation rate for these schools in 2008 was 58.1 percent; in 2011, this percentage climbed to 67.8 percent.

The first year of the grant started with a cohort group of seventh-graders who moved to the eighth grade in the second year, when a new cohort of seventh-graders joined the program. All cohort groups, formed in this fashion, will be served by the GEAR UP program throughout the grant. However, only the first cohort group of seventh-graders, who started in 2008–2009, will reach grade 12 by the end of this six-year grant, in 2013–14. The design of Oregon GEAR UP is intended to be inclusive: students who join the GEAR UP program no later than 11th grade will be eligible for the GEAR UP scholarship. Over 8,700 students and their parents will be served through this six-year GEAR UP grant.

Oregon GEAR UP Program

The Oregon GEAR UP Program is a six-year statewide effort to work with rural, low-income middle and high school students to provide meaningful academic enrichment activities that result in systemic school improvement. The goal is to ensure that Oregon's rural low-income students are prepared for, pursue, and succeed in postsecondary education. The following schools have been selected to participate in the program.

Table 1. GEAR UP Participating Schools

District	Schools	Town
Bend/La Pine	La Pine Middle and High Schools	Bend
Brookings-Harbor	Azalea Middle and Brookings-Harbor High School	Brookings
Glendale	Glendale High School	Glendale
Klamath County	Lost River High School	Merrill
Lincoln County	Taft High School	Lincoln City
Morrow	Irrigon Junior/Senior High School	Irrigon
North Marion	North Marion Middle and High Schools	Aurora
South Lane	Lincoln Middle, Kennedy High School and Cottage Grove High School	Cottage Grove
South Umpqua	Coffenberry Middle and South Umpqua High	Myrtle Creek
Stanfield	Stanfield Secondary	Stanfield
Sweet Home	Sweet Home Junior and High Schools	Sweet Home
Three Rivers	Fleming Middle and North Valley High School	Grants Pass

Beginning with the class of 2014, students will be eligible for GEAR UP scholarships. Students who have participated in required GEAR UP activities, enroll in an accredited college anywhere

in the United States, and submit an application through the Oregon Student Assistance Commission will be eligible for these awards.

Scholarships will be renewable for up to four years and award amounts will vary based on several factors, including the number of eligible students and the value of the Pell grant at the time of award. The scholarships will be no less than $1,000 the first year and $500 renewals for years 2-4.

Oregon GEAR UP believes that postsecondary education is possible for all Oregon students regardless of economic background, and strives to empower them to realize that ambition. Oregon GEAR UP brings this message to middle and high schools, students, their parents, and the community through early college and career awareness activities, scholarships, financial aid information, and improved academic support to help raise the expectations and achievements of all students.

The Education Northwest evaluation team worked with OUS staff members to develop an evaluation plan to meet the requirements of the Annual Performance Report (APR) for the federal government, as well as to provide formative evaluation information for the programs. Education Northwest developed surveys in consultation with OUS staff members; these included student, parent/guardian, and educator surveys, as well as Spanish versions of the student and parent/guardian surveys. The student and parent/guardian surveys included the required APR questions. Most surveys in both 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 were conducted in the spring, by March 15, in time for compilation and inclusion in the April submission of the OUS Annual Performance Report. Each year, Education Northwest staff members made site visits to each cluster to discuss evaluation data, survey results, and Oregon Department of Education data compiled for each cluster by members of the OUS staff. Education Northwest staff members also reviewed the activity tracking database to determine the numbers involved in activities in the school work plans.

This evaluation report is a summation of the program evaluation self reports, the activity database, site visits, and past survey data. Members of the cohort group that started in 2008–2009 are primarily ninth-graders in 2010-2011; however, activities in this past year have been, in large part, offered to the full grade range—from overseeing elementary school-to-middle school transitions, to filling out the FAFSA for seniors.

Oregon Context

Access to higher education remains a challenge for many students who face barriers to college entry. Low-income students and students who are potentially the first in their family to attend college have lower college enrollment rates than other students (Choy, 2002; NCES, 2008). Although academic preparation accounts for some of these differences, the disparities in college-going rates persist for these groups of students, even when controlling for academic preparation (Ellwood & Kane, 2000; Smith, et al., 1997). College access outcomes have important

economic and social consequences: college graduates earn more than those with a high school degree and are more active in their communities (Baum & Ma, 2007; Kane & Rouse, 1995; NCC, 2006; US Census, 2002).

Economy and State Revenue - Implications for Oregon Education

To understand the challenges that Oregon GEAR UP schools face, it is important to understand what is happening throughout the state in terms of the economy and state revenues for education.

Oregon Economy Overview

According to the Oregon Bluebook, Oregon's economy shadowed the national slowdown that began near the end of the decade. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Oregon bottomed out at 5 percent in the spring of 2007 and climbed during the next two years to a near-record high of 11.6 percent. The national unemployment rate fluctuated around 4.5 percent in the first half of 2007 and then climbed to 10.1 percent near the end of 2009, the highest level seen in decades. Both the Oregon and national unemployment rates fell slightly from their peaks but stayed persistently high.

During the past two decades, Oregon attempted to make the transition from a resource-based economy to a more mixed manufacturing and marketing economy, with an emphasis on high technology. Oregon's hard times of the early 1980s signaled basic changes had occurred in traditional resource sectors – timber, fishing and agriculture – and the state worked to develop new economic sectors to replace older ones. Most important, perhaps, was the state's growing high-tech sector, centered in the three counties around Portland. However, rural Oregon counties were generally left out of any shift to a new economy. When the boom of the 1990s collapsed, Oregon was again confronted with high unemployment, widespread hunger, and a diminishing safety net of social services. The state lost about 43,000 payroll jobs from 2000 through 2003 – many of them high-tech manufacturing jobs in the Portland area. As with the nation, Oregon's expansion from 2004 through 2007 was fueled by growth in construction and services. The "Great Recession" erased construction's job gains and devastated the economy to the extent that employment in 2010 was at roughly the same level as in 2000.

Since 2000, Oregon experienced two recessions which kept the state from seeing employment growth during the decade. Nearly every industry was hit hard, but a few were able to grow despite the turbulent economy. Employment in some of Oregon's traditional industries did not fare so well during the recessions of the decade. Mining and logging, an industry with employment in steady yet slow decline for decades, lost 30 percent of its jobs. The manufacturing industry shed one quarter of its jobs during the decade. Wood products workers lost the most jobs, followed by computer and electronic workers, and then by transportation equipment workers. Food manufacturing was the only manufacturing sector that was able to add jobs in the midst of the recession. The information industry was hit hard by both recessions of the decade and lost 17 percent of its workers during that period of time.

According to state rankings from the 2000 U.S. Census, Oregon had the 27th lowest percentage of population living with incomes below the federal poverty level. Back then, 11.6 percent of Oregon residents were living in poverty. As the decade came to a close, the poverty rate in Oregon began to rise. Recently, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated Oregon's poverty rate to be 13.4 percent, which is about the same as the national poverty rate of 13.2 percent, ranking Oregon 33rd among the states for lowest poverty rate. Oregonians in 2009 earned $35,667 per person, which is $112 less per person than in 2000. (Oregon Secretary of State, 2010).

Education Funding in Oregon

Oregon schools have faced huge and painful budget cuts. Education's share of the state budget has declined steadily. Oregon schools have already been cut by more than $1 billion over the past few years, and the K-12 share of the state budget has declined since 2004 from 45 percent to just 37 percent. According to an Oregon Education Association (OEA) report, districts across the state have been forced to cut school days, lay off educators, increase class sizes, and eliminate valuable courses such as music, art, and physical education**.** Oregon has already lost more than 9 percent of classroom teachers because of budget cuts**.** As a result, class size has increased by nearly 12 percent in the elementary grades alone. Increased class sizes mean less individualized attention and less instructional time for all students. (OEA, 2011)

Oregon GEAR UP grants range from $30,000 to $40,000 per year based on the number of students served. It is important to note that every dollar received by a school is matched, tracked, and documented by local resources. These monies are not used by schools to supplant activities that may be cut do to budget shortfalls, but are used to promote the goals of GEAR UP.

Oregon's Quality Education Model (QEM)

The Quality Education Model (QEM) was initially developed in 1999 to establish an objective and research-based connection between the resources devoted to schools and levels of student achievement and to guide efforts to fund Oregon schools adequately. In 2001, the Legislative Assembly created the Quality Education Commission (QEC) to serve as a permanent body to regularly update and improve the original QEM. The Commission's work in 2010 is linked to the changes and challenges for K-12 schooling associated with the ongoing implementation of the Oregon Diploma. The Best Practices Panel examined successful math programs in Oregon schools, building on an Oregon Department of Education (ODE) analysis of math course-taking patterns in Oregon high schools. The Cost Panel updated the QEM with the most recent data, evaluated the cost implications of the Best Practices Panel recommendations, and estimated the costs of fully implementing the QEM.

Best Practices: Given that mathematics skills and knowledge are increasingly in demand in higher education and the workplace, ensuring that students have sufficient math preparation by the time they leave high school is an important goal for Oregon schools. Based on the observations and interviews conducted in schools throughout the state, the Best Practices Panel

recommends that the following components of successful math programs be reflected in the Quality Education Model:

1) Include time for new teacher induction programs and job-embedded professional development that is directly related to the curriculum and building goals. Investing in the development of teachers as effective instructional leaders promotes student success.
2) Provide adequate resources and staff so that schools can offer Algebra courses for high school credit in the seventh or eighth grade, with teachers who hold advanced math endorsements. There is evidence that introducing algebra concepts at this stage may foster higher levels of math achievement in high school.
3) Include adequate classroom spaces, smaller class sizes, early identification of struggling students, and additional instructional time with licensed math teachers.
4) Allocate time and resources for districts to develop frameworks for the articulation of math programs for fourth-grade through high school. Such articulation will help schools to provide continuous instruction that builds skills and knowledge cohesively over time.

Course-Taking: As the phase-in of the Oregon Diploma continues, schools and districts must carefully consider how to best prepare students to meet high school graduation requirements. The ODE analysis of course-taking patterns in Oregon high schools helped the Commission to develop an understanding of how students can be kept on track to meet math graduation requirements throughout the grade levels. The following recommendations can be applied to other subject areas as well:

1) Develop a strategic focus on practices that build a solid academic foundation in the early grades. Excellent preparation in the early grades will equip students to achieve the standards established by the Oregon Diploma when they reach high school. If students are not at grade level when they reach high school, they will be unable to take full advantage of the rigorous coursework required to meet the new diploma requirements.
2) Align the timing of student course-taking with the timing of state assessments to avoid the problem that many Oregon students currently face: state assessments test them on content that they have not yet learned. The State Board of Education has already taken a critical first step by moving the high school assessments from the 10th to the 11th grade. This will give schools more time to fully prepare students for the state assessments, while still leaving sufficient time for students to earn all the credits required for graduation. (Quality Education Commission, 2010)

Costs: The Commission's Cost Panel updated the Quality Education Model to include the most current data (school finances, enrollment and other student information, and economic and price information) and for the first time incorporated information about the capital costs associated with providing and maintaining school buildings and facilities. The Cost Panel also carefully evaluated the recommendations of the Best Practices Panel to determine if additional resources were needed in the QEM in order to implement these recommendations. The Cost Panel concluded that the QEM already contains sufficient resources to implement the Best

Practices Panel recommendations. Table 2 shows the Commission's estimates of state funding levels required to maintain the current service level in Oregon schools (the Baseline) and to fully fund a system of highly effective schools as recommended by the Quality Education Commission—the Fully Implemented Model. (Quality Education Commission, 2010)

Table 2: QEM Funding Requirements (Millions of Dollars)

	2009-2011	2011-2013	2013-2015
Actual State Funding	$5,783.0	$5,725.0	
State Funding Requirement for the Baseline	$5,981.1	$6,710.9	$7,410.1
Percent Change from Prior Biennium		12.20%	10.42%
State Funding Requirement for Fully Implemented Model	$7,879.1	$8,747.7	$9,626.5
Percent Change from Prior Biennium		11.02%	10.04%
Funding Gap: Fully Implemented Model minus Baseline	$1,898.0	$2,036.8	$2,216.5
Percent Change from Prior Biennium		7.28%	8.82%

Source: Quality Education Commission, 2010

School Funding Facts

State appropriations over last decade are as follows:

2001 biennium: $5.2 billion, reduced to $4.75 billion through five special sessions
2003 biennium: $5.2 billion, reduced to $4.9 billion
2005 biennium: $5.263 billion
2007 biennium: $6.3 billion, reduced to $6.185 through allotment cuts
2009 biennium: $6 billion, reduced to $5.783 billion through allotment cuts
2011 biennium: $5.725 billion ($3 billion below the state's own QEM adequacy mark)

Using the U.S. Inflation Calculator, the 10-year inflation rate (2001–2011) was 28 percent. The amount of $4.75 billion, the ultimate resting place of the 2001-03 biennial budget after cuts, would inflate to $6.08 billion for the 2011-13 biennium. The current budget is not only $3 billion below QEM target, it is $355 million less than the 2001 recession-level budget, adjusted for inflation.

Changes in High School Graduation Requirements: Essential Skills

Starting with the senior class of 2012, it will be tougher to graduate from high school in Oregon. To earn a diploma, students will need to successfully complete the credit requirements, demonstrate proficiency in the Essential Skills (ES), and meet the personalized learning requirements. The Essential Skills (ES) are 21st century skills needed for success in college, the workplace, and civic life. Oregon will be the 27th state to require students to pass a state high school graduation exam. California began requiring students to pass state reading and math exams in 2006. In 2008, Washington graduated its first class of students who were required to

pass state reading and writing exams to get a diploma. Oregon will be one of just two states (the other one is New Jersey) to allow students to substitute a locally graded essay or work sample if they choose not to take the state test. Oregon's class of 2012 is the first class required to pass a reading test to graduate. The class of 2013 will be required to pass both a reading and a writing test, and the class of 2014 will need to pass reading, writing, and applied math tests in order to graduate. These new requirements are designed to better prepare each student for success in college, work, and citizenship.

The new Oregon Diploma requirements were adopted by the State Board of Education in 2008, and the roll-out for the requirements was described in terms of a student's high school graduation year (e.g., class of 2012, 2013, etc.). To avoid creating additional requirements for students whose graduation year changed when they decided on a fifth year of high school, requirements are described in terms of the year the student first entered the high school system. In this way, the diploma requirements are applied to students based on the school year they were first enrolled in grade 9, also referred to as the cohort year.

Table 3 shows the implementation timeline based on the year first enrolled in grade 9. The State Board has approved three assessment options for students to demonstrate Essential Skill proficiency: (1) OAKS state test, or (2) work samples using official scoring guides, or (3) other approved standardized tests (e.g., SAT, PLAN, ACT, PSAT, Work Keys, Compass, ASSET) (Oregon Department of Education 2010).

