

We hear the term "book banning", which is in appropriate in this context. Newsom uses this term all the time in the same inappropriate way. This bill would remove local control of the books that communities choose to use and put the decision in the hands of the Board of Education.

When a book has graphic sexual content, then it belongs in a porn section for people over 18. Choosing not to allow pornographic books in schools is NOT book banning it is simply following the law, providing age-appropriate content, and applying common sense. There is no reason to show children graphic sex. There is no reason to ever show Pedophile sex to children. Pedophilia is a psychiatric disorder in which an adult or older adolescent experiences a primary or exclusive sexual attraction to prepubescent children. Pedophilia is illegal.

The Oregon Department of Education has done enough to damage our children's education system. Please read the following article from, "The Oregon Capital Chronical on October 19, 2023. Copied from <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2023/10/19/oregon-students-wont-have-to-show-added-proficiency-in-basic-skills-through-2028-to-graduate/>

It's time to focus on basic skills: reading, writing, math, and science.

EDUCATION

Oregon students won't have to show added proficiency in basic skills through 2028 to graduate

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See article on following pages.

Oregon students won't have to show added proficiency in basic skills through 2028 to graduate

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BY: **ALEX BAUMHARDT** - OCTOBER 19, 2023 4:54 PM



 The state board of education suspended the essential skills requirement for five more years, because it was being misapplied, members said. Instead of using projects and essays and other methods of measuring students' ability to apply classroom skills out in the world, many districts relied on state standardized tests to measure student ability. (Getty Images)

Oregon high schoolers will not need to fulfill an essential skills requirement in order to graduate for at least the next five years.

The Oregon Board of Education on Thursday voted unanimously to pause a decade-old requirement that students show additional proficiencies in reading, writing and other skills on top of taking regular courses in those subjects. The essential skills requirement will be suspended through the 2027-28 school year.

The decision sparked criticism from Republican lawmakers, including a group led by former gubernatorial candidate Christine Drazan, who said the requirement is needed to ensure students have the necessary skills.

The decision followed an earlier decision by the board to suspend the requirements throughout the pandemic due to school closures. It has since received feedback from districts and the Oregon

Department of Education that it was burdensome to teachers and students, and that it was being misapplied. Republican legislators say the board is reneging on its duty to ensure students are prepared to graduate.

“If I had to distill this into one simple statement, it’s quite simply that they did not work,” Dan Farley, assistant superintendent of research, assessment and data at the agency, told the board Thursday.

A [report](#) from the Oregon Department of Education to the Senate Committee on Education in September 2022 recommended ending the requirement, because schools were mostly using students’ state standardized test scores, called the SBAC test, to measure whether they were proficient in essential skills. This was counter to what the requirement was intended to do, said state Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, who was on the state education board when the requirement was approved.

“Having this kind of assessment was not really to show whether or not students could read or write, but rather, could they apply what they were learning to the real world. And their scores on the SBAC are really not indicative of that,” he said.

The education department had hoped students would complete projects, write essays or engage in experiences that measured their ability to use those essential skills – such as listening, critical and analytical thinking, management and teamwork – once they left their classrooms.

Strong reaction against decision

State Rep. Tracy Cramer, R-Woodburn, and a member of the Oregon House Education Committee, reacted angrily over the decision and the lack of a public comment period prior to the vote.

“I think the bigger issue here is that the board has continued to remove standards and has not come up with a game plan,” she said. “I think that’s why parents and Oregonians are kind of frustrated. Just because graduation rates are improving, it doesn’t mean proficiency is.”

Cramer and state Rep. Ed Diehl, R-Stayton, encouraged constituents to submit public comments in advance of the board meeting, opposing suspension of the requirements.

New Direction – a nonprofit founded by former Republican legislator and candidate for governor Christine Drazen – organized a public comment campaign prior to the meeting, spurring 11,000 emails sent to the board, according to a news release.

“It’s disappointing that these unelected bureaucrats decided to ignore public comment and

continue down a path that neglects their responsibility to help students meet high standards,” Drazen said in the release.

Overall, graduation rates in Oregon have been on the rise in recent years among all racial and ethnic groups and socio-economic levels.

But proficiency in key subjects measured by state and federal standardized tests [has not budged](#).

Farley, the assistant superintendent, reminded the board that Oregon has among the highest credit requirements for graduation in the U.S. Only Connecticut requires students to earn more credits in order to graduate.

"We are as rigorous and as challenging as all other states in the country, and are more so in terms of the credit requirements," he said.

"On the surface, it looks like a good idea," Farley said of the requirement. "It looks like a good idea to make sure that students are meeting a proficiency expectation. Again, that's something we'll know about the students if they took our state assessment anyway."

Dembrow agrees with Cramer that more vigorous public debate should have occurred before the board voted to suspend the requirement, but he said some critics of the decision are motivated by an unfounded belief that schools and teachers are simply passing students grade-to-grade with little effort or expectation.

"I think there's an assumption here that teachers are just graduating students, who don't have the necessary competencies and I don't know what the justification is for that," Dembrow said.



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