



Science Outreach gets kids involved in hands-on experiments

Sure, a picture's worth a thousand words, but nothing's better than hands-on, inquiry-based science and math learning.

Since 2003, the University of Oregon's GK-12 Science Outreach Program has worked with more than 225 teachers and 4,500 elementary and middle school students throughout Lane, Deschutes and Jefferson counties.

Ten chemistry and physics graduate students, serving as GK-12 Science Outreach fellows, visit classrooms about once a week. The GK-12 Program uses science-kit instruction to teach such topics as the properties of light and liquids. The program puts UO fellows into classrooms for experience teaching elementary and middle-school students and offers teachers at the schools professional development opportunities.

Lane and High Desert ESDs partner with GK-12 schools. Lane ESD, for instance, attends GK-12 seminars about kit implementation and teaching strategies; coordinates the check-in, check-out and refurbishing of the kits; and collaborates to develop teacher sessions on kits and science teaching.

"It's been an awesome program," said Bob Curtis, a school-improvement specialist at Lane ESD. "Teachers and kids can't emphasize enough how nice it is to have 'real' scientists as role models."

Now, school districts are beginning to talk about an ESD-based consortia that could cost-effectively share science-kit materials and professional development efforts. This would be a benefit to small schools that couldn't afford, for example, a \$2,000 Energy, Motions and Machine science kit that they would use 10 months of the year.

A team from UO's Materials Science Institute (which included Dr. Dean Livelybrooks, an OSBA Board member) parlayed a three-year, \$1.8 million National Science Foundation grant into their vision of a program that would benefit K-9 students and teachers over the longer term and meet state requirements (HB 2614) for science and math.

The grant expired, but the program is

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Mandatory OEGB pool update: OSBA works to ease transition

While the dust is still settling from the passage of SB 426, which mandates health insurance for school districts through a new state pool, OSBA is gearing up to provide information, updates and direction for members.

The critical transition will be between now and Oct. 1, 2008, when the new Oregon Educators Benefit Board insurance pool starts.

The OSBA Board and the Health Insurance Trust held a joint meeting April 1 to discuss the future of OSBA's insurance trust, including its assets. While disappointed and extremely concerned about the passage of SB 426, the board will continue making decisions in the best interest of *all* OSBA members, and will work closely with the new OEGB to ensure a smooth transition of insurance plans.

OSBA has submitted a list of school board members for the governor's consideration for two appointments to the new board governing the pool.

"We've gotten a lot of questions about OSBA services and possible cut-backs, since the Health Insurance Trust is a significant source of our revenue," said OSBA Executive Director Kevin McCann. "We don't have all the answers, but we'll find them and share them as soon as possible through our Web site, newsletters and e-mails."

"I want to assure our members and partners they can expect our services to continue basically unchanged," he added. "In fact, in the face of this challenge, we plan to strengthen the services our members value most."

OSBA will offer its 45 years of insurance experience to help the new pool get off to the right start.

Because employee contract issues pose the most immediate need, OSBA's human resources staff has analyzed short- and long-term impacts of

SB 426. HRD Director Lisa Freiley encourages members to call her office directly for help.



A new "OEGB Information Center" is online under What's New at www.osba.org. Next week, we'll begin posting answers to questions members have asked and other information as it becomes available.

Action on the status of OSBA's Health Insurance Trust is expected in early May when the OSBA board meets in Salem; results from that meeting will be posted on the first work-day after the meeting.

Watch our new OEGB Information Center site for details. We'll include links in our daily e-newsclips.

Convention '07 seeks workshops

OSBA is requesting proposals for workshops for next fall's annual convention. If you have a program you believe will benefit others, please complete the Workshop Proposal form at www.osba.org and return it to OSBA by **May 18**.

Because the audience is primarily school board members and superintendents, consider topics that meet their needs, such as the following:

- Improving student achievement
- Innovative high school programs
- Parental and community involvement
- School board/superintendent relations
- Effective and/or innovative ESD

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Dropping out is dropping off – a little

The Oregon Department of Education announced this week that Oregon's statewide dropout rate for the 2005-06 school year was 4.1%, down from last year's 4.2%. The 4.1% dropout rate is the lowest rate the state has reported since statewide reporting began in 1991.

Dropout rates for white students decreased slightly, while the dropout rates for Asian, African American, Hispanic, and Native American students showed increases.

Oregon defines a dropout as a student in grades 9-12 who withdraws from school without receiving a high

school diploma, GED, modified diploma, or transferring to another school.