Table 3. Oregon Department of Education Graduation Requirements by Students' Cohort Year

Requirements for students first enrolled in grade 9 <u>prior to the 2008–2009</u> school year: **Graduating <u>after July 1, 2009</u>**	**Requirements for students first enrolled in grade 9 during the 2008–2009 school year:** ***(Graduation in 2012)***	**Requirements for students first enrolled in grade 9 during the 2009–2010 school year:** ***(Graduation in 2013)***	**Requirements for students first enrolled in grade 9 during the 2010–2011 school year and in any subsequent school year:** ***(Graduation in 2014 and beyond)***
English/LA – 4 credits	English/LA – 4 credits	English/LA – 4 credits	English/LA – 4 credits
Math – 3 credits	Math – 3 credits	Math – 3 credits	Math – 3 credits; ***content at Algebra I and above 2***
Science – 2 credits	***Science – 3 credits*** *Scientific inquiry and lab experiences1*	Science – 3 credits	Science – 3 credits
Social Sciences – 3 credits	Social Sciences – 3 credits	Social Sciences – 3 credits	Social Sciences – 3 credits
PE – 1 credit	PE – 1 credit	PE – 1 credit	PE – 1 credit
Health – 1 credit	Health – 1 credit	Health – 1 credit	Health – 1 credit
CTE/Arts/2nd Lang. – 1 credit	***CTE/Arts/2nd Lang.– 3 credits***	CTE/Arts/2nd Lang.– 3 credits	CTE/Arts/2nd Lang.– 3 credits
Electives – 9 credits	Electives – 6 credits	Electives – 6 credits	Electives – 6 credits
24 Credits	24 Credits	24 Credits	24 Credits
NA	***Essential Skills*** ***Reading***	Essential Skills Reading ***Writing***	Essential Skills Reading Writing ***Applied Math***
Personalized Learning Requirements	Personalized Learning Requirements	Personalized Learning Requirements	Personalized Learning Requirements

Note: Bold italic items represent the new changes.
Source: Oregon Department of Education, 2010

GEAR UP STUDENTS, PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

Twenty schools in Oregon comprise the statewide GEAR UP program. The number of schools that participated in administrating the surveys and the total number of survey respondents, by survey and school year, are shown in Table 4. The level of participation varied substantially by school. This year, the survey was not required for the Annual Performance Report by the U.S. Department of Education; consequently, only a few school opted to administer the survey for their individual school results. Appendix A lists the number of survey respondents by school for the 2008–2009, 2009–2010 and 2010-2011 school years. Because, the results from 2010–2011 provided such a small sample, they were not used in this statewide evaluation report. Highlights from the survey results of the last two years are compiled in the *Oregon GEAR UP: Survey Results for the First Two Years* (McDermott, 2010) and can be found on the Oregon GEAR UP website at http://gearup.ous.edu/admin/upload/Oregon_GEAR_UP_2010.pdf

Table 4. Number of Participating Schools and Respondents, by Survey

	Schools			Respondents		
	2008–2009	2009–2010	2010–2011	2008–2009	2009–2010	2010–2011
Student survey	18	16	3	4,219	4,128	585
Parent survey	14	12	1	1,111	709	10
Educator survey	16	15	3	359	254	52

Profile of Past Survey Respondents

Students. Table 5 shows the characteristics of the student respondents in the 2008–2009 school year and 2009–2010 school year. In both years, students who responded to the survey were split approximately evenly between males and females and all were in grades 7 through 12. In the 2008–2009 school year, more student respondents were in either seventh or eighth grade than in the other grades; in the 2009–2010 school year, student respondents were split more evenly across all of the grade levels. Most of the students in both years were either white, Hispanic, or American Indian/Alaska Native. Many of them were also first generation college-bound students; less than 40 percent reported that either their mother or their father had attended college.

Table 5. Student Respondent Characteristics, 2008–2009 and 2009–2010

Characteristic	2008–2009 School Year		2009–2010 School Year	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender				
Male	2,098	52.1%	2,090	52.2%
Female	1,929	47.9%	1,914	47.8%
Race/ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaska Native	505	12.0%	487	11.8%
Asian	84	2.0%	115	2.8%
Black or African American	104	2.5%	147	3.6%
Hispanic or Latino	713	16.9%	658	15.9%
White	3,012	71.4%	3,096	75.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	81	1.9%	101	2.4%
Multiethnic/multiracial	118	2.8%	178	4.3%
Other ethnicity	223	5.3%	258	8.7%
Attended college				
Father/male guardian	1,299	33.8%	1,334	34.1%
Brother or sister	1,009	26.9%	1,130	29.5%
Grandparents	1,167	30.7%	1,193	30.7%

Parents. In both years, (Table 6) the majority of parent respondents were white (86% in 2009 and 56.5% in 2010) followed by Hispanic (15% plus in 2009 and 35.5% in 2010), but there was a noticeably greater percentage of Hispanic parent respondents in 2009–2010 than in the 2008-2009. In addition, in both years, more than half of the mothers or female guardians, and almost half of the fathers or male guardians reported that they had attended at least some college. Student respondents reported much lower rates of college attendance for their parents, possibly indicating that parents who had attended college may have been more likely to respond to the survey than parents who had not attended college.

Table 6. Parent Respondent Characteristics, 2008–2009 and 2009–2010

Characteristic	2008–09 School Year		2009–10 School Year	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender				
Male	240	22.9%	196	28.8%
Female	809	77.1%	485	71.2%
Race/ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaska Native	72	6.6%	31	4.4%
Asian	10	0.9%	4	0.6%
Black or African American	7	0.6%	13	1.8 %
Hispanic or Latino	89	8.1%	252	35.5%
White	944	86.1%	401	56.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	13	1.2%	11	1.6%
Other ethnicity	33	3.0%	15	2.1%
Attended college				
Mother/female guardian	1,027	59.7%	661	57.3%
Father/male guardian	1,008	48.0%	643	45.6%
Brother or sister	849	35.1%	538	40.0%
Grandparents	962	44.2%	618	42.1%

Educators. Tables 7 and 8 provide the characteristics of the educator respondents in the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 surveys. Table 6 shows the years of experience and education of the respondents, and Table 7 shows the subject and grade levels taught. Almost all educators in both years identified themselves as white, and the majority reported that they were a teacher. Respondents reported a wide range of years of experience; however, 57.6 percent and 65.6 percent (in 2008–2009 and 2009–2010, respectively) reported that they had been working in education for more than five years. Although the range of years working in their current school was fairly wide, few educators in both years indicated that they had been working there for less than a year. In the 2008–2009 school year, 41.9 percent reported being in their current school for six or more years; 48.4 percent reported this in the 2009–2010. Most educator respondents reported that they had a Master's degree; and, for those who did teach, they did so primarily in the core subject areas of math, English, science, and social studies. Finally, the number of respondents who taught each grade was fairly evenly divided among the six grade levels.

Table 7. Educator Respondent Characteristics, 2008–2009 and 2009–2010

Characteristic	2008–2009 School Year		2009–2010 School Year	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Race/ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaska Native	4	1.1%	3	1.2%
Asian	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
Black or African American	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	14	3.9%	9	3.6%
White	327	91.9%	233	92.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Multiethnic/multiracial	6	1.7%	4	1.6%
Other ethnicity	4	1.1%	3	1.2%
School position				
Teacher	228	63.7%	199	78.0%
Counselor	17	4.7%	11	4.3%
Administrator	21	5.9%	18	7.1%
Secretary	20	5.6%	9	3.5%
Library/Media Specialist	6	1.7%	2	0.8%
Paraprofessional	40	11.2%	7	2.7%
Other	27	7.3%	9	3.5%

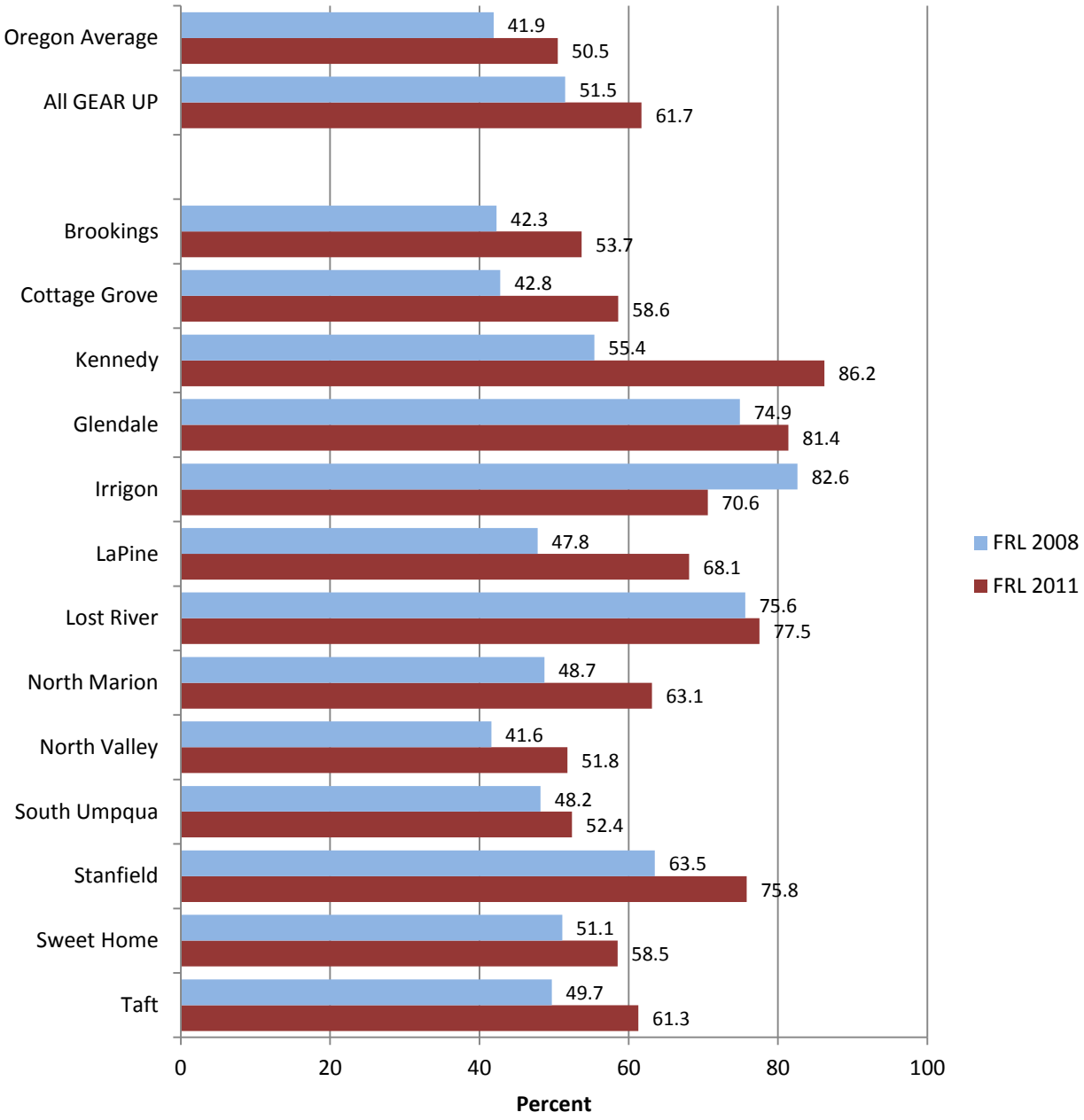
Table 8. Educator Respondents' Years of Experience and Education, 2008-2009 and 2009–2010

	2008-09 school year		2009-10 school year	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Years working in education				
Less than one year	80	22.3%	39	15.4%
One to five years	72	20.1%	48	19.0%
Six to ten years	119	33.1%	79	31.2%
Eleven to twenty years	82	22.8%	85	33.6%
Over twenty years	6	1.7%	2	0.8%
Years working at current school				
Less than one year	45	12.3%	13	5.2%
One to five years	144	40.2%	88	34.9%
Six to ten years	71	19.8%	64	25.4%
Eleven to twenty years	79	22.1%	58	23.0%
Highest level of education				
Bachelors Degree	27	8.7%	10	4.1%
Some graduate work	81	26.1%	42	17.4%
Master's Degree	198	63.9%	186	76.9%
Doctorate Degree	4	1.3%	4	1.7%

Oregon GEAR UP High Schools Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, 2008 and 2011

The overall economy in Oregon has declined in the most recent recession. In 2008, 41.9 percent of Oregon students qualified for free and reduced-price lunch (FRL), a measure of poverty status. In Oregon GEAR UP high schools, the FRL average was 51.5 percent. By 2011, the GEAR UP average for FRL had increased to 61.7 percent—a 19.8 percent increase in the number of students applying for assistance; that same school year, the Oregon state average grew to 50.5 percent, a comparable 20.5 percent increase. Twelve of the 13 GEAR UP high schools showed an increase in FRL percentages. Irrigon High school was the outlier; their FRL percentage decreased from 82.6 percent (the highest GEAR UP school FRL rate in 2008) to 70.6 percent in 2011. The greatest growth in FRL was at Kennedy High School, with a 30.8 percent increase, followed by LaPine, with a 20.3 percent increase. All the GEAR UP schools had a higher FRL percentage than the state average. GEAR UP schools, on average, saw a 10.2 percentage point increase in FRL numbers between 2008 and 2011, compared with the statewide FRL increase of 8.6 percentage points. Figure 1 displays these results. Both Taft and Cottge Grove experienced a growth in homeless students.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Oregon and GEAR UP High Schools, 2008 and 2011.



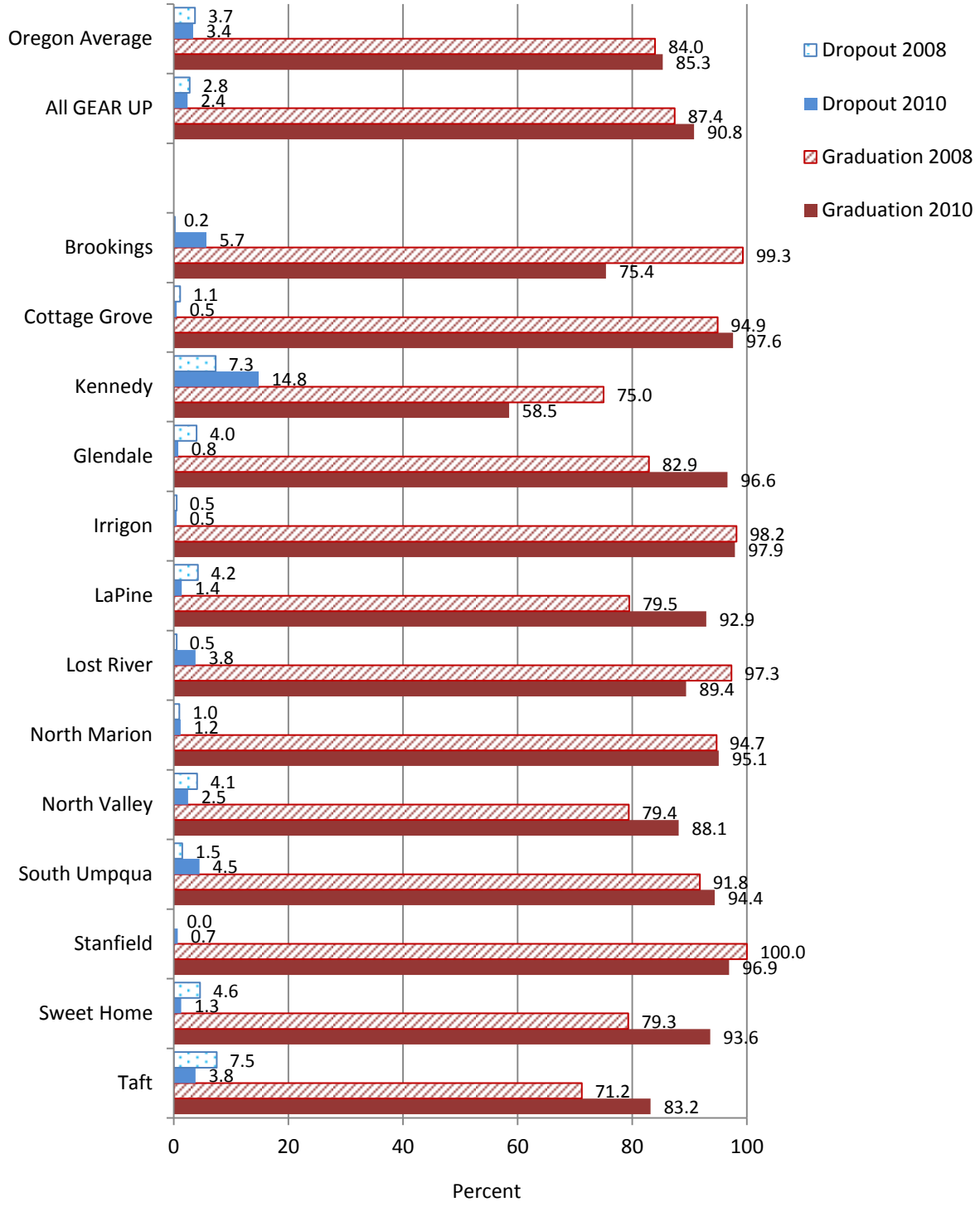
Oregon GEAR UP Graduation Rate and Drop-out Rates

Dropping out of high school is related to a number of negative outcomes. Among adults age 25 and older, the labor force consists of a lower percentage of dropouts than of adults who have earned a high school credential. Similarly, among adults in the labor force, a higher percentage of dropouts are unemployed than are adults who have earned a high school credential (U.S. Department of Labor, 2010). Furthermore, dropouts age 25 and older report being in worse health than adults who are not dropouts, regardless of income (Pleis, Lucas, & Ward, 2009). Dropouts also make up a disproportionately higher percentage of the nation's institutionalized population. Comparing those who drop out of high school with those who complete high school, the average high school dropout costs the economy approximately $240,000 over his or her lifetime in terms of lower tax contributions, higher reliance on Medicaid and Medicare, higher rates of criminal activity, and higher reliance on welfare (Levin & Belfield, 2007).

Interestingly, the Oregon GEAR UP high school average one-year graduation rate remained higher than the state average in both 2008 and 2011. In 2008, these schools had an average graduation rate of 87.4 percent compared to the statewide high school average of 84 percent. Likewise, the annual drop-out rate in the GEAR UP schools in 2008 and 2011 was lower than the statewide high school average in those years. The dropout rates for GEAR UP schools were 2.8 percent in 2008 and 2.4 percent in 2011; the statewide averages were 3.7 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively.

