

Oregon's support of public schools outranks other states', report says

Oregon has continued to provide high levels of public school support in relation to other states during the 1980s.

That is one of the main findings of a recent report released by the Oregon Educational Coordinating Commission, which coordinates the different levels of education in Oregon. The report describes Oregon's relative position compared with other states in its support of education.

In a ranking of states' tax support for higher education, Oregon ranked 18th in the category of state and local tax appropriations per capita.

Oregon also ranked 18th in tax support per \$1,000 of personal income. This ranking measures the effort of taxpayers to support their colleges and universities.

But although Oregonians make a relatively greater effort

to support public education, the tax revenue raised on a per capita basis is closer to average, the report says. Oregon's lower per capita wealth offsets its above-average efforts to provide public education, the report says.

In a ranking of participation rates in postsecondary education, which includes community colleges and all others, Oregon ranked 17th among the states. In the category of public four-year institutions, Oregon was 29th.

The report concludes that Oregon has relatively high access to postsecondary education. Public institutions, particularly the wide range of community colleges, are responsible for that high access, the report says.

"Oregon is like many western states which began developing their public four-year institu-

tions early and were early in establishing their community colleges," it says.

Enrollment rates in the public schools have been falling since 1980, but current enrollment projections indicate that decline may stop for several years. However, it is expected that participation rates may decline again in the early 1990s due to drops in the number of high school graduates, the report says.

The student burden, or the percentage of the population enrolled in public institutions, is somewhat higher in Oregon, thus creating a higher demand for public resources.

The high student-burden ranking contributes to Oregon's low ranking in tax appropriations per student. Oregon's State System of Higher Education schools reported an average of \$4,383 in tax support per student in 1984-85. This ranks 30th among the states and is about 4 percent below the median in the report.

But Oregon may have improved its per-student ranking in 1985-86.

"In contrast to the preceding four years, the increase in tax support for Oregon's state colleges and universities was above the rate of increase in most other states," the report reads. Less than 10 of the 29 states that ranked above Oregon in appropriations per student have reported a larger percentage increase in tax support for 1985-86, it says.

However, enrollment in Oregon schools increased by 2 percent in 1985-86. That was above the national rate of increase and will offset to some extent the increase in tax support, the study says.



Photo by Allan Lazo

Students from a two-year college in West Germany are spending time in University classrooms.

German students study computers at University

By Tonnie Dakin
Of the Emerald

Mike Ganowski is one of 65 students who traveled to the University this summer from West Germany to work on English and computer skills.

"It's very nice," he said of the United States. "I like it. I like the people... the whole feeling."

The students are from Bildungszentrum, a college in Paderborn, Germany. Bildungszentrum is a two-year college that specializes in computer literacy, said Jorg Erdmann, who helped organize the trip.

Most students who attend the college already have had some schooling but are interested in furthering their computer training, he said.

The students are in the third week of the five-week program. While at the University, the students take specialized classes in English and Pascal programming. The classes are not taken for credit, Erdmann said, but for the practical experience.

Erdmann, who was a student at the University in the 1960s, now teaches English at Bildungszentrum. This is the seventh year he has brought students to the University to study.

America's exposure in Germany has grown over the years, in business, industry and in everyday life, Erdmann said. German students often want to come to the United States to improve English skills, thus improving their chances in the German job market, he said.

"America is such an influence in Germany," Erdmann said. "The desire to come here is big."

The West Coast has a high degree of appeal to Germans because the countryside is typical of how Germans imagine America to be, Erdmann said.

But there are some differences between German and American students, said Ganowski, who is training for a career as a computer technician.

"German students seem to do a lot more learning," he said. "American students don't forget how to live."

Student Frank Gerber likened Americans' more relaxed lifestyles to their style of driving.

"In Germany, when people drive, everyone wants to be first... they are in a hurry to get where they are going. In America, people are very relaxed," he said.

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