Chapter 3. EDUCATION
OVERVIEW

Education benchmarks target Oregon's first strategic goal: "quality jobs for all Oregonians" (see Figure 1, page 4). Oregon's overall grade in Education has improved from C in 1998 to C+ in 2000.

	1998	2000	Page
KEY EDUCATION BENCHMARKS			
Ready To Learn	**N/A**	**A**	**21**
Eighth Grade Skill Levels	**B-**	**B+**	**22**
H.S. Dropout Rate	**F**	**D-**	**23**
College Completion	**B-**	**C-**	**24**
Adult Literacy	**N/A**	**N/A**	**25**
***OTHER* EDUCATION BENCHMARKS**			
Third Grade Skill Levels	A-	A	26
H.S. Work Experience	D	B	26
High School Completion	B	C+	26
Some College Completion	B-	D	27
Associates Degree	F	D	27
Computer Usage	A	B	27
Internet Usage	A-	A	27
Labor Force Skill Training	N/A	N/A	28
AVERAGE *OTHER* GRADE	**C+**	**B-**	
OVERALL GRADE*	**C**	**C+**	

Improvements occurred in these benchmarks:

- *Ready-to-Learn (A).* Oregon kindergarten teachers indicated improvement for new students in all areas but motor development.
- *Eighth Grade Skill Level (B- to B+).* Math skills have improved from 40% achieving the standards in 1991 to about 56% in 2000. Reading skills have similarly improved from 40% meeting the standard in 1991 to about 64% in 2000.
- *High School Dropout Rate (F to D-).* Oregon has improved, but about 10,000 students are still dropping out annually.
- *Third Grade Skill Levels (A- to A).* Between 1991 and 2000, the percentage of students meeting reading standards increased from 52% to 82% (target 82%); those meeting math standards increased from 35% to 75% (target 73%).
- *High School Work Experience (D to B).* Oregon has made significant progress, although it is still below target. Between 1993 and 1999, the percentage of 11th and 12th graders completing a structured work experience increased from 9% to 42%. The target for 2000 was 65%.
- *Associate Degree (F to D).* In 1998, three percent of adult Oregonians had an occupation-specific degree. That improved to 3.6% in 2000. Oregon remains well below target, however.
- *Internet Usage (A- to A).* In 1992 only 10% of households were online. By 2000 that percentage catapulted to 63%.

Oregon has slipped in these areas:

- *College Completion,* from B- to C-.
- *High School Completion,* from B to C+.
- *Percentage of Oregonians with Some College*, from B- to D.
- *Computer Usage*, from A to B (although the number of computers has increased).

The *adult literacy* benchmark has no grade because data are inadequate to show a trend. Nevertheless, experts estimate that over 480,000 Oregonians are at the lowest illiteracy level.

* The overall grade is a weighted average. Each key benchmark is given a weight of one. All other benchmarks are averaged, and that average is also given a weight of one.

NEW OR MODIFIED BENCHMARKS FOR EDUCATION

New or Modified Benchmarks	Rationale
25. Percentage of Oregon adults who have postsecondary professional-technical skills.	This now includes adults who have certificate programs.
26. Percent of Oregon adults who have completed: a. bachelor's degree, b. advanced degree.	This benchmark is now modified to include advanced degrees.
28. Percentage of adult Oregonians who use a computer or related electronic device to: a. access the internet, b. create documents/graphics or analyze data.	This consolidates two prior benchmarks measuring computer skills and internet access.

Benchmark 18

Key Benchmark
READY TO LEARN
Percent of Oregon children entering school ready-to-learn.

Grade A

Teachers Report More Kindergartners Ready to Learn

Contributes to Goal 1, Quality Jobs for All Oregonians

Do children in Oregon receive the nurturing and support they need early enough in their young lives to succeed later in life? Research has documented that there are "windows of opportunities" for children to form the basis of critical motor, language, literacy, and social skills. For many such skills, the best opportunity is from birth to three years of age. This means that a young child's parents or caregivers can either nurture a child's physical and mental development, or allow those brain connections to become diminished from lack of use.