In 2008, seven GEAR UP high schools had graduation rates above the state average: Brookings Harbor, Cottage Grove, Irrigon, Lost River, North Marion, South Umpqua, and Stanfield. By 2011, only three schools were not above the state average for graduation: Brookings Harbor (with a decline from 99.3 percent in 2008 to 75.4 percent in 2011), Kennedy (which declined from 75 percent graduating to 58.5 percent graduating), and Taft (who, nevertheless, had an increased graduation rate, from 71.2 percent to 83.2 percent). The schools with the largest increases in graduation percentages were Glendale (with a 13.7 percentage point increase, to 96.6 percent), LaPine (with a 13.4 percentage point increase, to 92.9 percent) and Sweet Home (with a 14.3 percentage point increase, from 79.3% to 93.6%). Dropouts and graduations rates are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Oregon GEAR UP Graduation and Drop-Out Rates



EVALUATION OUTCOMES

Evaluation and Survey Framework

The mission of GEAR UP is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. The aim is to help communities create new, or expand existing, school programs and provide educational opportunities for students. Additionally, GEAR UP prompts local schools, community-based organizations, private industry, and institutions of higher education to work in partnerships to help students and their parents gain necessary knowledge and bolster academic programs in their schools.

The program addresses academic rigor, linking educational and career choices to course-taking behaviors, opportunities for students to explore career interests, family and community engagement, and information about applying to and paying for college.

The Oregon GEAR UP Planning and Evaluation Rubric has five dimensions: Rigor, Right Classes, Relevance to Career, Relationships, and the Reality of Affordability. What follows is a brief discussion of each of these dimensions. The full Oregon GEAR UP Planning and Evaluation Rubric is in Appendix B. Survey questions were based on this framework.

- **Rigor**: ensuring that all students have access to a challenging curriculum that adequately prepares them for life beyond high school
- **Right classes**: informing students of the coursework needed to successfully pursue the postsecondary training of their choice
- **Relevance to career**: supporting students' exploration of their career ambitions
- **Relationships**: supporting peer networks, engaging families, and developing positive relationships with students
- **Reality of affordability**: helping students and their families understand the myriad ways to pay for postsecondary education

This model is based on the findings of a white paper entitled "Reclaiming the American Dream" (Bedsworth & Colby, 2006).

Considering the latest research synthesis from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and the review of the 2010–2011 GEAR UP evaluations, these categories of activities parallel the recommendations from the IES Practice Guide "*Pathway to College: What High Schools Can Do"* (Tierney et al., 2009). The only slight change, in the category of Reality of Affordability, is an emphasis the IES panel placed on readiness activities. This emphasis is in alignment with what evaluators observed on site visits and what educators described in their end-of-year evaluations. It is also a nod to a change in the schools. In the old world, the readiness piece was more likely the responsibility of the counseling department of a school. The changes that we see

immerging in the field are that school counselor positions have been cut and/or that the ratio of students to counselor has greatly increased. In response, schools have had to design solutions to get students the information they need, and to get this information to students and parents earlier in their educational career.

Translating the IES Recommendation and Action Steps to the Oregon R's

RIGOR

1. Implement a curriculum that prepares all students for college and includes opportunities for college-level work for advanced students
2. Identify existing assessments, standards, and data available to provide an estimate of college readiness
3. Utilize performance data to identify and inform students about their academic proficiency and college readiness
4. Create an individualized plan for students who are not on track

RELEVANCE

1. Provide hands-on opportunities for students to explore different careers, and assist them in aligning postsecondary plans with their career aspirations
2. Provide students with opportunities to explore their career interests and engage business and community partners in the process

RIGHT CLASSES

1. Develop a four-year course trajectory with each ninth-grader that leads to fulfilling a college-ready curriculum.
2. Ensure that students understand what constitutes a college-ready curriculum

RELATIONSHIPS

1. Provide mentoring for students by recent high school graduates who enrolled in college or other college-educated adults
2. Facilitate student relationships with peers who plan to attend college through a structured program of extracurricular activities

REALITY OF AFFORDABILITY

1. Ensure students prepare for, and take, the appropriate college entrance or admissions exam early
2. Assist students in their college search
3. Coordinate college visits
4. Assist students in completing college applications
5. Organize workshops for parents and students to inform them prior to 12th grade about college affordability, scholarship and aid sources, and financial aid processes

6. Help students and parents complete financial aid forms prior to eligibility deadlines
7. Ensure student awareness; provide financial aid information to students, families, teachers, and counselors
8. Parents Family Community Education and Support: Ensure that parents, families and community members understand how to pay for college and support for students in doing so

Rigor: Academic Preparation

According to "Reclaiming the American Dream," research synthesis, the most effective way to drive effective academic preparation in high school is to set a rigorous college preparatory curriculum as the default for all students, and provide the support necessary for them to pursue it. Anything less, by definition, defeats the purpose of a college-going culture (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor, et al., 2006). The latest Oregon State Education Board adoptions of new high school graduation requirements move the schools in this direction.

Previous GEAR UP survey data from school years 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 indicated that students and educators generally believed that their core subject classes— including English, science, math, and history/social science—were not that academically challenging. Both groups also tended to agree that students were not necessarily encouraged to take challenging classes that would prepare them for college. In spite of this perception, it is clear that GEAR UP schools have made considerable progress in reading, math, science and writing achievement, as evidenced by the improved scores on the state standardized tests for both 8th- and 10th-grade students. The following section will compare the scores in reading, math, and science for 8th- and 10th- graders, comparing scores from the year *prior* to the GEAR UP grant, in 2008, to this past year's test results for 2011. This section also includes a comparison of the 10/11th-grade writing scores in those two years.

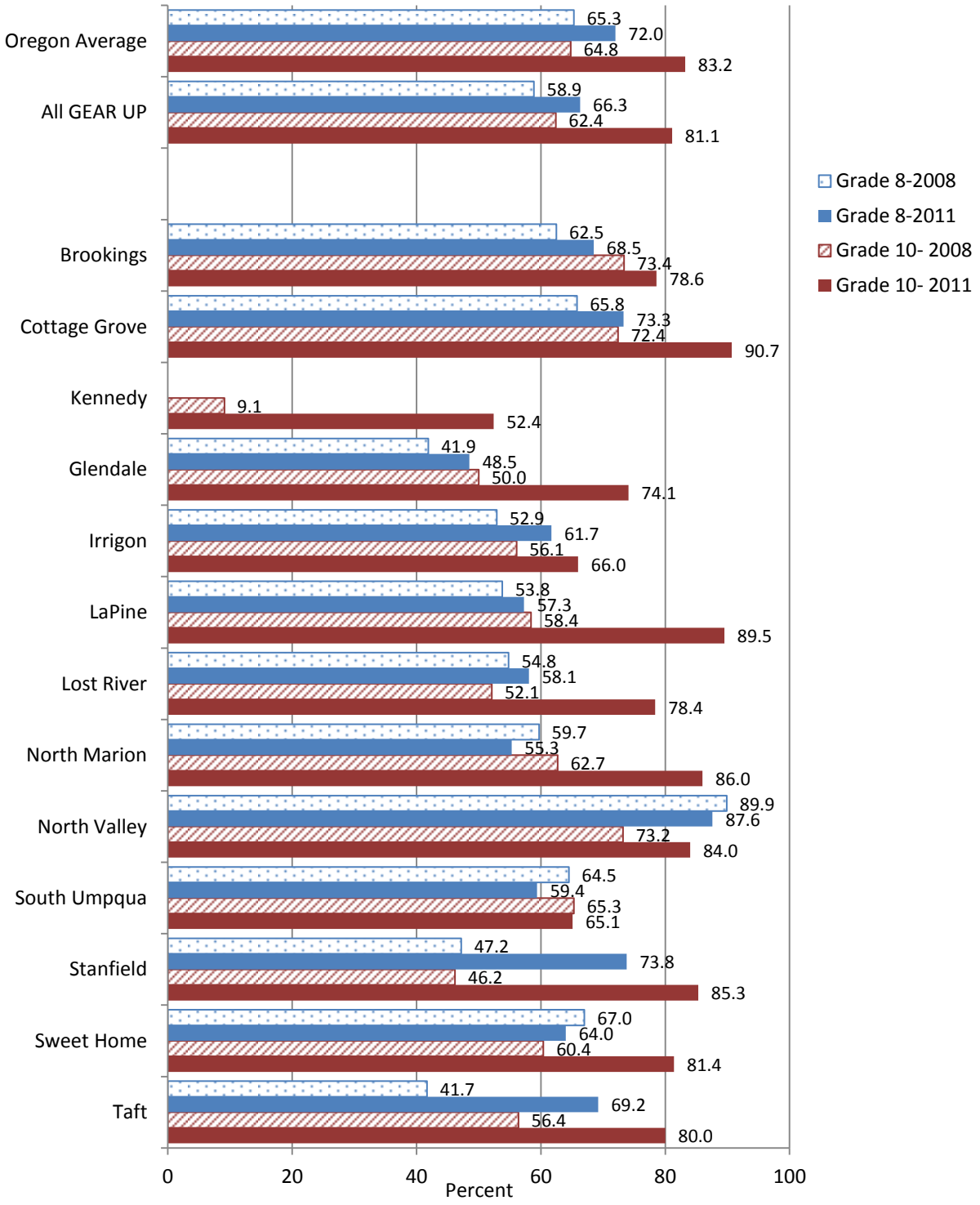
GEAR UP Reading Achievement, 2008 and 2011

According to Oregon Department of Education, the cut score for meeting proficiency in reading was the same for 2008 and 2011 for both the eighth-graders (231) and 10th-graders (236). In 2008, the average number of eighth-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency was 58.9 percent, compared to the eighth-grade overall Oregon average of 65.3 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 66.3 percent and the Oregon state average had grown to 72 percent. Overall, from 2008 to 2011, the gap between the eighth-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and Oregon eighth-graders meeting benchmark closed slightly—from 6.4 percentage points in 2008 to 5.7 percentage points in 2011.

For 10th-grade, students, the story was similar. In 2008, an average of 62.4 percent of 10th-grade GEAR UP students achieved proficiency, compared to the tenth-grade overall Oregon average of 64.8 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 81.1 percent and the Oregon state average had grown to 83.2 percent. Overall, from 2008 to 2011, the gap between the 10th-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency and Oregon 10th-graders overall achieving

proficiency closed slightly—from 2.4 percentage points in 2008 to 2.1 percentage points in the percentage of students meeting benchmark. Figure 3 shows these results.

Figure 3. Percent of Oregon Statewide and GEAR UP 8th- and 10th-Grade Students Meeting Proficiency in Reading, 2008 and 2011



Eight of the 12 GEAR UP middle schools showed growth between 2008 and 2011. The greatest growth was achieved by Taft (an increase of 27.5 percentage points in the number of eighth-grade students meeting benchmark) and Stanfield (an increase of 26.6 percentage points). In 2008, two schools were above the state average in percentage of students meeting benchmark: Lincoln Middle School, in Cottage Grove SD, at 65.8 percent, and Fleming Middle School, in North Valley SD, at 89.9 percent. In 2011, three schools were above the state average: Lincoln Middle School (73.3%), Fleming (87.6%), and Stanfield Jr. High (73.8%).

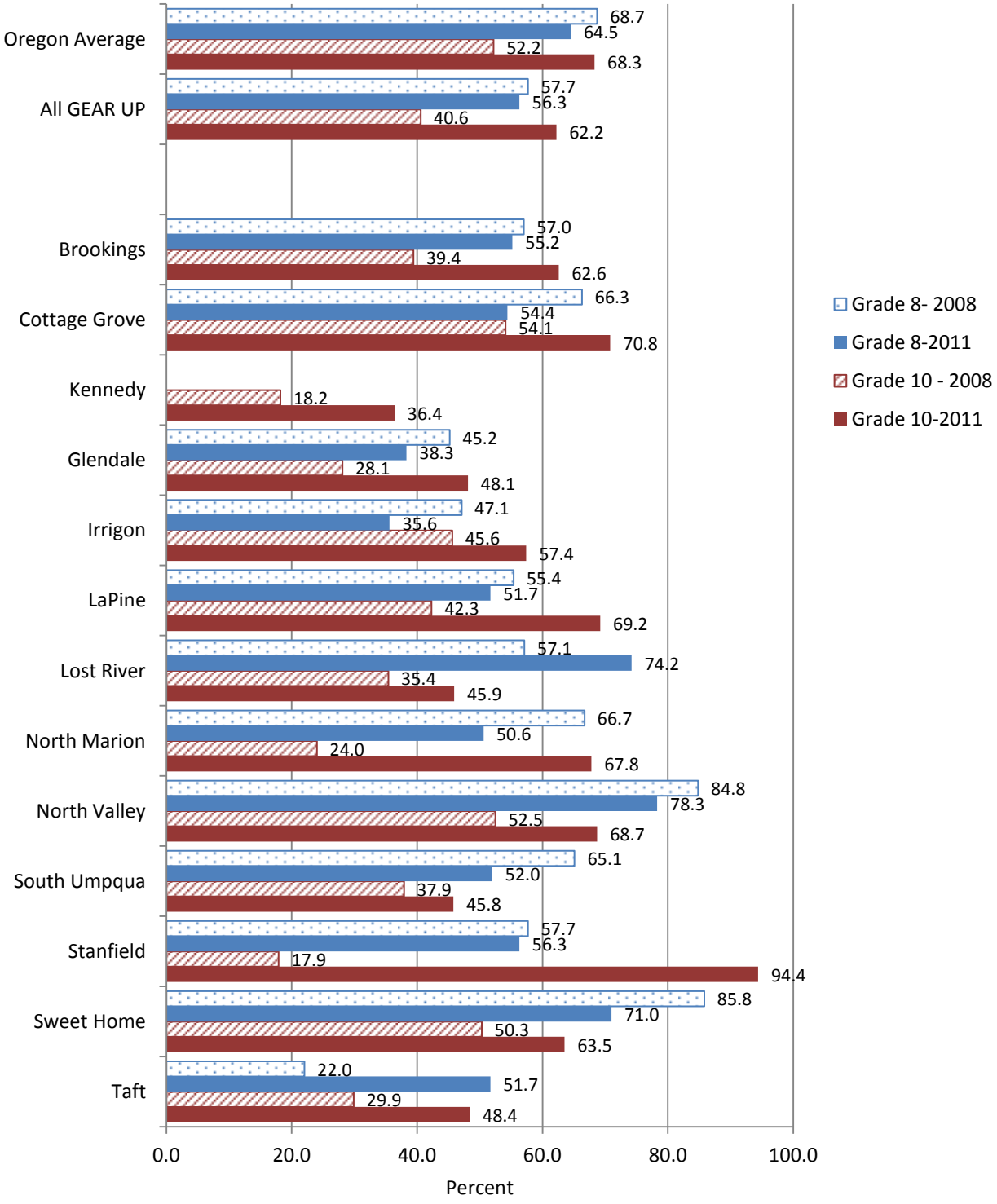
Twelve of the 13 GEAR UP high schools showed growth between 2008 and 2011, and one school, South Umpqua, had a minor decline of .2 percentage points. The greatest growth was achieved by Kennedy High School (an increase of 43.3 percentage points) and Stanfield (an increase of 39.1 percentage points). Other schools making at least a 20 percentage point improvement were: Glendale (24.1percentage points), LaPine (31.1 percentage points), Lost River (26.3 percentage points), North Marion (23.3 percentage points), Sweet Home (21 percentage points) and Taft (23.6 percentage points). In 2008, four schools were above the state average of 64.8 percent of students meeting benchmark: Brookings Harbor (73.4%), Cottage Grove (72.4%), North Valley (73.2%) and South Umpqua (65.3%). In 2011, five schools were above the state average of 83.2 percent: Cottage Grove (90.7%), LaPine (89.5%), North Marion (86.0%), North Valley (84.0%), and Stanfield (85.3%).

GEAR UP Math Achievement, 2008 and 2011

According to Oregon Department of Education, the cut score for meeting proficiency in math remained the same in 2008 and 2011 for 10th graders (236). The eighth-grade cut score for meeting proficiency was raised between 2008 and 2011, from 230 to 234. In 2008, the average number of eighth-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency was 57.7 percent, compared to the eighth-grade overall Oregon average of 68.7 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had decreased to 56.3 percent and the Oregon state average had decreased to 64.5 percent. Overall from 2008 to 2001, the gap between the eighth-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and Oregon eighth-graders meeting benchmark decreased—from 11.0 percentage points to 8.2 percentage points.

