

Oregon lays out guidelines for transgender students

PORTLAND (AP) — The Oregon Department of Education has suggested that all transgender students in the state should be able to use whatever names, bathrooms and pronouns they want.

The department on Thursday released 15 pages of guidelines on issues that are likely to be controversial, including allowing transgender women to play girls sports and transgender men to wear tuxedos to prom. *The Oregonian/OregonLive* reported.

"A student who says she is a girl and wishes to be regarded that way throughout the school day should be respected and treated like any other girl," the document reads. "So too with a student who says he is a boy."

The decision comes after Dallas School District Superintendent Michelle Johnstone asked Gov. Kate Brown for help in February. The district, located west of Salem, has been embroiled in controversy since last fall when Dallas High School's principal agreed to let a transgender male use the boys' locker room.

Parents and students in Dallas protested, but the district's lawyer said they would likely lose the lawsuit that would come if they caved to community pressure.

"There appears to be conflict regarding the intent of the Oregon Equality Act," Johnstone wrote to Brown, referring to a state law that bars discrimination on the basis of sex.

The Oregon Department of Education recom-

mentations do not lay out punishments for districts that ignore the guidelines, but federal regulators have warned schools in other states that they could lose funding if they discriminate against transgender students.

Oregon now joins a handful of states that have issued similar recommendations amid the increasingly heated conversation over transgender identity including Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York.

Lori Porter, a spokeswoman for Beaverton-based Parents Rights in Education, said her group disagrees with the education department's reading of state and federal laws.

"Federal law is clear," the group said in a statement, "that there are no legal grounds to require school districts to open up their bathrooms and changing rooms to members of the opposite biological sex."

LGBT advocacy groups, however, said they were grateful for the state's thoughtful recommendations.

"There are transgender students throughout the state of Oregon," said Andrea Zekis, a policy director for LGBTQ advocacy group Basic Rights Oregon. "Providing a place of privacy and safety ensures students can grow up to be an adult who can participate in all aspects of life. They should have same opportunities as everybody."

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Extra ballots, Grant County mix-up ahead of Oregon primary

By TAYLOR W. ANDERSON
The Bulletin

SALEM — Oregon may have been first on the vote-by-mail train, but that doesn't mean the system doesn't have kinks.

Each primary election, county clerks send out thousands of extra ballots to voters who wait until the last two weeks before the deadline to join a party or make other changes to their registration. This year has been no different.

The problem? With more than 2 million ballots to send, clerks have to work ahead of time to package the ballots up for mailing.

While the deadline to register, change parties or ask for an Independent Party ballot was April 26, clerks had already prepared millions of ballots, leading thousands statewide to receive a first ballot with their old information and a second ballot with the new.

High interest during this presidential election has amplified the issue, as voters have flocked to join the major parties to vote in their primaries. County clerks and Secretary of State Jeanne Atkins say the system is working fine, and there's no need to fear that votes will be counted twice.

"The implications that somehow there's fraud tied to this have no basis in facts," said Tim Scott, director of the Multnomah County Elections Division. "Through the election management teletype system, we can tell whether this is or is not an active ballot."

Still, the issues are widespread enough that some question whether vote-by-mail, which was pioneered in Oregon during the 2000 general election, is ready for prime time, as U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., is pitching in Congress.

Atkins notified voters this week that they may have received the wrong ballot if they updated their voter registration in the two weeks leading up to the time ballots were sent out.

Any voter who turns in the first ballot for their old party will only have their votes for nonpartisan offices like state Supreme Court or mayor count. Statewide and presidential picks wouldn't be counted if it was an outdated ballot.

Deschutes County Clerk Nancy Blankenship said the system recognizes voters who were sent multiple ballots and sorts them out. She said Deschutes County voters who received two ballots would have the outdated, or first, ballot inactivated. If that voter returns only the inactive ballot, only the voters' picks for nonpartisan office would count.

If they returned both ballots, the second would count and the first, inactive ballot wouldn't be counted. Atkins and county clerks said the state's online Centralized Voter Registration system would prevent the more than 3,600 Deschutes County voters who were sent more than one ballot — and thousands more statewide — from voting twice.

"We account for every

ballot," Blankenship said. Another factor that's led to more duplicate ballots than usual is the inaugural, state-run primary for the Independent Party of Oregon, which became a major party last year after reaching 5 percent of all registered voters.

Unlike the Republican and Democratic parties, which allow only registered members to vote in their primaries, the Independent Party is allowing any of the 524,000 voters who belong to no party to vote in theirs. But to receive a ballot, unaffiliated voters had to request one.

Any of the 20,660 unaffiliated voters who notified their clerk they wanted an Independent Party ballot were subject to receiving a nonpartisan ballot, followed by the one they actually asked for.

But it was a different blip altogether that caused a ballot mix-up in Grant County.

Dan Becker, a registered Independent in Grant County, was surprised when he opened his ballot envelope and started reading the list of candidates.

"As soon as I started seeing names" Becker noticed something was amiss. He wasn't holding his party's ballot. Instead, Becker — along with nearly 300 other Independent and unaffiliated voters in the county — received a Democratic Party ballot.

"I called the clerk's office and talked to the deputy clerk (and) she said they knew about it and they had

already mailed the new ballots," Becker said.

An ineligible candidate was put on the Independent Party ballot in Grant County, and the office printed new ones. But instead of printing a new Independent ballot, the clerk's office printed the Democratic Party ballot in the blue, Independent Party primary ballot.

Each of those 288 ballots was delivered to registered Independents and the unaffiliated voters who requested the party's ballot this May.

After quickly learning of the mistake, Grant County Clerk Brenda Percy personally drove to the printing plant in Prineville to pick up the replacement ballots, and the ballots were hand delivered to post offices in eight towns so they would quickly reach Independent Party and unaffiliated voters, who would soon have two ballots.

"I assure you that every precaution will be taken to ensure that the correct ballot is voted," Percy said.


The mix-ups come as Wyden says he'll unveil a bill in Congress to make voting by mail nationwide, where he says voters face the threat of states limiting ballot access. Some states are limiting polling hours and requiring certain identification to vote, Wyden said at a press conference unveiling his proposal this week. That doesn't exist with vote-by-mail.

But critics are pouncing on the slip-ups from this primary season and say mail-in voting shouldn't go nationwide.

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Nancy Storms
To a Wonderful Mom!
Who enjoys power shopping, the mother/daughter weekends (need to do more), and an occasional cup of tea to talk about stuff. I love you to the moon & back plus infinity.
Love, Your awesome daughter Dana




Many years ago on this date you became a mother. How fitting it is I get to thank you for that - and the years since - on Mother's Day!
I love you,
Your Daughter



Happy Mother's Day Grandma.
Thank you for all you do!
Love Gracie and Parker



Happy Mother's Day Nana
Love you- Brad, Marcy & Family



Pat Smart
Mom to the world you might just be one person, but to me you are the world.
Happy Mother's Day Love Kelly



Yvonne Bunker
To my dearest Mom! You have been my best friend, my confident and my Mom.
I love you very much! -Carrie



To the best mom out there...
We love you always! From all your kiddos!



To a special Mom on a special day! Love you!



Faye Hamman
Wishing you a very special Mother's Day, may your day be filled with happiness!
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