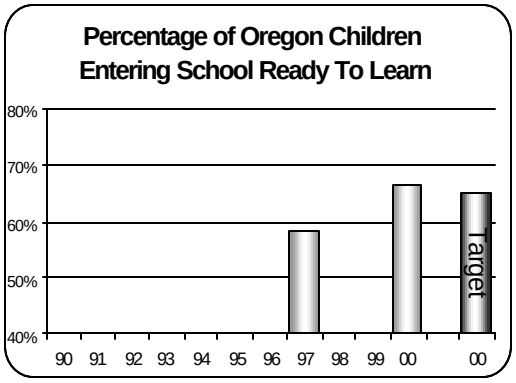
Targets Aim for Steady Improvement

Oregon kindergarten teachers are asked to assess their students in six key areas: physical well being, language usage, learning approach, cognition, motor development and social skills. In order to be deemed "ready to learn," a child must meet readiness standards in all six areas. The goal was to increase the percentage who are ready to learn from 58% (1997) to 65% (2000 target), a 12% increase.

School Readiness is Improving

Results show that the 2000 target was surpassed. The estimated percent of Oregon children meeting all six components increased nine percentage points from 58% in 1997 to 67% in 2000. During this time period, the percentage of kindergartners meeting each readiness area improved in all areas except motor development.

	Physical Well-being	Language Usage	Approach to Learning	Cognition/ Knowledge	Motor Develop.	Social Skills
2000	95%	90%	92%	84%	86%	84%
1997	91%	87%	87%	82%	88%	82%



Source: Oregon Department of Education

PERCENT OF TEACHERS ANSWERING:
"How does the readiness of your students compare to five years ago?"

	More Ready	Same	Fewer Ready
OR	18%	48%	34%
U.S.	25%	33%	42%

Source: OR Dept. of Ed., 1997 Kindergarten Teacher Survey on School Readiness
U.S. Dept. of Ed., 1993 Nat'l Teacher Survey on School Readiness

How Oregon Compares

Oregon teachers saw less change in readiness than their U.S. counterparts did (note: U.S. numbers are four years older). About half of all Oregon teachers felt there was no change, versus about 1/3 of U.S. teachers.

What Needs to be Done

Readiness to learn became prominent in the national dialogue on education around 1990. It was the first of the National Education Goals—that by the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn. Experts stress that a child's readiness does not happen in a vacuum. Rather, it is influenced by the "human ecosystem" of family, school and community. Because so much of a child's readiness is formed early in life, training on parenting skills and social supports are critical to reach and advance those children born in less fortunate environments not conducive to early childhood development. Social supports include providing access to good basic health care, assuring that children have nonviolent and drug-free home environments, and access to a comprehensive network of collaborative community services. Experts also agree that schools must be as ready for children as children are for school. This means developing programs and curricula that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for students in each neighborhood and school. It also means empowering and involving families, and providing a smooth transition from early childhood programs, such as Head Start, to kindergarten. The Governor's proposed 2001-2003 budget allocates $66 million to early identification and intervention for the 60% of Oregon's children who are born into situations with risks that can affect their success in life.

Relevant State Agencies: Oregon Department of Education, www.ode.state.or.us. (*See the Oregon Progress Board website for other key players and stakeholders.)*

See Also: www.futureofchildren.org, www.aecf.org, www.childtrends.org/r_ed.cfm

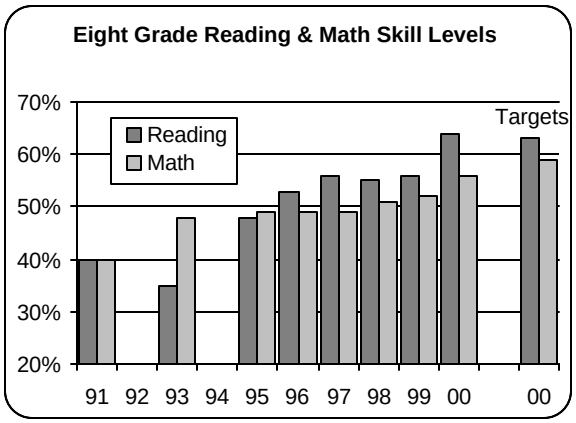
For 2005-2010 benchmark targets, See Appendix A

Benchmark		Reading	Math
20	***Key Benchmark*** **EIGHTH GRADE READING/MATH** *Percent of eighth graders achieving established reading and math skill levels.*	A	B-

Oregon Eighth Graders Doing Better in Reading and Math

Contributes to Goal 1, Quality Jobs for All Oregonians

Eighth grade is an important developmental period when many American students fall behind their counterparts in other nations. Studies have also indicated that math may be a particularly weak link in the U.S. educational system. The 1997 Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) of 40 countries, in which Oregon was one of two states that participated, reported that "on international tests, the United States is near the bottom in mathematics." (See "How Oregon Compares" below.)