For the 10th grade students, the story was similar . In 2008, an average of 40.6 percent of 10th-grade GEAR UP students achieved proficiency, compared to the tenth-grade overall Oregon average of 52.2 percent. By 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 62.2 percent and the Oregon state average had grown to 68.3 percent. Overall, from 2008 to 2011, the gap between 10th-grade GEAR UP students and Oregon tenth-graders overall achieving proficiency, closed—from 11.6 percentage points to 6.2 percentage points. Figure 4 shows school results in math achievement.

Figure 4. Percent of Oregon Statewide and GEAR UP 8th- and 10th-Grade Students Meeting Proficiency in Math, 2008 And 2011



Two of the 12 GEAR UP middle schools showed growth between 2008 and 2011 in the percentage of students meeting proficiency, even though the cut score had increased. The greatest growth was achieved by Taft, with an increase of 28.3 percentage points, and Lost River, with an increase of 17.1 percentage points. In 2008, two middle schools were above the state average in percentage of students meeting bench mark: Fleming Middle School, in North Valley SD, with 84.8 percent achieving proficiency, and Sweet Home Middle School, with 85.8 percent of the students achieving proficiency). In 2011, three schools were above the state average: Fleming Middle School, in North Valley SD, with 78.3 percent meeting benchmark, Lost River Jr./Sr. High School, with 74.2 percent meeting benchmark; and Sweet Home Jr. High School, where 71 percent met benchmark.

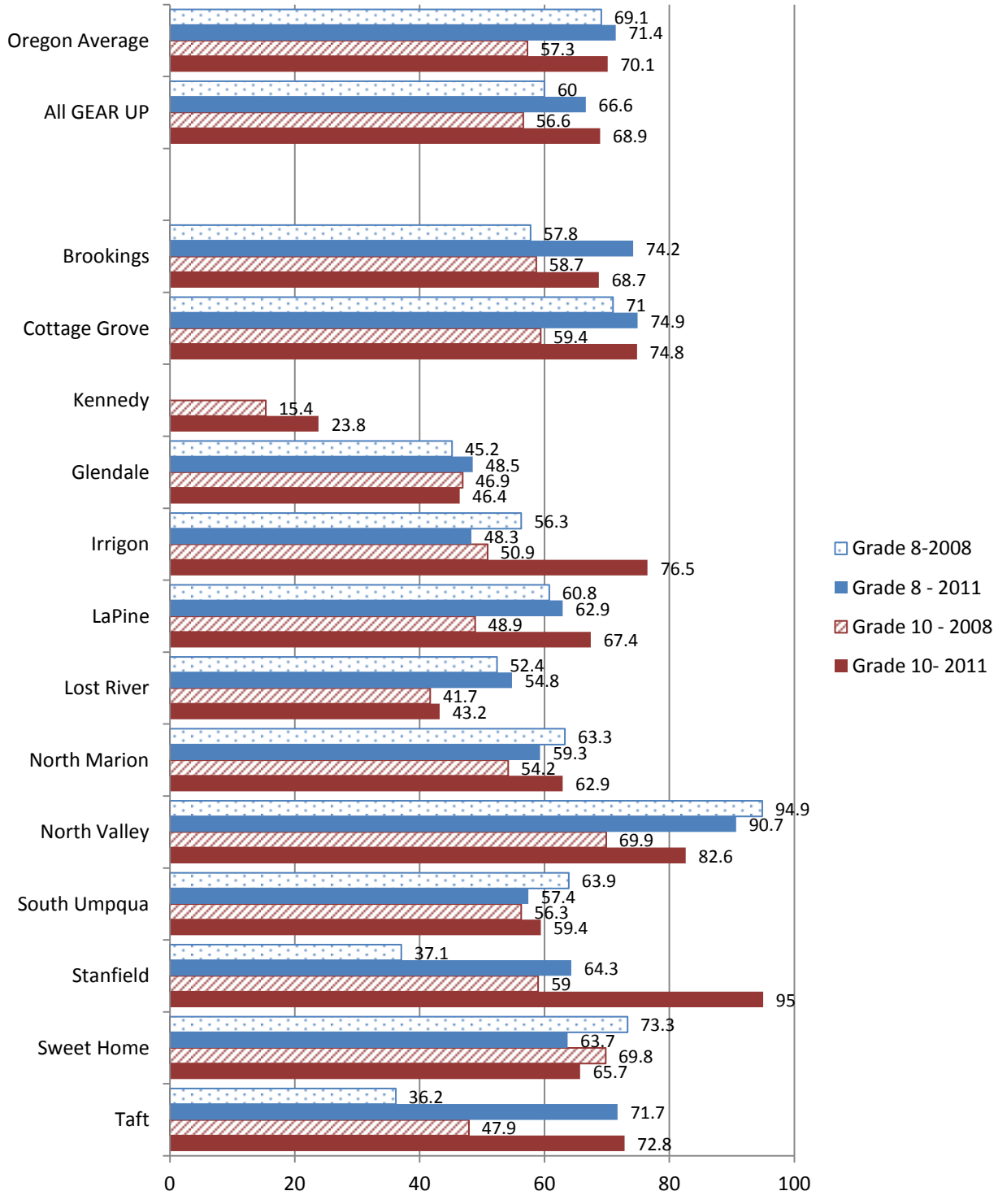
All 13 GEAR UP high schools showed growth between 2008 and 2011 in the percentage of students meeting the 10th-grade benchmark. The greatest growth was achieved by Stanfield, with an increase of 76.5 percentage points, and North Marion, with an increase of 43.8 percentage points. Other schools increased their achievement rate by at least 20 percentage points: LaPine, with an increase of 26.9 percentage points, and Brookings-Harbor, with an increase of 23.2 percentage points. In 2008, two schools were above the state average (52.2%) in percentage of students meeting benchmark: Cottage Grove (54.1 percent) and North Valley (52.5 percent). In 2011, four schools surpassed the state average for meeting benchmark (68.3%): Cottage Grove (70.8%), LaPine (69.2%), North Valley (68.7%), and Stanfield (94.4%).

GEAR UP Science Achievement, 2008 and 2011

According to Oregon Department of Education, the cut score for meeting benchmark in science remained the same in 2008 and 2011 for both eighth-graders (234) and the 10th-graders (240). In 2008, the average number of eighth-grade GEAR UP students achieving proficiency was 60 percent; the overall Oregon eighth-grade student achievement average was 69.1 percent students. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 66.6 percent; the overall Oregon state average increased to 71.4 percent. Overall, between 2008 and 2011, the gap between the eighth-grade GEAR UP students and Oregon eighth-graders overall decreased from 9.1 percentage points to 4.8 percentage points.

For the 10th grade students, the story was different. In 2008, an average of 56.6 percent of 10th grade GEAR UP students met benchmark, compared to an average of 57.3 Oregon tenth-graders overall who met benchmark. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 68.9 percent and the Oregon state average had risen to 70.1 percent. Overall, the gap between tenth-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and tenth-grade Oregon students overall increased a minor degree—from .7 percentage points to 1.2 percentage points. Figure 5 shows student achievement in science.

Figure 5. Percent of Oregon Statewide and GEAR UP 8th- and 10th-Grade Students Meeting Proficiency in Science, 2008 and 2011



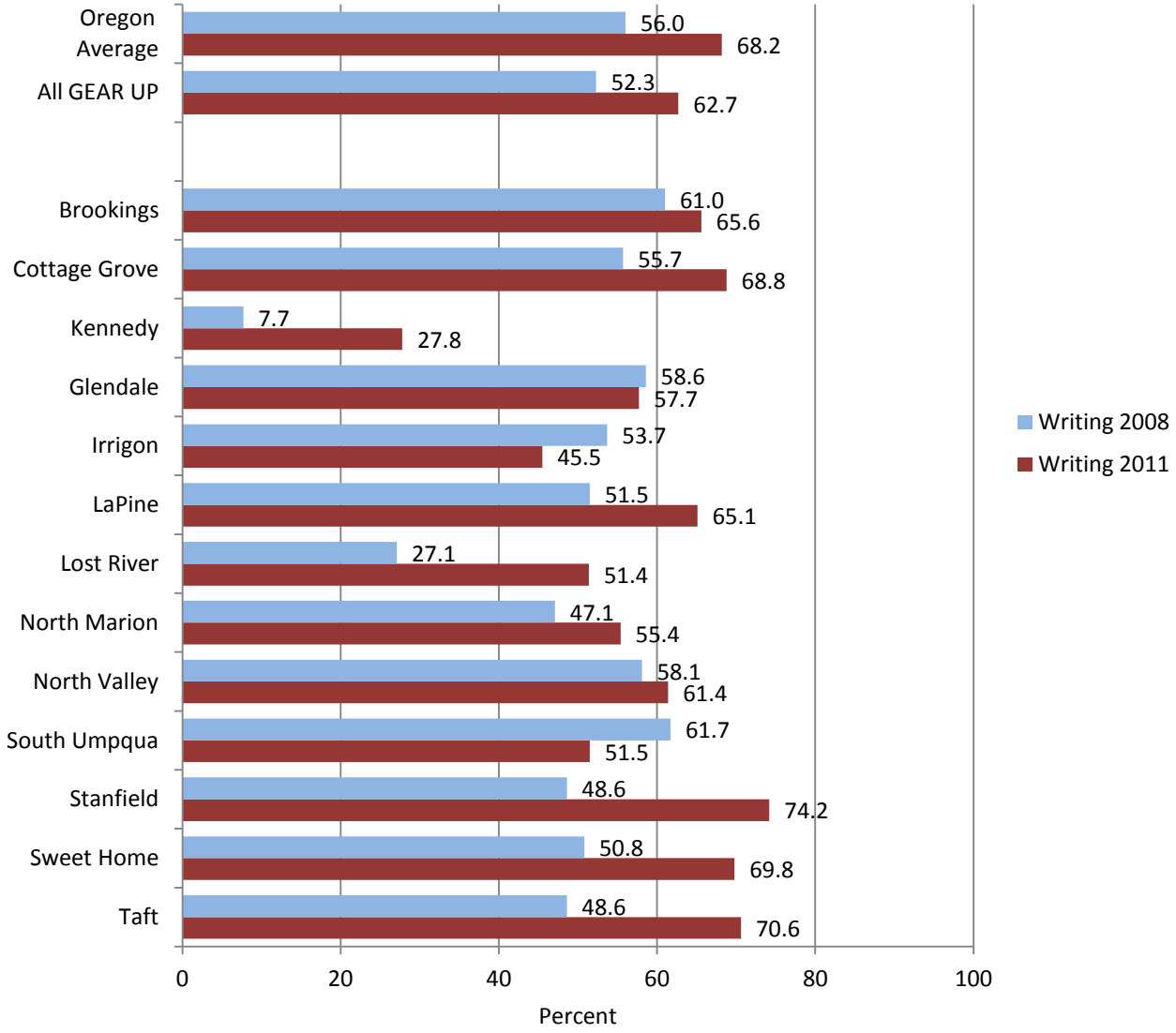
Eight of the 12 GEAR UP middle schools showed achievement growth between 2008 and 2011. The greatest growth was achieved by Taft, with a 35.5 percentage point increase, and Stanfield, with a 27.2 percentage point increase. In 2008, two schools were above the state average (69.1%) in percentage of students meeting bench mark: Fleming Middle School, in North Valley SD (94.9%) and Sweet Home Jr. High (73.3%). In 2011, four schools were above the state average (71.4%): Azalea Middle School, in Brookings SD (74.2%); Fleming Middle School, in North Valley SD, (74.9%); and Taft Jr./Sr. High School (71.7%).

Eleven of the 13 GEAR UP high schools showed growth between 2008 and 2011. The greatest growth was achieved by Stanfield High School, with an increase of 36 percentage points; Irrigon, with an increase of 25.6 percentage points, and Taft, with an increase of 24.9 percentage points. In 2008, four schools were above the state average (57.3%) in percentage of students meeting benchmark: Brookings Harbor (58.7%), Cottage Grove (59.4%), North Valley (69.9%) and Sweet Home (69.8%). In 2011, five schools were above the state average (70.1%) of students meeting benchmark: Cottage Grove (74.8%), Irrigon (76.5%), North Valley (82.6%), Stanfield (95%) and Taft (72.8%).

GEAR UP Writing Scores for 10th/11th Grade, 2008 and 2011

According to Oregon Department of Education, the cut score for meeting benchmark in writing was the same in 2008 and 2011 for both 10th-and 11th-graders(a score of 40). In 2008, the average number of 10th/11th-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark was 52.3 percent; the average for Oregon 10/11th-graders overall meeting benchmark was 56 percent. In 2011, the GEAR UP average had increased to 62.7 percent and the Oregon state average had risen to 68.2 percent in 2011. Overall, the gap between 10/11th-grade GEAR UP students meeting benchmark and 10/11th-grade Oregon students overall, increased from 3.7 percentage points to 5.5 percentage points. Figure 6 reflects writing achievement results.

Figure 6. Percent of Oregon Statewide and GEAR UP 10th- and 11th-Grade Students Meeting Proficiency in Writing, 2008 and 2011



Ten of the 13 GEAR UP high schools showed growth between 2008 and 2011. The greatest growth between 2008 and 2011 was achieved by Stanfield High School, with a 25.6 percentage point increase, and Lost River, with a 24.3 percentage point increase. Two other schools increased their average by 20 percentage points: Kennedy, with a 20.1 percentage point increase, and Taft, with a 22 percentage point increase). In 2008, four schools were above the state average (56.0%) in percentage of students meeting benchmark: Brookings Harbor (58.7%), Glendale (58.6%), North Valley (58.1%) and South Umpqua (61.7%). In 2011, four different schools were above the state average (68.2%) of students meeting benchmark: Cottage Grove (68.8%), Stanfield (74.2%), Sweet Home (69.8%), and Taft (70.6%).

GEAR UP Instructional Interventions and Extended Instructional Time

Every cluster was looking at ways to extend instructional time with students. In spite of budget cuts, GEAR UP schools looked at several creative ways to increase contact with students in core subjects. Many of the school personalized the educational intervention based on formative feedback from the state assessment test—the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS).

In several clusters, additional class times were added to boost test scores in core academic areas. Brookings added "Tutoring Lab Classes," La Pine offered "Math Lab Program," and Stanfield offered "selectives" versus electives for students close to meeting proficiency in math and language arts. These classes were used to give students a double dose of content time. In all cases, the schools reported some level of success in terms of raising the OAKS scores for the students in these classes. LaPine also implemented a rotating system of pulling students into tutoring when it appeared that these students might be failing a class. With very close monitoring, and "just-in-time tutoring" LaPine was able to reduce F's by 3 percent.

Other clusters implemented an afterschool model to deliver tutoring, including Glendale Middle School, North Marion, and South Umpqua High School. Brookings has a common prep time for faculty for the final period of the day, faculty are available to help students at that time. North Marion additionally offered tutoring before school and at lunch time. Irrigon and LaPine extended the lunch period, combining it with a study time, students who required additional help had a shortened lunch. This extended lunch served as a reward. Sweet Home offered tutoring during study hall as an option, and Stanfield offered a similar middle school support. Irrigon operates on a four-day school week, and periodically offered a tutoring session, called "5th Avenue," on Fridays.

Taft worked with their Web-Link Crew program and offered end-of-semester special events, "Cookies and Cram," and student support in the form of peer tutoring with adult supervision.

Glendale had seven students in jeopardy of not passing their grade and offered a summer school program to support them. By the end of the short summer school, all but three students were retained in their grade.

Curriculum Alignment

In surveys administered in the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 school years, a clear majority of the teaching faculty responded that they used the Oregon state standards as a guideline for teaching; only 2.3 percent in 2008–2009 and 4.0 percent in 2009-10 indicated that they did *not* use the standards (Table 9).

Table 9. Educator: Do you use Oregon state standards for your content areas as guidelines for teaching?

	2008–2009		2009–2010	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	243	69.0%	205	81.0%
No	8	2.3%	10	4.0%
Not applicable (I do not teach)	101	28.7%	38	15.0%
Total	352	100.0%	253	100.0%

Few educators were convinced that their curriculum was "very" aligned from middle school to high school; most believed it was either "moderately" or "minimally" aligned (Table 10).

Table 10.Educator: In your opinion, how aligned is curriculum in core subjects between middle and high school?

	2008–2009		2009–2010	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very aligned	13	3.9%	15	6.0%
Moderately aligned	102	30.5%	89	35.6%
Minimally aligned	173	51.6%	123	49.2%
Not at all aligned	47	14.0%	23	9.2%
Total	335	100.0%	250	100.0%

Additionally, 71.7 percent of the educators in 2008–2009 and 80.0 percent in 2009–2010 disagreed that their school provided professional development for teachers to align curriculum between middle and high school (Table 11).

