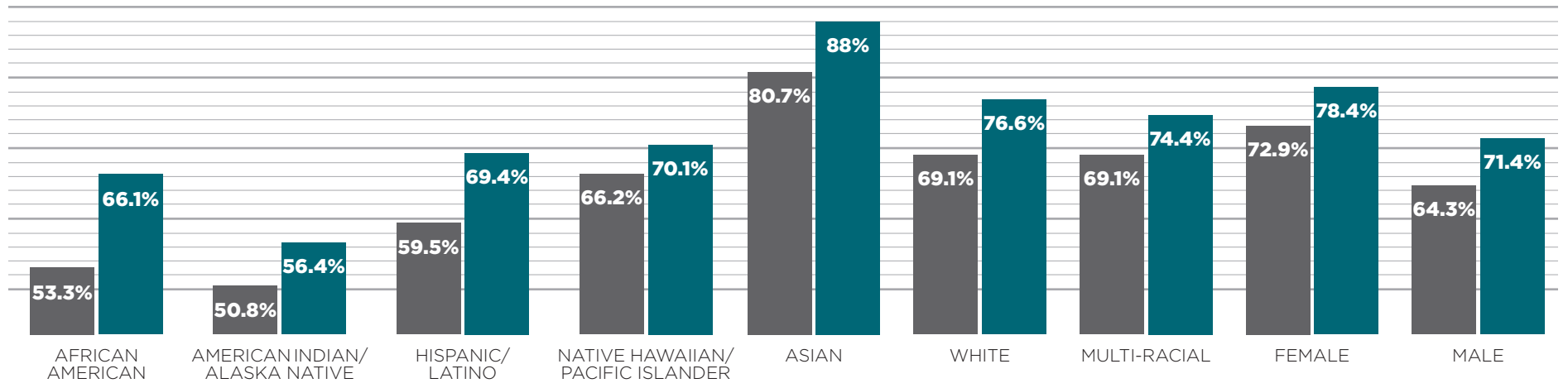


OREGON GRADUATION RATES COMPARED BY RACE & GENDER

2011 2016



as School Improvement) at Lane ESD, says Lane County has consistently done a poor job of justifying why kids should be passionate about what they learn in class. Sequeira says that CTE's expansion will better serve the students by accommodating their various needs.

"We want to improve the outcomes for each and every student," Sequeira says, "and find out what that looks like in terms of the curriculum and instructing we are providing for our students." He says that his department, which collaborates with CTE, is taking a closer look at students who come from stable homes and who traditionally have more opportunities than marginalized or lower income students. The latter groups tend to be the students who fall through the cracks of academia, thus negatively impacting graduation rates, Sequeira explains.

Achieving better graduation rates means better funding for adequate curriculum that accommodates to a diverse pool of students. "One initiative is Math In Real Life, which is a statewide approach that intends to improve math instruction equity," he says. "Meaning that we want to explore, honor and integrate the language and culture of the student into every day instruction."

Math In Real Life was awarded the STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) Innovation Grant, which, according to ODE, allots \$250,000 to a single regional project and runs from March 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017. Linn County was awarded the Carl D. Perkins Grant, which supports CTE programs and has a proposal-dependent amount. Lane County was awarded a \$950,000 chunk last year, however, in 2016 the county did not make the list.

Although the new CTE initiatives are still fresh, graduation rates in Lane County have been rising in tandem with the expansion and involvement of CTE, as well as the statewide emphasis on equitable teaching practices.

The challenge of communicating with students in a way that makes them feel supported as well as motivated in the classroom, Sequeira says, is not unique to Eugene or Lane County.

"It's a state and nationwide question about how we engage with our marginalized students," he explains. "It's about how we connect that bridge between what they value at home and what our teachers value. Do their pedagogical beliefs match the students they're serving?"

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