Source: Oregon Department of Education

Target Aims for Results, not Efforts

The national movement toward accountability in schools echoes the Oregon benchmarking system, which focuses on outcomes or results, not just efforts. This benchmark was chosen because it focuses on the *results* of the educational process in Oregon.

Skills Improving Steadily

Math skills have improved for Oregon eighth graders from 40% achieving the standards in 1991 to about 56% in 2000. Reading skills have similarly improved (despite a drop in 1993) from 40% testing well in 1991 to about 64% in 2000.

EIGHTH GRADE AVERAGE SCORE

	Reading-1998	Math-1996
OR	266	276
WA	266	276
U.S.	261	271

Source: NAEP, The Nation's Report Card

How Oregon Compares

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Oregon's eighth grade reading and math scores equaled the state of Washington's and were higher than the U.S. average for the years 1998 (reading) and 1996 (math). Although eight countries outscored Oregon, 16 countries scored about the same. Missouri and 17 other countries including the U.S. posted scores significantly below Oregon.

What Needs To Be Done

Several Oregon schools have had marked success in helping students achieve. Teachers have personalized the lessons, focused sharply on academics, and closely monitored student progress. Other practices that are important, according to experts, include an orderly school climate, school wide academic goals, teamwork among teachers, a strong principal, small classes, heavy parental involvement, clear and focused instruction and quick feedback on student work. These practices have been demonstrated successful for all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Researchers have identified significant scholastic success in several Oregon schools using similar methods where a majority of children were from disadvantaged backgrounds.*

Governor Kitzhaber's proposed 2001-2003 budget adds significantly to the state's educational program by allocating an additional $220 million to ensure that 90% of 3rd and 5th graders meet or exceed the state reading benchmark within four years.

Relevant State Agencies: Department of Education, www.ode.state.or.us; Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Policy, www.workforce.state.or.us. *(See the Oregon Progress Board website for other key players and stakeholders.)*

See Also: http://bluebook.state.or.us/state/executive/Teachers_Standards/teacher_standards_history.htm, www.pfie.ed.gov/about_main.htm

* Source: Graves, Bill. "The best schools tend to mirror each other." *The Oregonian*. March 20, 2000.

Benchmark 22

Key Benchmark

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE

Percent of public high school students who drop out of grades nine through twelve in any given year.

Grade D-

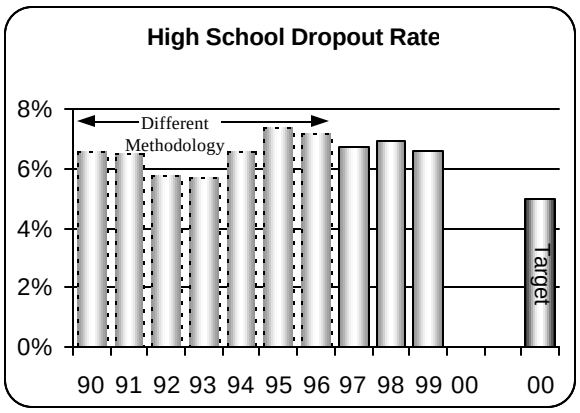
10,600 Oregon Students Quit Without Graduating

Contributes to Goal 1, Quality Jobs for All Oregonians

In order for all Oregonians to enjoy the affluence of a knowledge based economy, they must have the skills and education required to work in it. In 1995, high-tech companies were importing up to 90% of their senior scientists and engineers while unemployment in many Oregon counties exceeded 12%. Those without high school diplomas earn half of those with associate degrees and roughly a third of those with college degrees.

2000 Target is Aggressive

This benchmark measures all students who drop out of grades nine through 12 in Oregon's K-12 (public) school system. Please note: the modest reduction in 1997 reflects a change in methodology (see chart). GED students were no longer counted as dropouts. For a more complete explanation, see the endnote, Appendix C.