Table 11. Educator: To what extent do you agree that your school provides professional development for teachers to align curriculum between middle and high school?

	2008–2009		2009–2010	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	37	10.5%	11	4.4%
Agree	20	5.7%	14	5.6%
Disagree	83	23.6%	79	31.6%
Strongly Disagree	169	48.1%	121	48.4%
Don't know	42	12.0%	25	10.0%
Total	351	100.0%	250	100.0%

In the 2010–2011 school year, curriculum alignment was conducted at five of the 12 clusters. Brookings aligned the math curriculum for grades 7-10. "Power Standards" were aligned at Cottage Grove Middle School, and Language Arts vertical alignment was completed at the high school; Glendale focused on 7-12 curriculum mapping of science; North Valley focused on writing in middle school and high school; and Sweet Home continued their curriculum mapping in middle school and high school.

Professional Development Activities

Additionally, educators were asked which professional development topics would most help them prepare students for college. The complete results are displayed in Table 12. As shown, the top three choices in both school years were: instructional strategies to help at-risk students reach high standards; strategies for improving student learning; and strategies for increasing parental/community involvement.

Table 12. Educator: Which professional development topics would most help you prepare your students for college or other postsecondary options?

	2008–2009		2009–2010	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Instructional strategies to help at-risk students reach high standards	212	59.1%	167	65.5%
Strategies for improving student learning	176	49.0%	151	59.2%
Strategies for increasing parental/community involvement	171	47.6%	124	48.6%
Knowledge of funding opportunities for students to pay for postsecondary training	145	40.4%	97	38.0%
Behavioral management strategies	133	37.0%	91	35.7%
Opportunities to vertically align curriculum with the grades below and above me	120	33.4%	111	43.5%
Instructional technology development	110	30.6%	93	36.5%
Strategies for negotiating home and school cultural differences	99	27.6%	86	33.7%
Peer mentoring strategies	97	27.0%	70	27.5%
Content development (i.e., math, reading, and writing)	94	26.2%	79	31.0%
Ways to monitor and analyze student learning	90	25.1%	94	36.9%
Opportunities to horizontally align curriculum with other at my grade level	72	20.1%	70	27.5%
Ways to apply the state or national standards in my content area	58	16.2%	58	22.7%
PASS teacher training	30	8.4%	24	9.4%

In the 2010–2011 school year, GEAR UP supported professional development as it related to increasing rigor at nine of the clusters.

- Bookings provided opportunities for collaborative learning for teachers in grades 7-10. They also had several staff trained in "Understanding Poverty".
- Cottage Grove increased teacher collaboration through the use of Studio Classrooms, with an emphasis on higher order thinking skills at the middle school.
- Cottage Grove faculty developed AP literature courses.
- Irrigon also increased AP offerings and tests given to students. Other staff were learning about "Brainology" and how to best deliver instruction to adolescents.
- Glendale worked with staff members from the middle school and high school to increase college readiness into lesson plans.
- La Pine added a U.S. History AP course as an offering.
- Lost River staff worked with the Kagen materials, for increasing student engagement.
- North Valley purchased *My Access*, a writing program that teachers use as a tool to improve writing and assessment.
- South Umpqua used professional development time with staff members, in a Professional Learning Community format, to look at ways to support freshman success.
- South Umpqua used *Cambridge Physics Outlet* (CPO). CPO Science features completely integrated materials. Each system includes a student text, an investigations manual, equipment, a teacher's guide, resource materials, and technology tools for planning and enhanced student learning. This professional development for science was implemented at the middle school.
- Stanfield provided AP courses for high school students.
- Stanfield also had a Professional Learning Community activity during which all faculty read the same text and had discussions at weekly staff meetings.
- Sweet Home provided *Step Up to Writing: Year 2* professional development to faculty at the high school. Additionally, Sweet Home implemented a late start staff collaboration time, for overall school goal setting.
- Taft, South Umpqua and Brookings all provided staff training on proficiency-based instruction.

Several clusters are offering dual credit with college partners, both 2 year and 4 year public institutions; Brookings, Cottage Grove, Irrigon, Lost River, South Umpqua and Stanfield. Brookings, Cottage Grove and South Umpqua additionally have students engaged in the local community college Talent Search grant.

Right Classes

The challenge of improving the college-going rate can be traced to two key difficulties. First, students must be academically prepared for college by 12th grade. The opportunities to academically prepare for college narrow as students progress through high school. If students do not start taking college preparation courses in the ninth grade, they will be less likely to enroll in college. In addition, students who are not reading or doing math at grade level will not be prepared for college-level work. The problem is made more difficult if students and their families are unaware that their performance is inadequate. Schools need to ensure that students are on the path to college beginning in ninth grade, or earlier, and that they stay on that path throughout high school (Tierney, et al., 2009).

> *More than 90 percent of students currently entering high school say they expect to attend college. By putting students in courses that do not prepare them for college, however, schools effectively make the choice for them and dash their dreams. Moreover, as the recent ACT study demonstrates, a college preparatory curriculum is the same curriculum that will prepare students for a successful working life. To offer students any curriculum less than this not only fails the objective of preparing a student for college, but also fails to prepare them for life and work. A default college prep curriculum for all students is the most straightforward way to fix the problem. Schools need to take steps to ensure that students understand early in their school careers (eighth grade or earlier) what curriculum is necessary to prepare them for college-level work and future careers. In a true college-going culture, discussions of grades, class schedules, academic progress, and the like would all revolve around the requirements for college, whether or not students are on track to achieve that goal, and, if there are any deficiencies, what steps will help them get back on track*. (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

Survey Results

Data from surveys administered in the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 school years revealed that parents and educators in both survey years had very similar perceptions about how much information the school makes available to students and parents about what it takes to go to college (Table 13). Close to 60 percent of parents and educators disagreed that the school gives students information about what it takes to go to college. Likewise, 60 percent or more of both groups surveyed disagreed that the school provides parents with information on what it takes to get their children to college.

Table 13. To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

	2008–2009 Percent (n)			2009–2010 Percent (n)		
Parents	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Don't Know**	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Don't Know**
My child's school gives students information on what it takes to go to college.	27.6% (297)	59.7% (644)	12.7% (137)	22.7% (157)	60.5% (418)	16.8% (116)
My child's school gives parents information on what it takes to get their children to college.	28.0% (301)	64.3% (691)	7.7% (82)	24.0% (165)	62.8% (432)	13.2% (91)
Educators						
My school gives students information on what it takes to go to college.	6.2% (22)	61.0% (216)	32.8% (116)	2.8% (7)	55.7% (141)	41.5% (105)
My school gives parents information on what it takes to get their children to college.	14.8% (52)	64.8% (228)	20.4% (72)	8.3% (21)	61.9% (156)	29.8% (75)

Expectations

In the surveys administered in the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 school years, educators had higher expectations that their students had the capability to complete a college preparatory curriculum than they had that those students would actually go on to college. As shown in Table 14, while 67.5 percent in 2008–2009, and 74.4 percent in 2009–2010, believed that two-thirds or more of their students were capable of completing a college preparatory curriculum, approximately one-half or more of them believed that less than a third would actually go on to college.[1]

Table 14. Educator: What percentage of your students are capable of completing a college prep curriculum, and what percentage of your students will go on to college?

	Percentage of Educators who Indicated Students are Capable of Completing a College Preparatory Curriculum		Percentage of Educators who Indicated Students Will go on to college	
	2008-2009 (n 342)	**2009-2010** (n = 249)	**2008-2009** (n = 332)	**2009-2010** (n = 246)
Less than 30%	32.5%	25./6%	56.6%	46/3%
30% or greater	67.5%	74.4%	43.4%	53.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

[1] It should be noted that almost 10 percent more teachers in the 2009–2010 sample than in the 2008–2009 sample believed that two-thirds or more of their students would go on to college.

In addition, in both years, more than two-thirds of students and their parents believed that the highest level of education students would complete was a four-year college degree or higher. However, only 11.6 percent of educators in 2008–2009, and 13.0 percent of educators in 2009–2010, believed that their students would obtain this level of education
These results are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15. Highest Level of Education That Students, Parents, and Educators Expect Students to Obtain

	Students		Parents		Educators	
	2008-09 (n = 4,098)	2009-10 (n = 4,021)	2008-09 (n = 1,087)	2009-10 (n = 694)	2008-09 (n = 344)	2009-10 (n = 253)
4-year college degree or higher	64.1%	63.4%	64.5%	66.0%	11.6%	13.0%
Some college	11.4%	11.9%	13.7%	13.4%	26.5%	32.0%
2-year college degree	12.8%	12.3%	9.8%	11.1%	22.4%	27.3%
1-year trade school	2.5%	2.4%	2.8%	2.6%	7.3%	5.5%
High school diploma	7.6%	8.0%	8.2%	5.5%	32.0%	20.6%
GED	1.0%	1.2%	0.5%	1.2%	0.0%	0.8%
Less than high school	0.6%	0.8%	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Almost 70 percent of students reported that their teachers expected them to at least go to college (Table 16).

Table 16. Student: Do you think your teachers expect you to go to college, and do you think your parents expect you to go to college?

	Teachers expect you to go to college?		Parents expect you to go to college?	
	2008-2009 (n = 4,122)	2009-2010 (n = 4,086)	2008-2009 (n = 4,098)	2009-2010 (n = 4,088)
Yes	67.4%	68.0%	85.4%	83.7%
No	5.1%	5.7%	5.4%	7.3%
Not sure	27.4%	26.3%	9.2%	9.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Data from both the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 surveys revealed that over half of 12th-graders had applied to a college and more than a third were planning to apply (Table 17).

Table 17. Seniors: Have you applied to any colleges for next year?

	Grade 12 Students	
	2008–2009 (n = 389)	**2009–2010** (n = 521)
Yes, applied to 4 year college	34.2%	32.5%
Yes, applied to 2 year college	20.8%	19.7%
No, but I plan to apply	34.3%	34.9%
No, does not plan on attending	8.7%	13.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

School Interventions to Support Right Classes in 2010–2011

Eight of the 12 clusters offered parent nights to inform parents about transition to high school, graduation requirements, and college requirements. These clusters were Brookings, Cottage Grove, Irrigon, LaPine, North Marion, North Valley, South Umpqua, and Stanfield.

Lost River held a Parent Night at the both elementary schools. The parents were given information about student transitioning to the Junior/Senior High School as well as information about the right classes their children would need for college.

Cottage Grove instituted Advisory classes to help students understand college planning, enrolling in the right classes, and financial literacy. Advisory has really been a help in view of the reduced number of counselors available in the district. More faculty members are better informed about students needs, are more familiar with current college requirements, and can guide students in the selection of the right classes. All of this also assists students with development of their four-year plans. Lost River and North Valley have a similar advisory program,

Glendale and North Valley use the Oregon Career Information System (CIS) computer website to develop four-year plans for eighth-graders.

To make sure students do not fall behind, several clusters offer credit recovery. In Glendale and Taft, this is done in a Summer Academy. Taft used their "credit by proficiency" model, and funds from their 21st Century Learning Community grant supported this effort. Nearly 250 students took advantage of this option to gain credit. South Umpqua offers credit recovery as an evening class to their students. Stanfield has used *Oddessy* software to expand course offerings of the right classes as well as for credit recovery.

Sweet Home facilitates student panels of high school students to talk to middle school students, and of college students to talk to high school students about what right classes will further student goals of going on to college.

In spring, North Valley conducts a Freshman Transition activity for students moving from Fleming Middle School to North Valley High School; staff members facilitate orientation and students are able to complete their forecasting for the coming year. Irrigon conducts a Transitions Camp for transitioning seventh- and ninth-graders. South Umpqua previously held a "Freshman Camp," but has since found that they are more successful with transition when eighth-graders come over to tour the school in the spring.

Relevance

> *A student who makes this connection between college and his or her life goals is six times as likely to attain a degree as one who doesn't. A recent survey by Public Agenda found that 77 percent of college students say they are attending college because the jobs they want require it.It also implies a need for more career-awareness information, which could come in the form of curricula, coordinated internship programs, or career guidance."* (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

Essential Skills and Career Related Learning Standards

In 2002, the career-related learning standards (CRLS) were adopted as a requirement for graduation in 2007. The CRLS were foundational skills that prepare students for post high school success. They were to be applied across the curriculum and in a variety of settings. (Proficiency levels and assessments, however, were determined locally.)

Later, in January 2007, the State Board adopted a similar set of skills, entitled Essential Skills (ES) as a requirement for graduation, to better prepare all students for success in postsecondary education, work, and citizenship.

The essential skills are foundational skills for learning. They help students acquire knowledge and skills in academic and career and technical studies, and apply what they learn in practical situations. Students learn and apply essential skills across the curriculum in all subject areas, both in the classroom and outside of school. Students are required to demonstrate proficiency in these skills to receive a diploma. The state will identify state, local, and national assessment options and proficiency levels to measure the essential skills. Graduates of 2012 will be the first students to meet this proficiency requirement. Figure 7 lists the skills and indicates how several of the CRLS and ES skills overlap (Oregon Department of Education, 2008).

Figure 7. Essential Skills and Career-Related Learning Standards Categories

Career Related Learning Standards (CRLS) and Essential Skills (ES)*

Applied math	*Problem solving
Career development	*Read
Civic & community engagement	*Speak/listen
*Communications	*Teamwork
Employment foundations	*Think critically and analytically
Global literacy	*Use technology
*Personal management	*Write
*Personal management & teamwork	

* CRLS skills that overlap with Essential Skills..

Given this degree of overlap, and the potential record-keeping burden and confusion associated with requiring two sets of similar and overlapping skills, the Essential Skills Task Force recommended merging the ES and CRLS into one set of skills. The task force also recommended adding personal management/teamwork to the ES and applying the remaining CRLS (career development and employment foundations) to other diploma requirements.

According to the ODE September 4, 2008 Memo,

> *It is important to note, as the essential skills and CRLS merge, the intent and application of the CRLS is not lost, only the name. The CRLS criteria are reflected in the ES definitions with more clearly defined targets. As schools transition to ES, teachers can begin by substituting ES wherever the CRLS are currently taught and continue to provide instruction in these areas. All teachers, across disciplines, should incorporate ES in their course syllabi. To develop proficiency, students should practice these skills throughout the curriculum. This evolution of the CRLS will strengthen and reinforce these skills. With the heightened demands of our changing world it is even more critical today that our students are proficient in these areas in order to adapt to rapid advances in technology and our changing world economy*. (ODE, 2008)

Figure 8 is a more comprehensive description descriptive compilation of the Career-Related Learning Standards and the Essential Skills; bold type indicates the overlap of skills.

Figure 8. Career-Related Learning Standards and Essential Skills Overlap

A Detailed Description of the Overlap between the Essential Skills and the Career-Related Learning Standards (CRLS)

(Bold indicates the overlap of skills**.)**

Read and comprehend a variety of text*

- Demonstrate the ability to read and understand text.
- Summarize and critically analyze key points of text, events, issues, phenomena, or problems, distinguishing factual from non-factual and literal from inferential elements.
- Interpret significant ideas and themes, including those conveyed through figurative language and use of symbols.
- **Follow instructions from informational or technical text to perform ask, answer questions, and solve problems**.