Dropout rates 2005-06

Total	4.1% (-0.1%)
White	3.3% (-0.2%)
Asian	2.7% (+.5%)
African American	6.4% (+.4%)
Hispanic	8.4% (+.3%)
Native American	6.6% (+1.0%)

For resources and more information about dropout rates, visit www.osba.org – look under Quick Links.

Workshop proposals – continued

- programs
- Long-range planning
 - Assessment and accountability
 - Curriculum and instruction
 - Board governance
 - School safety and building security
 - Cultural competency
 - ELL programs
 - Data-based decision making
 - School climate and culture
 - Community college/K-12 partnerships
 - Successful budget strategy
 - Facilities planning
 - Cyber schools and e-learning
 - Bullying and harassment
 - Community college issues
 - Sports and Title IX issues

Submit proposals for other topics that may appeal to our audience. Presenters and panelists will be limited to five per workshop due to space limitations.

Talented students wanted

We'll continue our tradition of showcasing student performing arts during our 2007 convention. Students will perform during the opening sessions Friday, Nov. 9; Saturday, Nov. 10; and Sunday, Nov. 11.

There is a form on our Web site for student-group proposals. Please submit an audio tape, video tape or CD of the student entertainment group with your proposal by May 18. Submitted materials need not be of professional quality.

The convention will be at the Portland Marriott Downtown Hotel, 1401 SW Naito Parkway. For more details, please visit www.osba.org.

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Questions regarding this publication or OSBA may be directed to the OSBA office at 503-588-2800 or 800-578-OSBA. Send e-mail to info@osba.org.

New guide helps keep emergencies from becoming crises

Our easy-to-use *Emergency Response Quick-Step Reference*, leads staff through emergencies “A to Z.” Keep one in every classroom and office in your district, community college or ESD to help keep emergencies from becoming full-blown crises. (This publication updates and replaces OSBA’s *Crisis Management Plan*.)

Intended to complement your district’s emergency-management plan, *Emergency Response Quick-Step Reference* is a tabbed guide that directs your staff through “first steps,” lists administrators’ duties, provides space for internal and external emergency responders’ numbers and offers tips and policy codes around which you can

build your plan.

The *Emergency Response Quick-Step Reference* lists OSBA policy codes for each situation – and, it’s designed to keep on countertops or hang where it’s always at hand.

Member price: \$18 each for wire-bound paper; \$75 for a “build your own” CD-ROM version. Ask about quantity discounts.

Non-member price: \$25 each for wire-bound paper; \$175 for “build your own” CD-ROM.

Books will be available to ship by the end of April. To place orders, send e-mail to defseaff@osba.org, call 800-578-6722 or 503-588-2800, or order online, www.osba.org.

Input needed at regional meetings

Attend one of 17 *Spring Regional Meetings* and help define OSBA for the future. The model created by the Governance Committee is designed to balance the interests of urban, rural, large and small districts.

All are evening meetings and include dinner. Look for exact times and locations for the meeting scheduled in your area at www.osba.org under the Calendar.

Wed., April 18	Union-Baker, Region 13 & Region 18	La Grande
Thurs., April 19	Umatilla-Morrow	Pendleton
Tues., April 24	Malheur	Vale
Wed., April 25	Grant & Harney	John Day
Thurs., April 26	Lake	Lakeview
Tues., May 1	North Central	Condon
Wed., May 2	High Desert & Jefferson	Redmond

Salute – continued from front

now funded by the Oregon Engineering & Technology Industry Council with additional funds from Intel and Pacificorp Foundation for Learning.

Anae Rosenberg, GK-12 program coordinator, said: “Before a GK-12 scientist starts in the classroom and children are asked to draw a picture of a scientist, they most often draw a cartoonish madman with crazy hair blowing something up. After their experience with the GK-12 fellow, the children often draw pictures of themselves doing something from one of the many scientific experiments they have undertaken.”

For contact information, go to Salute to Success online at www.osba.org.

Reminders

- **Volunteer Week** – April 15-21
- April 26 – **Bring Your Daughter or Son to Work**
- **Celebrating Educational Opportunities for Diverse Students Conference** – April 27-29, Seattle
- May 7-11 – **National Teacher Appreciation Week**

On the Web

Online budget calculator

How is the state school budget shaping up for your district? Visit OSBA’s online calculator, www.osba.org, under Legislative News & Action Network.