Source: Oregon Department of Education

Results: Too Many Dropping Out

Over 10,600 high school students dropped out in 1999. This is 6.6% of Oregon's public high school students. It is a modest drop from 1998's 6.9%. Because job availability plays an important role in this benchmark the dropout rate tends to fluctuate with the unemployment rate. Dropout rates can also be couched in cumulative terms. The percent of the average class entering freshman year that drops out by the end of senior year is nearly 22%.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATE, 18-24 YEAR OLDS

	1991-93	1994-96	1997-99
OR	85.5	81.1	78.5
WA	89.2	86.8	87.0
U.S.	85.7	85.8	85.5

Source: NCES: Dropout Rates in the U.S., 1999 **3 year averages**

How Oregon Compares

The best available national comparator is high school completion for adults, 18-24. Oregon did not compare favorably on these rates against Washington or the U.S. during the eight year period shown in this chart. Please note: these figures are based on a three year moving average.

What Needs To Be Done

Students quit because of an accumulation of absences that leave students so far behind they can't keep up; lack of parental support; jobs requiring more than 15 hours per week (exacerbated by a good economy with lots of jobs); frequent moves between schools; and dysfunctional homes. Finally, 628 students (533 girls) said in a state survey that they quit school because they had children. Because the dropout rate of Latino, Native and African Americans is double or more than that of Asian and white Americans, the dropout rate is also influenced by the racial diversity of any given school system and how well the system is able to address the cultural needs of those students*.

Schools with reduced dropout rates offer programs to help teens feel connected to their schools. These include summer school for struggling eighth-graders, teacher mentors for freshmen, and efforts to make school more inviting. Lowering the dropout rate is a community issue. Of critical importance are social supports and services for children and families that are struggling with issues such as poverty, cultural alienation, teen pregnancy and domestic abuse. Targeted assistance to schools, professional development for teachers and administrators, and public awareness are all needed to keep kids from quitting. The Governor's 2001-2003 budget proposes $8.4 million for reducing dropout rates as well as assisting low performing schools and supporting new teachers.

Relevant State Agencies: Department of Education, www.ode.state.or.us; Adult & Family Services Division, www.afs.hr.state.or.us; Governor's Office of Education & Workforce Policy, www.workforce.state.or.us. *(See the Oregon Progress Board website for other key players and stakeholders.)*

See Also: www.ed.gov/Family/agbts, www.highscope.org, http://measuringup2000.highereducation.org

* Graves, Bill. "10,634 quit school in Oregon" *The Oregonian.* April 27, 2000.

Benchmark 26

Key Benchmark

COLLEGE COMPLETION

The percentage of Oregon adults age 25 and over who have completed a baccalaureate degree.

Grade C-

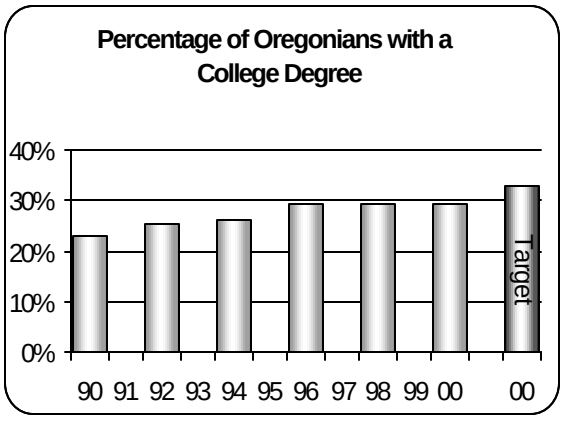
College Completion Rate Flat

Contributes to Goal 1, Quality Jobs for All Oregonians

More advanced levels of education are required for the better jobs in the emerging information and technology oriented economy. The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Industries projects a rapidly growing demand for advanced degrees, including those for professional specialty professions such as elementary and secondary teachers, marketing/public relations managers, psychologists, computer engineers, computer systems analysts and social workers.

Goal: a Third with College Degrees

This benchmark aimed to increase the percentage of adults in Oregon with a baccalaureate degree from 23% in 1990 to 33% in 2000. This measure includes both those with bachelors and with advanced degrees. *Please note: this benchmark is being modified so that in the future, it will differentiate between undergraduate and postgraduate percentages.*



Source: Oregon Population Survey

Holding Steady at 29% for Five Years

Oregon did not achieve its 2000 benchmark target of 33%, although the long term trend is in the right direction. The percentage of adults with college degrees in Oregon increased steadily throughout the first half of the decade and leveled off in the past five years. This was influenced by flat degree production of Oregon's colleges and universities, as well as a higher educational attainment of the many who moved into Oregon in the mid-late 1990s. An estimated 40% of adult newcomers had at least a bachelor's degree during that period.