Write clearly and accurately

- Adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts in a variety of formats and media, using appropriate technology.
- Develop organized, well-reasoned, supported, and focused communications.
- Write to explain, summarize, inform, and persuade, including business, professional, technical, and personal communications.
- **Use appropriate conventions to write clearly and coherently, including correct use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, sentence construction, and formatting.**

Listen actively and speak clearly and coherently

- **Listen actively to understand verbal and non-verbal communication.**
- **Give and follow spoken instructions to perform a task, ask and answer questions, and solve problems.**
- **Present or discuss ideas clearly, effectively, and coherently, using both verbal and non-verbal techniques.**
- **Use language appropriate to particular audiences and contexts.**

Use technology to learn, live, and work

- Use creativity and innovation to generate ideas, products, or processes using current technology.
- Use technology to participate in a broader community through networking, collaboration and learning.
- Recognize and practice legal and responsible behavior in the use and access of information and technology.
- **Use technology as a tool to access, research, manage, integrate, and communicate ideas and information**

Figure 8. Career-Related Learning Standards and Essential Skills Overlap (continued)

Communication

- Demonstrate effective communication skills to give and receive information in school, community, and/or workplace.
  - **Locate, process, and convey information using traditional and technological tools.**
  - **Listen attentively and summarize key elements of verbal and non-verbal communication.**
  - **Give and receive feedback in a positive manner.**
  - **Read technical/ instructional materials for information and apply to specific tasks.**
  - **Write instructions, technical reports, and business communications clearly and accurately.**
  - **Speak clearly, accurately and in a manner appropriate for the intended audience when giving oral instructions, technical reports and business communications.**

Personal Management and Teamwork

- **Participate cooperatively and productively in work teams to identify and solve problems.**
- **Display initiative and demonstrate respect for other team members to complete tasks.**
- **Plan, organize, and complete assigned tasks accurately and on time.**
- **Exhibit work ethic and performance, including the ability to be responsible and dependable.**

Personal management (Exhibit appropriate work ethic and behaviors in school, community, and workplace)

- **Identify tasks that need to be done and initiate action to complete the tasks.**
- **Plan, organize, and complete projects and assigned tasks on time, meeting agreed upon standards of quality.**
- **Take responsibility for decisions and actions and anticipate consequences of decisions and actions.**
- **Maintain regular attendance and be on time.**
- **Maintain appropriate interactions with colleagues.**

Teamwork (Demonstrate effective teamwork in school, community, and workplace)

- Identify different types of teams and roles within each type of team; describe why each role is important to effective teamwork.
- **Demonstrate skills that improve team effectiveness** (e.g., negotiation, compromise, consensus building, conflict management, shared decision-making and goal-setting).

Figure 8. Career-Related Learning Standards and Essential Skills Overlap (continued)

Think critically and analytically

- **Identify and explain** the key elements of a complex event, text*, **issue, problem,** or phenomenon.
- Develop a method to explore the relationship between the key elements of a complex event, text*, issue, problem, or phenomenon.
- **Gather, question and evaluate** the quality of information from multiple primary and secondary sources.
- **Propose defensible conclusions** that address multiple and diverse perspectives.
- **Evaluate the strength of conclusions**, differentiating reasoning based on facts from reasoning based on opinions.

Problem Solving (Apply decision-making and problem-solving techniques in school, community, and workplace.)

- **Identify problems** and locate information that may lead to solutions.
- **Identify alternatives** to solve problems.
- **Assess the consequences** of the alternatives.
- Select and **explain a proposed solution** and course of action.
- Develop a plan to implement the selected course of action.
- **Assess results** and take corrective action.

Survey Results

Only 31.9 percent of the responding parents in 2008–2009, and 26.0 percent of the responding parents in 2009–2010, agreed that the school provided students with career awareness activities. A majority (57.6%) of responding students in the 2008-2009 sample agreed that they had become more aware of career options because of GEAR UP, but this response rate dropped to 43.0 percent in the 2009–2010 sample (Table 18).

Table 18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

	2008–2009 Percent (n)			2009–2010 Percent (n)		
Parents	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
My child's school provides students with opportunities to participate in career awareness activities, such as job shadowing, career fairs, and career and counseling classes.	31.9% (338)	57.8% (612)	10.3% (109)	26.0% (179)	59.0% (407)	15.0% (103)
Students						
I have become more aware of various career options because of GEAR UP.	57.6% (2,227)	42.4% (1,641)	0.0% (0)	43.0% (1,703)	57.0% (2,252)	0.0% (0)

School Activities to Support Relevance

Seven clusters carried out college site visits with a focus on career connections: Brookings, Glendale, Irrigon, Lost River, North Valley, South Umpqua, and Stanfield.

Pendelton and Medford have large career fairs; Irrigion and Stanfield attend Pendelton, Lost River and North Valley attend Medford.

Computer-assisted career exploration, including CIS, Navigation 101, and Career Cruising were employed by Cottage Grove, Irrigon, LaPine, North Marion,North Valley, and Sweet Home. Sweet Home students include this information in their eighth-grade, four-year education plans.

Lost River, Glendale, La Pine, and Taft facilitated career visits and job shadows. LaPine requires seniors to have 16 hours of internship time to graduate.

Taft offered internships for students in grades 11 and 12. Taft also sponsored internship workshops for local businesses to prepare them to take students into their workplace.

College and career guest speakers presented at Stanfield, Glendale, South Umpqua, and Sweet Home. Career Fair, Career Day and Career Assemblies were held by Irrigon, La Pine, Stanfield, North Marion, and Sweet Home.

Both La Pine and Sweet Home hosted a Career and College Club. At Sweet Home, the GEAR UP club invited guest speakers to come in and talk about their professions. Stanfield offers a Career Class for middle school students.

8th graders in Irrigon have a "My Story" project, where they research and document their future career goals. They have their picture as a part of their poster. This becomes part of the 8th grade promotion that had 75 parents attend.

La Pine offered professional development for educators on CIS. Taft's professional development with teachers focused on how to design proficiency-based Learning Options with the Career Related Learning Standards.

North Marion held a college essay contest based on students perceptions of college, their future goals, and research.

North Valley invited college representatives to come to the school, and matched representatives to students who had developed specific interests based on what they had learned in CIS. From these matches, students learned what their college options were and what the entrance requirements would be.

Relationships

High schools play a critical role in preparing students academically for college and assisting students through the steps to college entry. They also can take steps to influence students' access to college-going peer groups and to encourage high academic expectations of students. The college-going culture of a high school, or lack thereof, becomes important in college-going decisions. When students, teachers, and administrators openly talk about preparing for and going to college, the climate in the school can move toward college access (Tierney, et al., 2009).

> *A low-income student's chances of completing college are likely to increase when friends value learning and plan to attend college themselves. Schools need to provide social support and reinforce college-going norms within peer groups. The value of strengthening links between postsecondary education and the "real world" is reinforced by the fact that parents taking time to visit a postsecondary institution with their child also had a positive impact on going to college and success. This implies that the most successful college access programs will target as many high school students as possible (i.e., they will be whole-school models). This means ensuring that students and their families have access to information early (before high school) and consistently regarding college requirements, financial aid availability, and other general college-awareness information such as the benefits of a college education and links to the real world.* (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

Peer Networks

In the surveys administered in the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 school years, more than one-third of the students indicated that they sometimes talk to their friends about going to college; another 20 percent reported that they "often" or "almost always" talk to friends about college (Table 19). Almost all students surveyed reported that at least two of their best friends would go to college (Table 20). In addition, in both years, more than 20 percent of students and parents reported that their interest in college has increased since they began GEAR UP; more than 70 percent in each group reported that their interest had stayed the same (Table 21).

Table 19. Student: How often do you talk to your friends about going to college?

	2008–2009		2009–2010	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Almost always	139	3.4%	128	3.1%
Often	764	18.6%	704	17.3%
Sometimes	1,471	35.8%	1,516	37.2%
Rarely	923	22.5%	888	21.8%
Almost never	808	19.7%	839	20.6%
Total	4,219	100%	4,075	100.0%

Table 20. Student: Think about your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). How many of your best friends do you think will go to college?

	2008–2009		2009–2010	
Number of friends	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	129	3.2%	185	4.6%
1	375	9.3%	354	8.7%
2	1,018	25.2%	928	22.9%
3	1,178	29.2%	1,270	31.3%
4	1,333	33.1%	1,317	32.5%
Total	4,033	100.0%	4,054	100.0%

Table 21.Since you began GEAR UP has your (your child's) interest in college . . . ?

	Student		Parent	
	2008–2009 (n = 3,949)	2009–2010 (n = 4,025)	2008–2009 (n = 996)	2009–2010 (n = 629)
Increased	24.2%	24.0%	25.1%	20.8%
Stayed the same	71.8%	72.0%	73.2%	71.9%
Decreased	4.0%	4.1%	1.7%	7.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Most students, in both years, indicated that they talked to their friends about going to college; In addition, nearly a quarter of students, in both years, reported that their interest in college had increased since they began GEAR UP; almost all of the remaining students reported that their interest had stayed the same.

Parent, Family and Community Involvement

In both survey years, more than 70 percent of parents indicated that they had attended at least three activities at their student's school during the past year (Table 22).

Table 22. Parent: How many times have you attended an activity at your child's school during the past year?

	Parents		Grades 11–12 Parents	
	2008–2009 (n = 1,095)	2009–2010 (n = 707)	2008–2009 (n = 157)	2009–2010 (n = 157)
More than 5 times	45.5%	47.1%	49.7%	40.1%
3–5 times	24.7%	27.2%	26.8%	30.6%
1–2 times	22.2%	21.6%	16.6%	22.9%
Never	7.7%	4.1%	7.0%	6.4%
Total	98.6%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

However, over 80 percent of the parents in both years reported that they had *not* attended a GEAR UP event at their child's school. Parents generally felt welcome at their child's school, with 82.0 percent in 2008-2009 and 86.3 percent in 2009-2010 reporting that they "often" or "almost always" felt welcome. With the exception of parents of students in grades 11 and 12 reporting in 2009-2010, over three-quarters of the parents in each year reported that they had not visited a college with their child.

Educators were asked how their school had succeeded in involving parents in their school. The majority of educators, in both survey years, indicated the following activities were successful at involving parents in their school: Parent/teacher conferences; facilitating communication with phone and e-mail; and extracurricular school events (not including athletic programs).

Personalization

Students were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with statements related to student personalization with their school. The statements and the frequency and percentage who agreed with each statement are included in Table 23. The majority of students agreed with each of the statements. In 2008–2009, the percentage of agreement ranged from 56.6 percent for "I receive help from my teachers" to 84.9 percent for "I feel safe in school." In 2009–2010, percentage of agreement ranged from 52.7 percent for "This school helps me get a clear sense of what I would like to do in the future" to 74.0 percent for "I feel safe in school." With the exception of the statement about receiving help from teachers, the percentage of agreement with each statement was lower in the 2009–2010 sample of students than in the 2008–2009 sample. (it is of note that the schools responding in 2008-09 were not exactly the same as the group in 2009-2010 and may account for some of the results shown.

Table 23. Frequency and Percentage of Students who Agreed with Statements about Their Experiences in School

	2008–2009		2009-2010	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
I feel safe in school.	3,427	84.9%	2,989	74.0%
I feel respected by my teachers.	3,129	78.3%	2,830	70.6%
My teachers are truly interested in my learning.	3,093	78.0%	2,754	68.7%
This school helps me get a clear sense of what I would like to do in the future.	3,076	77.8%	2,118	52.7%
The school provides useful hands-on experiences that help me learn.	3,036	76.8%	2,317	57.9%
I feel comfortable talking with my teachers.	2,813	71.5%	2,601	65.1%
I feel I belong to this school.	2,769	69.9%	2,535	63.2%
My parents/guardians are actively involved in my learning.	2,618	66.8%	2,588	64.7%
I receive the help I need from my teachers.	2,240	56.6%	2,789	70.0%

Why Student's Struggle in School

Students, parents, and educators were asked why a student would be struggling in school. The student's top three reasons in both 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 were that the student does not try hard enough, has problems outside of school, and does get along with teachers. Parents agreed with students in both years that the top reason for struggling was that a student did not try hard enough. The second top reason for parents in both years was that parents do not get involved enough in their child's schooling. The third top reason, in 2008–2009, was that the school did not understand the student's home life; in 2009–2010, it was that the student has problems outside of school. Educators had five responses that were selected at least 50 percent of the time in both years, including that the student misses too much school, does not try hard enough, has problems outside of school, has parents who do not get involved enough in their child's schooling, and is in a school that does not understand the student's home life. In addition, 56.1 percent of the educators surveyed in 2009–2010 indicated that the student has too many family or work responsibilities. See Table 24 for details.

Table 24. In your opinion, if a student is struggling in school, it is usually because....(Check all that apply).

	Students		Parents		Educators	
	2008-09 (n=4,219)	2009-10 (n=4,128)	2008-09 (n= 1,111)	2009-10 (n=709)	2008-09 (n=359)	2009-10 (n=255)
The student does not try hard enough.	72.9%	77.7%	64.3%	62.6%	74.7%	71.0%
The student has problems outside of school.	51.6%	54.6%	11.9%	34.7%	56.5%	75.3%
The student does not get along with teachers.	42.0%	46.3%	32.0%	25.1%	32.0%	27.8%
Parents do not get involved enough in their child's schooling.	40.9%	41.7%	53.8%	57.4%	86.4%	84.3%
Classes are too challenging.	37.3%	40.2%	20.9%	15.1%	9.7%	12.2%
The student has too many family or work responsibilities.	29.4%	33.2%	15.1%	16.8%	42.6%	56.1%
The school does not understand the student's home life.	28.2%	29.5%	37.1%	14.2%	71.3%	65.0%
The student does not get along with other students.	28.1%	29.0%	21.7%	19.3%	29.0%	22.7%
The student does not get any personal attention in the school.	19.0%	19.7%	25.1%	23.8%	24.0%	24.3%
Classes are not meaningful or relevant.	18.3%	22.4%	15.2%	15.9%	29.2%	30.2%
Teachers do not try hard enough.	12.1%	13.7%	20.6%	16.2%	12.0%	11.0%
The student does not feel safe in the school.	10.4%	11.4%	9.9%	6.2%	6.7%	8.2%
Classes are not challenging enough.	10.2%	12.5%	17.4%	17.8%	12.5%	14.1%
Teachers' low expectation for their students in the school.	10.1%	11.6%	13.5%	14.0%	13.1%	13.3%
The student misses too much school.	8.7%	10.2%	16.7%	17.8%	84.7%	87.8%

School Activities that Support Relationships

Access to Student Assistance Programs In Reach of Everyone (ASPIRE)

Administered by the Oregon Student Access Commission, **A**ccess to **S**tudent assistance **P**rograms **I**n **R**each of **E**veryone (ASPIRE)) is Oregon's official mentoring program to help students access education and training beyond high school. Students receive information about college options, admission, and financial aid from trained and supportive ASPIRE volunteer mentors who work one-on-one with them throughout the year. Beginning with just four pilot schools in 1998, ASPIRE has expanded to 115 sites across Oregon. ASPIRE serves students by:

- Helping high schools build a sustainable community of volunteer advisors

- Educating students and families about the scholarship application process and other options for paying for postsecondary education
- Advising, and providing resources and encouragement to help students access education and training beyond high school

ASPIRE is for all students. It is an all-comer's program and serves the entire student body. Any student who believes they can benefit from an ASPIRE advisor is welcomed and encouraged to participate. By being inclusive, ASPIRE ensures that all of Oregon's students have many options for a fulfilling future beyond high school. Volunteer ASPIRE Advisors are assigned to work one-on-one with students, guiding them through important steps toward postsecondary education. The ASPIRE Advisor position attracts a broad spectrum of adult volunteers. Many are parents/guardians of students at the ASPIRE school; professionals, some of whom are the first in their family to attend college; or retired community members. Volunteers do not have to have attended college themselves to be effective ASPIRE advisors.

Eight of the 12 clusters have an ASPIRE programs: Brookings-Harbor, Glendale, LaPine, Lost River, North Valley, Stanfield, Sweet Home, and Taft. This has been a successful program in building community relationships and has provided students with the additional support of a caring adult in addition to support in completing the college application process.

College Dreams

Two clusters have the support of College Dreams, a non-profit agency located in Grants Pass. Glendale and North Valley both have access to the College Bound support program. Additionally North Valley has a Guiding Lights Mentoring program for youth which is provided by College Dreams.

College Bound students are seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-graders who have been identified as having a number of risk factors and who show academic promise. These students work with "College Preparation Specialists" in regular outreach meetings at their schools to motivate academic excellence, build strong relationships, learn their options for future careers based on their interests, and explore college options. College Bound students have access to the Barrier Removal Fund to provide their families with funding for clothing, registration fees, and program costs to facilitate student participation in sports, clubs, after-school programs, and summer youth programs. College Preparation Specialists meet with their College Bound students weekly to review and coach them regarding their academic grades, program activities, college preparation, and plans for school schedules. Specialists work closely with participants, school staff members, and parents to monitor participant grades, celebrate excellence, intervene regarding challenges, explore interests, and discuss the advantages of pursuing a rigorous course of academic study. The College Preparation Specialists typically meet with College Bound students in small groups in order to promote a college-bound peer culture that encourages planning for college and supporting each other.

WEB and Link Crew

The Boomerang Project, a company that provides training to both educators and students, houses the student orientation and transition programs Link Crew and Where Everybody Belongs (WEB). WEB is a middle-school orientation and transition program that welcomes sixth- and seventh-graders and makes them feel comfortable throughout their first year of their middle school. Through this nationally recognized middle school transition program, members of the eighth-grade class are trained to act as positive role models, mentors, and teachers who guide the sixth- and seventh-graders to discover what it takes to be successful in middle school. Schools have reported that the WEB middle school transition program has enhanced anti-bullying efforts, reduced discipline issues, and increased school safety, creating an improved school climate and a greater sense of connection for the whole school.

