

South Lane School District tops graduation rate list

South Lane School District high schools are graduating 93.62 percent of its students.

This, according to the latest data from the U.S. Department of Education. The rate is the best in all of Lane County and third in the state overall. The district also scored a .88 percent drop-out rate, bested only by Thurston which reported a .73 percent drop-out rate.

"We're very excited," said South Lane School District Superintendent Krista Parent. "We're very proud. We think that, ok so why are we able to keep our graduation rates looking that good?"

The recognition is nothing new for South Lane. Two of the last three years have seen the school district in the top position for Lane County but that hasn't always been the case.

Twelve years ago, South Lane School District routinely came in at the bottom of the graduation list. Since then, changes to the classes helped elevated the school. Parent highlighted the contributing factors to the high graduation rate in South Lane noting the district's dedication to extra-curricular activities and a wide variety of classes.

"You know, I can't prove this but I have some idea about what's working," she said. "One is, we've been able to keep a very diverse offering of courses and programs at the high school level because one size doesn't fit all and the more things we can offer the better chance we have of hooking kids and kids wanting to be at school."

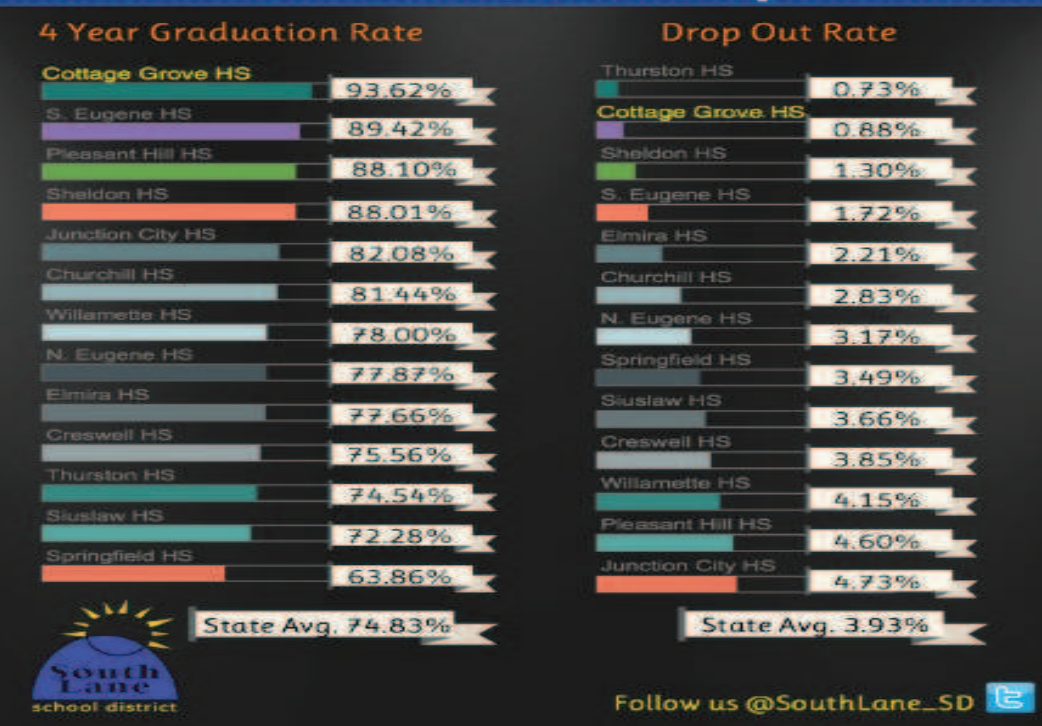
South Lane's standing is a bright spot in a dark picture the report painted for the state as a whole. Oregon was ranked as the third lowest graduation rate in the country with 74.83 percent of its students managing to earn a diploma. Alaska improved its graduation rate from last year, pushing Oregon further down the list with only New Mexico and Nevada between the state and last place. Iowa and New Jersey topped the rankings with graduation rates of 91 and 90.

Local groups tied to Measure 98, a measure approved by voters in November that aimed to improve the graduation rate, spoke out on the new numbers.

"Our appallingly low graduation rates are a crisis, and this problem isn't going to solve itself," said Toya Fick, executive director of Stand for Children, an education advocacy organization. "An incremental solution isn't enough because a one percent improvement a year still leaves thousands of kids without the knowledge and skills to be successful. Oregon's slow rate of improvement underscores the need for Measure 98."

While SLSD is proud of its new distinction, it remains dedicated to reaching a higher percentage each year with Parent noting, "Cottage Grove High School staff works hard to ensure that our students are successful and having over 93 percent of our seniors graduate is fantastic, but we won't be satisfied until 100 percent of them walk across that stage to receive their diploma."

Lane County Comprehensive HS 2015-2016 Graduation and Drop Out Rates



South Lane School District came in first in regards to graduation rates in Lane County and third best in the state overall.

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Creswell administrators resign

Calls for disciplinary actions grew after scandal hit

Two school administrators are out of a job after being caught making inappropriate comments about students.

Creswell High School Principal Andy Bracco and fellow Creswell administrator Jordan Osborn have resigned after nearly a week of complaints from parents and media attention after the men were discovered to have sent text messages making light of a female student's weight and insinuating that a separate student was using drugs.

"She's 5'2" 257 pounds," one text read.

"Where's Emma joy?" another asked.

The response? "Snorting coke."

Both administrators were not put on paid leave until several days after the incident became public. They resigned on Jan. 28.

"There is no tolerance for making inappropriate comments about kids, ever, or anybody for that matter," said South Lane School District Superintendent Krista Parent. "But I would also say that administrators are human beings too and you know, we make mistakes and I happen to know both of those administrators and I don't think they're bad people and I think they work hard and I think it's unfortunate for everybody." She added that South Lane School District has strict policies in place to navigate such situations.

The policy in Creswell was unclear after both administrators were reportedly back to work between the incident becoming public and being placed on leave days later.

In a letter to the community, Superintendent Todd Hamilton said, "I am putting together a plan to provide administrative leadership at CHS for the remainder of the school year. In the short-term, former Creswell teacher and retired administrator Marcy Rice will step in as principal. Marcy spent many years as a highly-regarded educator in Creswell before retiring as an administrator in Bethel School District."

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