COLLEGE ATTAINMENT RANK

	1996	1997	1998	1999
OR	18th	14th	15th	18th
WA	5th	10th	11th	11th

Source: CfED, The Development Report Card

How Oregon Compares

For several years, Oregon ranked below Washington in heads of households with at least four years of college. (This includes individuals without baccalaureate degrees.) However, U.S. Census data indicate that Oregon has a higher percentage of people with college or advanced degrees—28.4% (2000) compared to 24.4% (U.S., 1999).

What Needs To Be Done

In order to boost Oregon's college completion rate, efforts must be made to address its relatively high tuition, low state financial assistance to students, and lower state investment in public education compared to other states. A recent study graded each state on various aspects of higher education. Oregon's worst grade was for college affordability (D-).* Oregon ranks 39th in the nation in per pupil support of higher education.** University officials assert that Oregon universities have provided quality education and research programs despite these challenges.

Experts believe that sustained investment is necessary for public universities to remain affordable and relevant to tomorrow's workforce and a fast-paced, knowledge-based economy. The Governor's proposed 2001-2003 budget targets $20 million for engineering programs and $7.2 million to improve access to four-year degrees in central Oregon, the fastest growing region of the state. It also targets $45 million dollars towards meeting the dramatic enrollment growth facing Oregon's community colleges. This investment will enable Oregon's community colleges to serve more Oregonians, and provide a stepping stone to higher education for many.

Relevant State Agencies: Oregon University System, www.ous.edu; Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, www.odccwd.state.or.us/colleges. *(See the Oregon Progress Board website for other key players and stakeholders.)*

See Also: www.chronicle.com, http://osu.orst.edu/oregon/future

* The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, study released in December 2000. The other grades assigned to Oregon were: preparation C-, participation D, completion C, and benefits C+.

** Hovey & Hovey. *CQ's State Fact Finder 2001.* CQ Press, a Division of Congressional Quarterly, Inc., p. 217.

Benchmark 27

Key Benchmark
ADULT LITERACY
Percent of all adult Oregonians with intermediate literary skills.

Grade N/A

About 40% of Oregonians at Intermediate Literacy

Contributes to Goal 1, Quality Jobs for All Oregonians

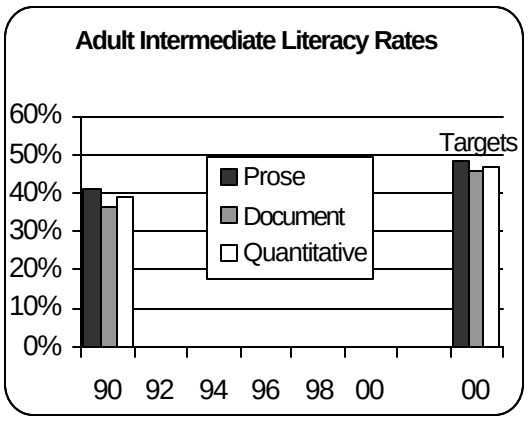
Adult literacy refers to the basic reading, writing, speaking, and work skills needed to function in today's world. For example, Oregon's ballot measures require intermediate literacy skills. Crime, incarceration, and the educational success of children have been linked to the literacy levels of their parents or caregivers. Levels of literacy are highly correlated with earnings potential and poverty.

Target Approaches 50%

The 2000 target for this benchmark aimed to elevate the percentage of Oregonians with intermediate literacy skills to nearly 50%. Future targets (for 2005 and 2010) will aim for levels exceeding 50% (see Appendix A).

2001 Survey will Provide a Basis of Comparison

In 1990, only about 40% of adults in Oregon could demonstrate intermediate literary skills. Unfortunately, The *Oregon Literacy Survey*, which forms the basis for these specific measurements, was last conducted in 1991. It will not be conducted again until 2002, so no trend data is currently available. Nevertheless, it has been estimated that 482,550 Oregonians are at the lowest level of literacy.*



Source: Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WITH INTERMEDIATE LITERARY SKILLS

	Prose	Document	Quantitative
OR (1990)	41%	36%	39%
U.S. (1992)	32%	31%	31%

Source: NCES, 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey

How Oregon Compares

The most recent comparator data available for this benchmark is the 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey. This shows that Oregon exceeds the U.S. in the percentage of adults with intermediate literary skills.