Link Crew is a high school orientation and transition program that increases freshman success. Members of the junior and senior class are trained to be Link Crew Leaders, who act as positive role models, motivators, student mentors and teachers, and help guide the freshmen to discover what it takes to be successful during their high school transition. As freshman success increases, the benefits to the school climate and culture become apparent; Link Crew schools report having greater student connection, increased extracurricular participation, fewer discipline issues, and improved academic performance. Link Crew schools value the service-learning and character development achieved through this proven high school orientation program.

Five clusters use WEB and Link Crew, a program designed by the Booerrang Corporation, for the transitions between elementary to middle school and middle school to high school: Brookings, Cottage Grove, North Valley, Lost River, and South Umpqua. North Marion offers a freshman survival camp before school starts in September for similar purposes.

Three clusters have created GEAR UP clubs after school: Stanfield, Sweet Home and Taft. Taft has a family fun night put on by GEAR UP club students. Cottage Grove, North Marion and Sweet Home have established a GEAR UP parent's group to help support GEAR UP activities. In addition, Sweet Home has a GEAR UP University, a series of six workshops to inform parents about the transition from middle to high school and beyond.

Irrigon has a commitment to Graduate Banner signing, and Sweet Home has a recognition senior signing event which occurs when seniors are accepted into college.

Sweet Home conducts a GEAR UP class in middle school; Stanfield offers similar information in an advisory class structure. Stanfield uses the Advisory to build relationships with students, and to follow students' grades, referrals, and academic interventions.

Two cluster have a community involvement grant, "Everyday Democracy". Taft is working with the community to have them better understand the positive things the high school is doing as is Cottage Grove.

Reality of Affordability

Many students do not take the necessary steps during high school to prepare for and enter college because they are not aware of these steps or because they lack the guidance or support needed to complete them. In addition to the academic obstacles discussed earlier, students need to complete a number of discrete steps in high school to enroll in college, such as taking college entrance exams, searching for colleges, applying for financial aid, submitting college applications, and selecting a college. In their senior year, students have to decide where to go, how to apply, and, most important, how to pay for college. Optimally, these issues should be considered in the earlier years of high school; but in the senior year, students must make their decisions. Students may lack adequate advice, particularly if no one in their immediate families has completed a two- or four-year degree. Students and their families need guidance from knowledgeable school staff members if they are to successfully navigate the college application processes. As a result, a large part of the obligation for enabling students to gain the academic, social, and cultural skills to gain entrance to college falls upon teachers, counselors, and school administrators (Tierney, et. al. 2009)

> *Low-income students who attended financial-aid information sessions and subsequently applied for financial aid were much more likely to attend and complete college, presumably because they understood both the true cost of college and the types of aid available to them. A school that successfully institutes a college-going culture needs to ensure that its students are well informed about the costs of college, the types of aid available to them, and the knowledge that many students take loans to pursue higher education (and are able later to repay them). Successful examples include standard practices such as information sessions or even requiring students to apply for aid. But some schools are also experimenting with more creative methods such as working with students on building financial planning skills, which can help all students, including those who do not eventually attend college, as well as highlighting the financial tradeoffs associated with not obtaining a college degree.* (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

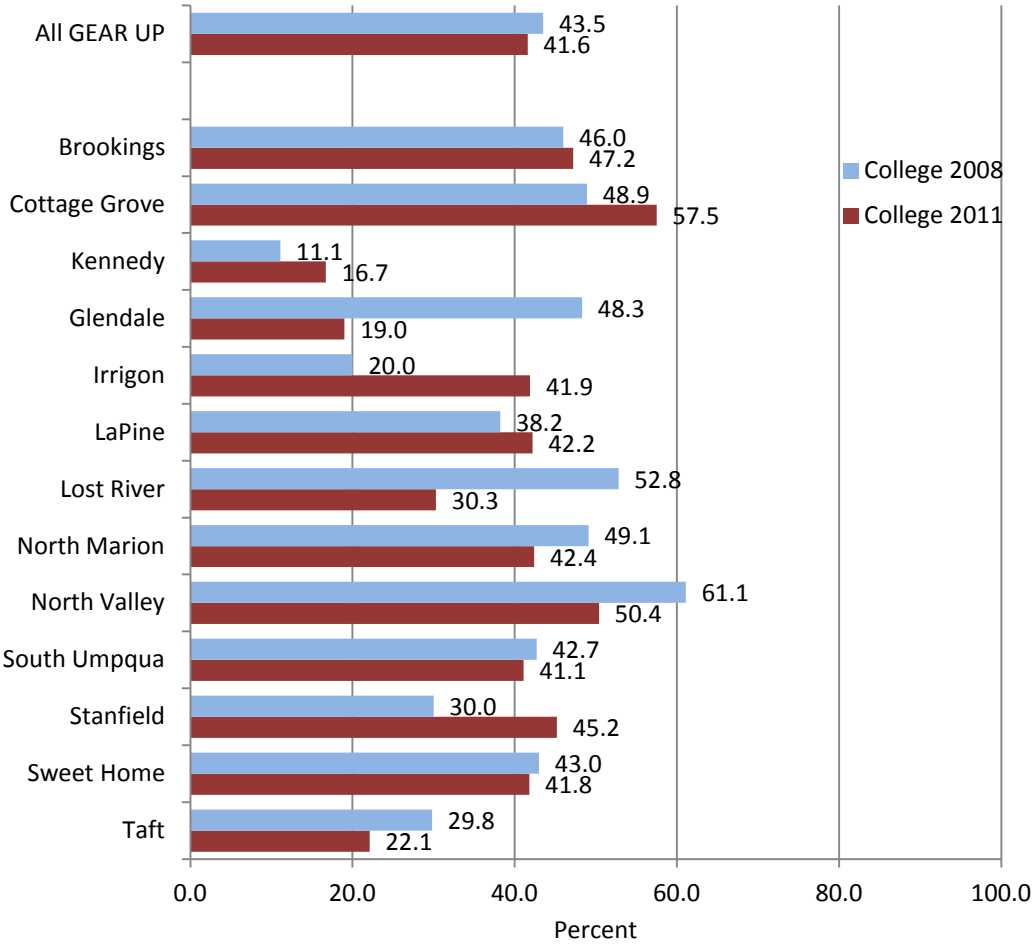
Oregon GEAR UP College Going Rates, Class of 2008 and 2010

As reported through the National Student Clearinghouse (2010), for the class of 2008 graduating from the GEAR UP high schools, 43.5 percent of the students, on average, continued on to college. In 2010, this percentage declined slightly to 41.6 percent. The decreasing percentage of students entering college may be reflective of the 10.2 percent increase of students eligible for FRL in these same schools.

Comparing the classes of 2008 and 2010, six of the GEAR UP high schools *did* have an increase in their college-going rates. Two schools had significant increases in college-going students: Irrigon, with a 21.9 percentage point increase (from 20.0 to 41.9 percent), and Stanfield, with a 15 percentage point increase (from 30.0 percent to 45.2 percent). The schools with a majority of their students going on to college were: Cottage Grove, with 57.5 percent of its seniors

matriculating (an 8.6 percentage point increase from 2008) and North Valley, with 50.4 percent of its seniors going on to college (a decrease of 10.7 percentage points from 2008).

Figure 9. Oregon GEAR UP College-Going Rates, Class of 2008 and 2010



Readiness

In surveys administered in the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 school years, educators were asked what experiences would be most helpful for students in improving their chances for success in postsecondary education. The results are displayed in Table 25. All of the suggested success strategies were rated as helpful by nearly 40 percent of the educators in both years. The top three rated strategies in the 2008–2009 school year were: visiting a college/college student shadowing, workshop/counseling on college preparation, and tutoring in academic subjects. The top three rated strategies in the 2009–2010 school year were different, and included: tutoring for the SAT, ACT, or other college entrance exams; financial aid awareness and financial planning; and mentoring.

Table 25. Educator: What types of experiences during grades 7–12 would be helpful for your students in improving their chances for attending and succeeding in postsecondary education?

	2008–2009		2009–2010	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Visiting a college/college student shadowing	284	79.1%	153	60.0%
Workshop/counseling on college preparation	264	73.5%	150	58.8%
Tutoring in academic subjects	229	63.8%	177	69.4%
Financial aid awareness and financial planning	221	61.6%	185	72.5%
College prep curriculum	219	61.0%	165	64.7%
Visiting a job site/job shadowing	215	59.9%	166	65.1%
Mentoring	214	59.6%	179	70.2%
Summer programs	211	58.8%	114	44.7%
Tutoring for SAT, ACT, or other college entrance exams	204	56.8%	204	80.0%
Study skills classes	191	53.2%	165	64.7%
Social skills classes	179	49.9%	94	36.9%
Dual enrollment (e.g., AP, Tech Prep, Running Start)	141	39.3%	142	55.7%

Educators were asked to indicate to what extent they were involved in different postsecondary preparation activities with their students in the past year. The activities and the frequency and percentage from those who indicated they were "often" or "sometimes" involved with each activity are included Table 26 for both 2008–2009 and 2009–2010. The majority of educators indicated in both years that they were "often" or "sometimes" involved in providing information on financial aid and scholarships available for postsecondary education. Although not reported by a majority of educators in the 2009–2010 school year, the next two most frequently occurring postsecondary activities in both years included providing information and counseling about college choices and familiarizing students with college environments. Finally, for each activity in Table 26, the percentage of educators who indicated that they were "often" or "sometimes" involved in the activity was lower in the 2009–2010 sample than in the 2008–2009 sample.

Table 26. Frequency and Percentage of Educators Indicating That They are "Often" or "Sometimes" Involved in Post-Secondary Preparation Activities with Students

	20008–2009		2009–2010	
To what extent have you been involved in…	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Providing information on financial aid and scholarships available for postsecondary education?	215	61.4%	127	51.0%
Providing information and counseling about college choices?	205	59.0%	113	45.0%
Familiarizing students with college environments?	176	51.1%	111	44.2%
Informing students of admissions requirements for various institutions of higher education?	163	46.8%	89	35.7%
Providing information about postsecondary work, training, and educational opportunities?	159	45.5%	102	40.8%
Counseling students to take more rigorous courses?	132	37.7%	68	27.3%
Providing direction and extra instruction for at risk students?	75	21.5%	46	18.4%

On the 2008–2009 survey, the majority of students and parents reported that they believe it would cost at least $20,000 to attend a four-year public college in Oregon. However, the majority of students, parents, and educators surveyed in both years did not believe that the school provided parents or students opportunities to participate in financial-aid awareness and planning activities for college.

Parents and educators in both years had very similar perceptions about how much information the school makes available to students and parents about what it takes to go to college. More than half in each group, in both 2008–2009 and 2009–2010, did not believe that the school gives students information about what it takes to go to college or provides parents with information on what it takes to get their children to college.

Of the three types of postsecondary school options, all students were most familiar with entrance requirements for four-year colleges and community colleges. A slightly greater percentage of parents were familiar with the entrance requirements for community colleges than for four-year colleges. In both years, approximately a third of parents, and parents of juniors and seniors, were familiar with the entrance requirements to technical, trade, or business institutions.

The majority of students and parents in both years reported that they are having conversations at home about requirements for attending college. As students become juniors and seniors, the percentage of students and parents who report having these conversations about attending college increased in both 2008–2009 and 2009–2010. In general, students were familiar with the

SAT, with a majority of the students in 2008–2009, and nearly three-quarters of students in 2009–2010, either planning to take it or had already taken it.

Student Awareness

According to the *Oregon University System 2008 Fact Book*, the average cost for an academic year including tuition, books, housing, food and personal expenses would be $18,500 (http://www.ous.edu/factreport/factbook/). The survey asked both parents and students about how much it costs to attend a four-year public college in Oregon. The majority of students and parents selected $20,000 or higher in both 2008–2009 and 2009–2010. Parents selected $30,000 most frequently in both years (Table 27). According to the *Oregon University System 2010 Fact Book*, the average cost for an academic year, including tuition, books, housing, food and personal expenses, would be $20,193 (http://www.ous.edu/factreport/factbook/); this is an increase of $1,693 a year since 2008.

Table 27. About how much do you think it costs (including tuition, books, housing, and food) to attend a 4-year public college in Oregon?

	Students		Parents	
Estimated annual cost of 4-year public college in Oregon	**20008–2009** (n = 4,105)	**2009–2010** (n = 4,036)	**2008–2009** (n = 1,059)	**2009–2010** (n = 673)
$5,000	2.4%	2.1%	1.4%	1.6%
$10,000	6.0%	5.9%	6.4%	7.9%
$15,000	13.0%	12.4%	15.4%	15.5%
$20,000	24.0%	24.1%	24.6%	26.3%
$25,000	27.5%	29.5%	20.1%	20.7%
$30,000	27.2%	26.0%	32.0%	28.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The majority of students, parents, and educators surveyed in both years disagreed that the school provided parents or students opportunities to participate in financial-aid awareness and planning activities for college. See Table 28.

Table 28. To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

	2008–2009 Percent (n)			2009–2010 Percent (n)		
Students	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Don't Know**	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Don't Know**
My school provides students with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for college education.	28.7% (1,120)	71.4% (2,793)	0.0% (0)	25.4% (1,013)	74.6% (2,966)	0.0% (0)
Parents						
My child's school provides parents with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for their children's college education.	35.2% (376)	58.0% (620)	6.7% (72)	30.6% (211)	57.8% (398)	11.6% (80)
My child's school provides students with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for their college education.	36.8% (394)	55.2% (591)	7.9% (85)	31.0% (213)	56.0% (385)	13.0% (89)
Educators						
My school provides students with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for college education.	14.8% (52)	55.3% (194)	29.9% (105)	9.1% (23)	54.2% (137)	36.8% (93)
My school provides parents with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for their children's college education.	20.2% (71)	55.7% (195)	23.3% (84)	13.2% (33)	55.7% (140)	31.1% (78)

Parent, Family, Community Education and Support

As shown in Table 29, over 30 percent of students in both 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 believed that they would definitely attend college, and over 35 percent of parents in both years indicated that their child would definitely attend. Fewer than 3 percent of teachers in both years indicated that their students would definitely go to college. In both years, all three groups believed that the top reason for not attending college would be because it costs too much.

Table 29.What is the main reason you, your child, or students would not continue your education after high school?

	Students		Parents		Educators	
	2008–09 (n=4,008)	2009–10 (n=3,816)	2008–09 (n=1,070)	2009–10 (n=675)	2008–09 (n=349)	2009–10 (n=224)
I am definitely going to go	32.6%	31.2%	37.3%	37.8%	.6%	2.2%
It costs too much	31.6%	31.6%	28.4%	25.3%	23.5%	26.8%
I need to support myself	5.9%	4.1%	6.2%	6.4%	17.8%	20.1%
I want to join the military service	8.2%	9.5%	4.5%	4.6%	1.4%	4.0%
College is too far from home	1.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	.9%	1.3%
My grades are not good enough	6.5%	6.8%	4.5%	5.9%	3.4%	5.4%
I am not interested	4.1%	4.9%	10.4%	11.0%	25.8%	29.0%
I need to take care of family	2.3%	3.0%	1.3%	0.9%	1.1%	0.9%
I want to work	4.5%	4.6%	3.6%	4.0%	10.9%	10.3%
Some other reason	3.1%	3.4%	3.8%	4.1%	14.6%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Approximately 50 percent of all parents surveyed in both years, and parents of juniors and seniors in 2009–2010, indicated that they know how to help their child apply for financial aid. Over 60 parent of the parents of juniors and seniors in 2008–2009 indicated that they knew how to help their child to apply (Table 30).

Table 30. Parent: Do you know how to help your child apply for financial aid for college?

	All Parents		Parents of Students in Grades 11 and 12	
	2008-2009 (n = 1,081)	2009-2010 (n = 690)	2008-2009 (n = 152)	2009-2010 (n = 154)
Yes	52.9%	48.3%	60.5%	51.3%
No	47.1%	51.7%	39.5%	48.7%

The majority of all students and parents had not spoken to someone at the school about financial aid. However, the majority of juniors and seniors had spoken to someone at the school or GEAR UP about the availability of financial aid to pay for college (Table 31).

Table 31.Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?

	All Students		All Parents		Students Grades 11–12		Parents Grades 11–12	
	2008–09 (n=4,096)	2009-10 (n=4,086)	2008-09 (n=1,085)	2009-10 (n=685)	2008-09 (n=935)	2009-10 (n=1,210)	2008-09 (n=156)	2009-10 (n=155)
Yes	37.4%	43.8%	15.2%	17.1%	69.1%	56.5%	16.0%	21.9%
No	62.6%	56.2%	84.8%	82.9%	30.9%	43.5%	84.0%	78.1%

Finally, students and parents generally believed that they could afford a public four-year college using financial aid, scholarships, and family resources (Table 32).