What Needs to be Done

Oregon has a well developed network of dedicated agencies bringing basic skills education to Oregonians who are eligible and in need. Literacy programs within this network assess people according to six levels of reading, math, writing and oral skills. The highest level is equivalent to the intermediate level referred to in this benchmark. The hub of this network is the Oregon Department of Community Colleges & Workforce Development (CCWD). Its Oregon Council of Adult Basic Skills Development (OCABSD) includes local adult education program directors from the community colleges and other agencies such as the Oregon Department of Corrections.

Programs bridging the cultural gap for foreign-born Oregonians and their families may have a positive effect on adult literacy in Oregon. According to a recent estimate, over 50,000 Oregonians spoke English not well or not at all in 1998*. This is likely due to the fact that Oregon has the fifth fastest growing immigrant population in the United States, according to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Unfortunately, of the estimated half million Oregonians at the lowest level of literacy, less than 10% are enrolled in literacy programs.* Future efforts must address this issue if significant progress in this benchmark is to be made.

Relevant State Agencies: Oregon Department of Community Colleges & Workforce Development, www.odccwd.state.or.us/colleges. *(See the Oregon Progress Board website for other key players and stakeholders.)*

See Also: www.oregonliteracy.org/oregon, http://literacynet.org/oregon/odccwd.html, www.nifl.gov, www.nifl.gov/newworld/facts.htm, www.casas.org/lit/litcode/Search.cfm.

* Source: www.oregonliteracy.org/oregon

19 Third Grade Skill Levels

Percentage of third graders who achieve established skill levels: a. reading, b. math.

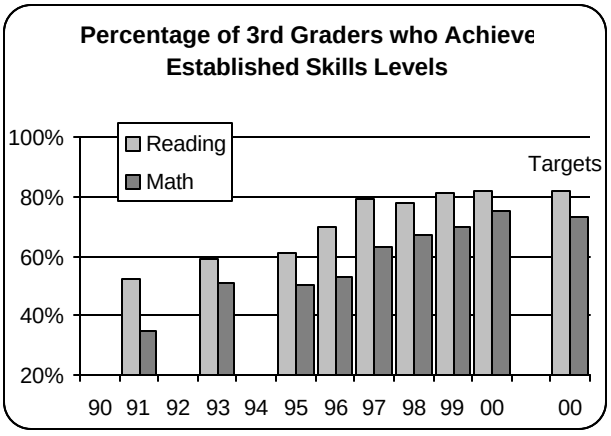
For Benchmark 18, see page 21.

Reading	Math
A	**A**

Third Grade Skill Levels Exceeded 2000 Target

Oregon met its 2000 third grade target for both reading and math. Between 1991 and 2000, the percentage of students meeting reading standards increased from 52% to 82% (target 82%); those meeting math standards increased from 35% to 75% (target 73%).

The best comparator data available compares Oregon's *fourth* grade reading and math skills to other states and the nation. In 1998, Oregon scored slightly lower than the U.S. in fourth grade reading skills, ranking 22nd behind Washington's ranking of 15th. In math, Oregon scored slightly better than the U.S., ranking 20th, one place ahead of Washington (19th).



Source: Oregon Department of Education

21 High School Work Experience

Percentage of high school students that have completed a structured work experience.

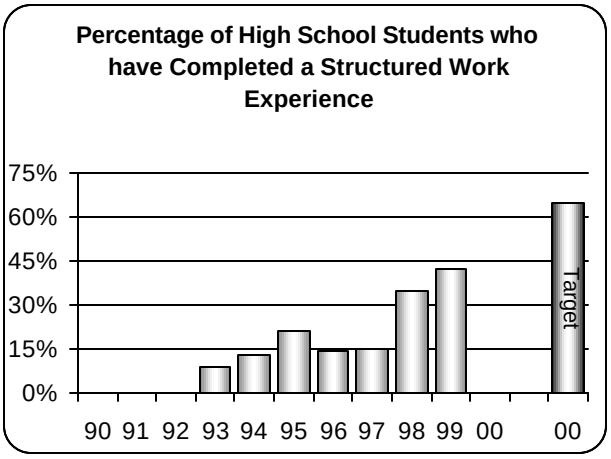
For Benchmark 20, see page 22.

Grade
B

More HS Students are Experiencing the "Real" World

This benchmark measures Oregon's progress in building local systems for making structured work experiences available to high school students. Structured work experiences are tied to classroom studies and will likely be a key element of the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM), which encourages students to apply their knowledge and skills and helps them make the transition from school to their next steps in life.

Despite significant progress, Oregon is still below target. Between 1993 and 1999, the percentage of 11th and 12th grade students completing a structured work experience increased from 9% to 42%. The target for 2000 was 65%.



Source: Oregon Department of Education

23 High School Completion

Percentage of Oregon adults (25 and older) who have completed high school or equivalent.

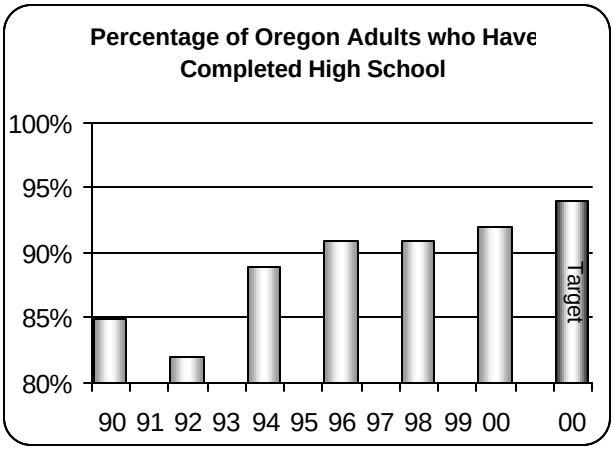
For Benchmark 22, see page 23.

Grade
C+

Making Progress, Ahead of Nation

High school completion is the first step towards higher education, and better-paying jobs. This benchmark includes adults 25 and older and those who have completed GED and equivalent programs. Many high school dropouts go to community college between age 20 and 25 to obtain a GED.

Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of adult Oregonians completing high school increased from 85% to 92% (2000 target was 94%). The U.S. Census Bureau indicates that as of March 2000, Oregon ranks slightly lower than the state of Washington and slightly higher than the nation on adult high school completion.



Source: Oregon Population Survey

24 Some College Completion

Percentage of Oregon adults who have completed some college.

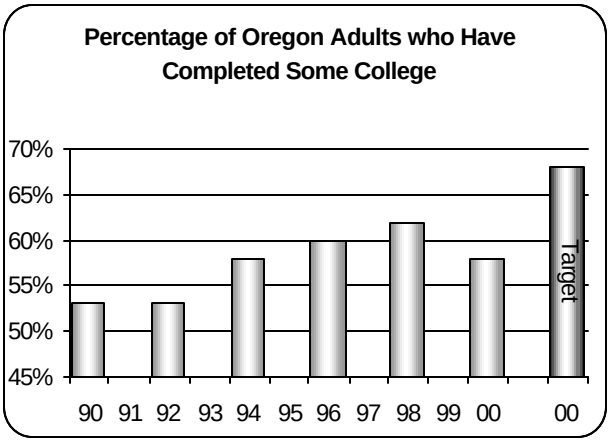
Grade **D**

Slow Progress, Setback in 2000

Benchmark 24 is another indicator of Oregon's ability to respond to the need for a more skilled work force. It is a cumulative average that includes adults with college degrees. Between 1990 and 1998, the percentage of adults who reported completing some college increased from 53% to 62%, but then dropped in 2000 to 58%.

U.S. Census data indicate that about the same percentage of the Oregon and U.S. population have attended college, but have not yet earned a degree (18%).

For more information on college completion, please see Benchmark 26, page 24.



Source: Oregon Population Survey

25 Associate Degree

Percentage of Oregonians who have completed an associate degree in professional-technical education.