Table 32. Do you think that you could afford to attend a public four-year college using financial aid, scholarships, and your family's resources?

	All Students		All Parents		Students Grades 11–12		Parents Grades 11–12	
	2008–09 (n=4,102)	2009-10 (n=4,095)	2008–09 (n=1,086)	2009-10 (n=690)	2008–09 (n=948)	2009-10 (n 1,209)	2008–09 (n=156)	2009-10 (n=154)
Definitely	15.4%	13.8%	16.1%	15.7%	15.3%	13.3%	19.2%	9.1%
Probably	42.3%	44.2%	34.9%	34.2%	42.1%	42.9%	35.3%	36.4%
Not sure	28.7%	26.8%	34.3%	31.4%	25.4%	24.9%	28.2%	22.7%
Probably not	10.4%	11.5%	11.8%	14.2%	13.5%	14.3%	14.7%	23.4%
Definitely not	3.2%	3.7%	2.9%	4.5%	3.7%	4.5%	2.6%	8.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

School Activities to Support the Reality of Affordability

Starting in middle school, Irrigon and Lost River use the "Pathway to Scholarship" curriculum. In this curriculum, students start all the steps of writing their essays, volunteering and providing service, and keeping a log of their activities. This class is offered outside of school hours.

Sweet Home offers a special, two-section class, "College Prep Class." This class includes financial planning, budgeting, and college living. Speakers from the college financial aid office, as well as recent graduates and college student services counselors, are invited to the school to offer information and support.

Sweet Home additionally offers a "Parent University." This is a six workshop series that helps parents understand all the steps for college planning. Brookings-Harbor, Glendale, Irrigon, Lost River, North Valley, and Stanfield all offer financial aid planning evenings. Glendale also offers a parent newsletter, with information about paying for college.

For FAFSA completion, Cottage Grove trains a cadre of volunteers to help facilitate the application process. South Umpqua has a FAFSA Parent night to guide parents on the process of applying for financial aid and scholarships. They have also hosted a speaker on the topic "How I Paid for College." Recent graduates have also been recruited to come and discuss their experience with financing college. Stanfield hosted evening meetings for parents. At the first one, parents were able to use school computers to register their pin number, the first step in the financial aid application process. LaPine offers something very similar—a FAFSA session along with an open house. Families are able to participate and leave with completed FAFSA forms.

Glendale offers a series of activities that prepare students for applying for college. In seventh-grade, students take a class in personal finance; in eighth-grade students learn about paying for college; and in ninth-grade, students learn to set goals using the "Navigation 101" computer program. They receive awards and recognition for completing the "Navigation 101" goal-setting section of the program.

Three clusters, Brookings, Irrigon, and Lost River did outreach to students in elementary grades using a program designed by the Northwest Education Loan Association to increase college awareness *I'm Going to College* (IGTC)which provides college and career curriculum and culminates with a visit to a college campus.

Four cluster have a college T-Shirt day, where students and faculty all show their college colors. This awareness activity is in Glendale, South Umpqua, Sweet Home, and Taft. Sweet Home has also had some local businesses that students frequent where their colors as well.

Summer programs have been available for GEAR UP students. Each year their has been a student leadership camp. First held at Western Oregon University and this past year held at the Universtity of Oregon. Students live on campus, meet other students from across the state and learn important confidence and leadership skills. Many of the cluster made this opportunity available to their students by providing chaperones. Eastern Oregon has had a summer academy where students can earn college credit. Southern Oregon has had Sea Camp, a residential academy and a day camp for students. Oregon State University has offered a science camp. Oregon Institute of Technology has had an outdoor camp with a natural resources focus. Oregon Health Sciences Universtity has offered a camp for students interested in health occupations. All of these have been supported by the GEAR UP administration to reduce costs to students.

All of the clusters provide college site visits in a variety forms, and for a spectrum of grade levels. The younger the students, the more the activities are hands-on. North Marion

encourages reflective writing about the student site visits, either in their writing or reading class. Taft provides site visits for their ninth-graders and has several activities supporting the event in their advisory. College site visits are a very powerful experience for the students visits are a very powerful experience for the students, and serve as a positive motivator for students to set goals for a postsecondary college experience.

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APPENDIX A
Survey Respondents by School and Survey Year

School	Student			Parent			Educator		
	2008–09	2009–10	2010-11	2008–09	2009–10	2010-11	2008–09	2009–10	2010-11
Azalea Middle	88	169		27	1		16	14	
Brookings-Harbor High	0	358		0	0		0	9	
Coffenberry Middle	201	142		182	0		24	23	
Cottage Grove High	1	624		0	141		0	43	
Fleming Middle	294	277		9	3		0	0	
Glendale Junior/Senior High	157	170	139	28	23		14	11	7
Irrigon Junior/Senior High	243	248	263	58	5	10	30	12	29
Kennedy Alternative	6	31		0	0		0	0	
LaPine Middle	491	0		81	0		24	0	9
LaPine High	55	84		0	54		38	17	7
Lincoln Middle	314	1		112	70		26	18	
Lost River Junior/Senior High	44	163		35	192		24	22	
North Marion Middle	616	243		9	89		28	23	
North Marion High	169	0		0	0		17	1	
North Valley High	54	439		0	56		8	20	
South Umpqua High	13	0		24	0		24	0	
Stanfield Secondary	177	0		38	0		15	0	
Sweet Home Junior	835	188	183	254	0		14	8	
Sweet Home High	0	492		209	0		14	21	
Taft 7–12	461	499		45	75		43	12	
Total	4,219	4,128	585	1,111	709	10	359	254	52

APPENDIX B: OREGON GEAR UP PLANNING AND EVALUATION RUBRIC

GOAL 1. RIGOR for all students: Provide appropriately rigorous courses for all students		
Objective 1.1 EQUITY: Explore the equitable availability of courses for all students, particularly those from low-income backgrounds		
Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
Attempts are made to provide open enrollment to most courses. However, some students still face barriers to enrolling in rigorous courses, and forms of tracking still exist. There is growing awareness of how equity issues impact student learning and opportunities.	All course offerings are aligned with college admission requirements; barriers to course enrollment are mostly removed. Policies, practices, and support systems provide rigorous opportunities for nearly all students.	School structure and culture fosters challenging and relevant learning opportunities for students from all cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and special needs backgrounds. There are no students assigned to low-achieving classes. Demographics of individual classes reflect demographics of the entire school. Each student receives unique support and academic preparation to achieve college-readiness. All students have equal access to highly challenging coursework that is relevant and connected to real life experiences. Sample strategies: • All students are provided with multiple college-prep options during their high school career. • Regular tutorial periods help all students access additional support. • Every student is provided with an adult mentor. • Summer school is provided for enrichment and remediation. • Strategic use of distance learning tools • Rigorous performance standards are upheld for all students in all classes. • Professional development explicitly addresses issues of equity in the classroom. • A rigorous college-preparatory curriculum is provided for all students • Dual credit programs are offered.

Objective 1.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING: Improve the quality of teaching and learning through professional development.		
Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
Teachers have limited repertoire of instructional strategies. Many teachers rely heavily on direct instruction strategies such as lectures and text-based activities. Curriculum tends to be broad and shallow.	Teachers learn and use a variety of effective instructional practices. Curriculum becomes more focused and in-depth.	School has adopted and consistently employs a variety of engaging and effective teaching strategies. Learning goals and expectations are clearly articulated and understood by all students. Curriculum supports in-depth study. Teachers are knowledgeable about cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and special needs characteristics that affect learning and capitalize upon students' backgrounds when designing curriculum to meet individual learning needs. Sample strategies: • Utilization of teaching strategies, such as differentiated instruction, project-based learning, community-based or service learning • Exhibitions or public demonstrations of learning • Internship and mentorship programs • Staff meetings regularly used for discussions and demonstrations of best practices • Professional development providing opportunities to learn effective teaching strategies • Curricula / school activities that incorporate students' cultural, linguistic, and historical knowledge • Postsecondary and high school staff members who collaborate, align coursework, team teach • Understanding that cognitive development depends on repeated exposure to inquiry-based and problem-solving learning over time; courses and teaching are designed to contribute to these skills

Objective 1.3 CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT: Curriculum aligned between middle and high school to ensure a seamless and effective transition for students.		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
Some alignment with standards, some teachers begin to engage students in complex problems or projects.	Curriculum increasingly aligned with standards. Academic challenge is growing but remains uneven throughout the school.	Instruction is aligned with state and district standards and community expectations to prepare students for post-high school education. Students actively explore, research, and solve complex problems to develop a deep understanding of core academic concepts. Students are given multiple opportunities to engage in sophisticated and reflective learning experiences. Sample strategies: • Curricular mapping is used to ensure alignment with local and state standards and expectations. • Course sequences are carefully articulated with lower grades to eliminate gaps and overlapping. • Students are supported to produce work that approaches industry standards. • Courses regularly pursue depth over breadth. • Courses are aligned with college courses; articulation agreements allow for college credit to be transcripted. • Middle/high school teacher teams facilitate understanding of competencies students need for success in high school college-preparatory and advanced level courses.

GOAL 2. RELEVANCE: Link students' career aspirations with their educational goals		
Objective 2.1 CAREER AWARENESS: Provide students with opportunities to explore their career interests, and engage business and community partners in the process		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
A few classrooms build employer partnerships in school- and work-based settings, but connections mostly limited to guest speaking appearances.	Community and employer partners provide most students with at least one in-depth learning interaction each school year.	Community and employer partners develop rich learning experiences for all students and staff and reap tangible rewards from their relationships with students and the school. Partners actively work to bring school vision to fruition. Partners have opportunities to influence curriculum and program development. Partners receive regular updates on key curriculum and policy changes. Sample strategies: • School supports work-based learning, student internships, and job shadowing. • Employer and community partners work with teaching teams to develop community-based projects. • Employer and community partners regularly serve as audience members for student exhibitions. • Student internships and projects target real needs of employers and community organizations. • School communication plans target employer and community partners. • Integrated use of career information system.

GOAL 3. RIGHT CLASSES: *All students understand early in their school careers what curriculum is necessary to prepare them for college-level work and future careers.*		
Objective 3.1 INFORMING and PLANNING: Inform students and their families about college entrance requirements and how to apply, and ensure that students have the information necessary to take the right courses for their chosen academic/career path.		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
Few students and parents understand the full impact of class choices on college and career access. Few students and parents know the class requirements for graduation and college entrance.	School is aware that some community subgroups are not informed about the importance of class choices. Efforts are made to educate students, family, and community about the impact of class choice, and graduation and college entrance requirements.	Students and parents from all cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, special needs, and socioeconomic backgrounds are informed about graduation and college entrance requirement as well as the importance of making informed class choices. School staff talks to students and parents about the importance of class choice. Sample strategies: • All school personnel coach students to take the right classes. • Eighth-grade requires that 5-year plans are made for all students, with parents involved. • Integrated use of career information system in planning course selection • All school newspapers and communications offer options for translation into different languages. • Parent volunteers coach peers on the importance of college and choosing the right classes. • Student panel made up of recent graduates now attending college informs students of the importance of academic preparation for college. • Special service announcements educate the community about class choice

Objective 3.2 EMPOWERING: Create a school environment, policies, and teacher expectations that support all students pursuing a postsecondary education		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
Few school staff members believe that all students are capable of completing a college-prep curriculum. Few staff members believe that a majority of students have the skills to be successful in college. Many students believe that college is only for a select few.	Teacher expectations are changing, with more staff recognizing that college is an option for all students. More students see themselves as college students.	All students expected to take a college-prep curriculum. All students are expected to achieve at high levels. All students understand that college is possible, even for those students who don't come from traditional college-going families. School and community create open and explicit dialogue regarding issues of student achievement, equity, diversity and empowerment. Sample strategies: • Staff and faculty verbalize that college preparation is a goal for every student. • A rigorous core curriculum is the norm for all students. • All students have access to the type of curriculum that will prepare them for college. • School reaches out to underrepresented parent and community groups, gathers their views, and uses them. • Postsecondary institutions help to create high expectations and clear pathways to postsecondary education.

GOAL 4. RELATIONSHIPS: *Foster relationships that encourage students' academic success*		
Objective 4.1 PEER NETWORKS: Develop peer networks that encourage college-going aspirations.		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
A college-going culture does not exist in the school. Peer groups are not used to assist or encourage students to stay in school, excel academically, or prepare for college.	There is a growing realization of the importance of peer networks on a student's decision to go to college. Steps have been identified for creating a school-wide college-going culture.	An overall college-going culture pervades the school. College access programs target as many students as possible (whole-school model). Peer student supports are in place. Structures have been developed that facilitate supportive relationships for students with caring adults and peers. Sample Strategies: • Structures are provided that allow students to know each other well. • Peer connections are developed and fostered through advisory groups, project teams, and student clubs centered around academics and college attendance. • Recent graduates serve on panels that address the importance of preparing for and pursing postsecondary education. • Peers are used as tutors (college or high school students). • Recent graduates at local colleges give tours to students.

Objective 4.2 PARENT, FAMILY and COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: Involve family and the broader community in supporting students' academic pursuits.		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
Parents are welcome in the building. Notification of events is sent in home language. Parents are involved primarily on "booster" level, but still may not connect to curricular issues or school change process.	Some parents aware of school change plans. Parental involvement extends to governance and limited instructional connections. Parents attend informational events with students.	Parents and community members form all cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, special needs, and socioeconomic backgrounds are involved in all aspects of the school. Parents understand the vision and are active partners in curriculum design, student learning plans, school improvement, and school decisions. School understands and respects the various cultural communities represented in the building and tap into values that support student achievement and college aspirations. Sample Strategies: • Schools seek guidance from families about what information and resources they need in order to support their children's college aspirations. • Communication plans target parents from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds. • Parents are active and meaningful participants in school governance bodies. • Parent representatives serve in key roles on committees throughout the school and are voting members on school decision making bodies. • Parents partner with students and school staff members to develop student learning plans for all students. • Parents go on college site visits. • Schools actively engage community through forums, town hall meetings, and visits to community organizations and events. • Community groups are used as a method of distributing school information.

Objective 4.3 PERSONALIZATION: Personalize education through school policy and relationships with teachers and counselors.		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
Some structured attempts at grouping or creating long-term adult contacts may be in place such as advisory programs or limited small learning communities.	Advisories, teaming, and small learning communities provide connections for a majority of students.	Student interests and passions drive learning opportunities. Students from all cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and special needs backgrounds develop meaningful, long-term connections to peers and adults. Mentors guide students to develop a post-high school plan. Sample Strategies: • School staff visits the homes of incoming ninth-grade students to welcome them to the school. • Enrollment limits are used to maintain small size. • Course offerings are based on student interests. • Every student is paired with adult mentor. • Small or personalized learning environments are provided and used. • School staff members, including counselors, are given time to help each students develop an academic program that meets their needs and prepares them to meet postsecondary goals.

GOAL 5. REALITY OF AFFORDABILITY: Address perceived and real affordability concerns of students and families.		
Objective 5.1 STUDENT AWARENESS: Provide financial aid information to students, families, teachers, and counselors.		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
College affordability seen as a significant barrier to attending a postsecondary institution by most students and their families as well as school staff.	There is growing awareness among underrepresented students of the actual cost of attending college and the various methods of paying for it.	Students from all cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, special needs, and socioeconomic backgrounds understand the means available to them to pay for postsecondary education. College affordability is not seen as a barrier to attending college. Sample strategies: • School provides help with college applications, financial aid forms, and applying for loans and grants. • School curriculum addresses college affordability/paying for college • College partners provide information on paying for college. • Staff members work with students to build financial planning skills. • Students understand the cost-benefits of attaining a postsecondary education.

Objective 5.2 PARENT, FAMILY, COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT: Parents, family and community members understand how to pay for college and support students in doing so.		
Early Steps	**Growing Innovation**	**New Paradigms**
Parents and community are uninformed or misinformed about the cost of college and how to pay for it. Education around paying for college is left to the student or school.	Parents receive information in their home language on paying for college. Parents attend informational sessions with their students.	Parents, family, and community members understand the options available to pay for college and are active participants in helping students plan and pay for college. Parents, family and community members are resources for students and each other. Parents help plan the FAFSA evenings. Sample Strategies: • Community partners support financial aid nights. • Local college financial aid directors are available to parents and students. • Financial planning is available for parents and students. • Local scholarships are available to students. • Students are supported in creating individual development accounts and other forms of savings. • Bi-lingual scholarship information is readily available early in high school.