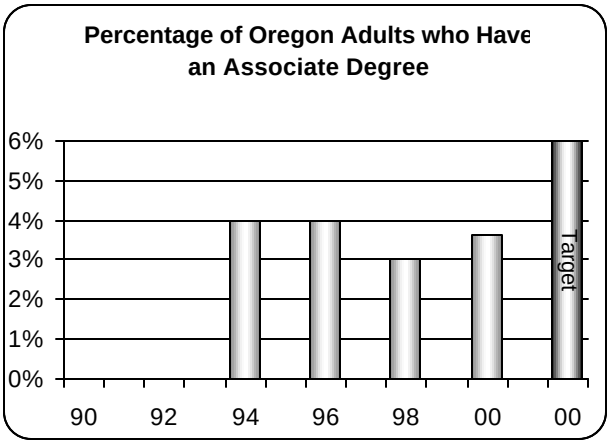
Grade **D**

Percent of Oregonians with Associate Degrees Fell

This benchmark focuses on the need to create more high-tech workers for the new economy. The measure includes Oregonians 25 and older who have completed occupation-specific associate programs. Oregon dropped from 4% in 1994 to 3.6% in 2000. The 2000 target was 6%.

Nationwide, the percentage of adults in this category increased from 6.4% in 1997 to 6.9% in 2000, placing Oregon below the national level.*

This benchmark will be expanded in the future to include Professional Education Certificates, Journeyworker Cards, Associate of Science or Associate of Applied Science degrees.



Source: Oregon Population Survey

28 Computer/Internet Usage

Percentage of Oregon households who use a computer to, a. create documents/ graphics or analyze data, b. connect to the internet.

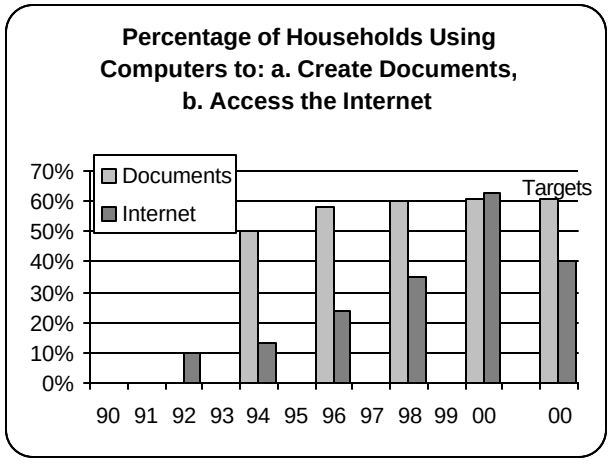
For Benchmarks 26 & 27, see pages 24-25.

Document **B** Internet **A**

Internet Usage has Skyrocketed

This benchmark measures extent to which Oregon households use computers on and offline. Experts feel that increased use of web-based resources benefits Oregonians by giving them access to wider sources of information and additional opportunities. Between 1994 and 2000, the number of households using a computer to create documents or graphics and/or analyze data increased from 50% to 61%.* Connecting to the Internet, in contrast, has exploded. In 1992, only 10% of Oregon households were online. By 2000, that number jumped to 63%, far surpassing the 40% target. *This benchmark combines two retired benchmarks. See Appendix A for more detail.*

* Even though it looks like it hit the target, computer usage earns a B because the year 2000 data point represents a statistically insignificant change from 1998.



Source: Oregon Population Survey

29 Labor Force Skills Training

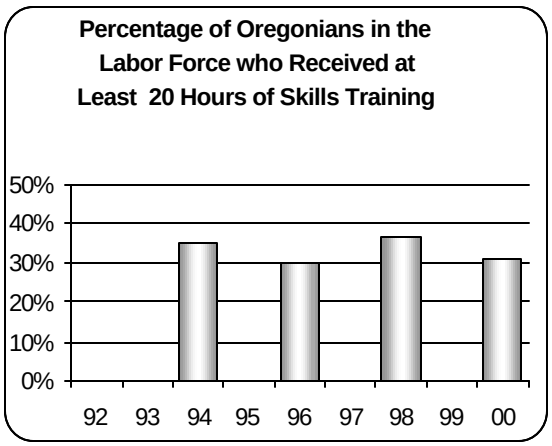
Percentage of Oreognians in the labor force who received at least 20 hours of skills training in the past year.

Grade **N/A**

Labor Force Training Not Increasing

This benchmark reflects the extent to which working Oregonians are encouraged to keep up with the fast paced nature of today's knowledge-based economy.

Current data show that the percentage of respondents who received at least 20 hours of skills training have shown no improvement. The percentage has fluctuated within a small range from previous Oregon Population Surveys (conducted biennially): 1994-35%; 1996-30%; 1998-37%; and 2000-31%.



Source: Oregon Population Survey