

Schools seek delay in Oregon's P.E. requirement

Lack of facilities, teachers hamper districts' progress

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — With less than 10 percent of Oregon's K-8 schools providing the minimum number of weekly physical education minutes mandated by the Legislature nine years ago, districts want lawmakers to extend the fall 2017 compliance deadline.

Rather than inching towards meeting the requirement, the number of compliant schools has actually declined, according to public records reviewed by the Pamplin Media Group/EO Media Group Capital Bureau.

House Bill 3141, approved by state lawmakers in 2007, made Oregon the first state in the nation to require minimum physical education instructional minutes for elementary and middle school pupils, according to the American Heart Association.

The law calls for a minimum of 150 minutes of physical education instruction per week for grades K-5 and 225 minutes for grades 6-8. Schools are required to meet that standard by fall 2017.

Most schools are so far from fulfilling the requirement that their advocacy groups are now asking lawmakers to either push back the deadline or allow for a phase-in. They also want other tweaks to the law, such as prorating the standard



E.J. Harris/EO Media Group

A pristine gym in the newly finished Washington Elementary School in Pendleton. The new building provides the district with a facility making it easier to comply with the state's physical education mandate.

to account for professional development days and inclement weather, and to add more flexibility in how physical education may be defined.

"Everybody recognizes the pinch we find ourselves in," said Jim Green, deputy executive director of the Oregon School Boards Association. "There are not enough P.E. teachers. Some of the facilities are inadequate in order to be able to provide that level of instruction, and it is going to take a lot to ramp up to that."

Out of 1,080 public schools with some or all grades in K-8, only 97 schools in 2014-15 provided the minimum number of weekly minutes outlined in HB 3141, according to the Oregon Department of Education's most recent count. That's a decline from the 102 schools in 2013-14 that

met the minimum.

Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, championed the law in 2007 as a way to address childhood obesity and boost pupils' academic skills. Along with the minimum instructional time, the bill offered schools special grants, known as PEEK-8, or Physical Education Expansion K-8, to help hire P.E. teachers or give existing teachers professional development in physical education. The grants provided about \$4 million to schools in the last four years.

"I started this some 10 years ago because physical education had disappeared from our schools," Courtney said. "I understand resources are an issue, and every school is different. I just hope that together we can find a

way to continue to move forward."

Courtney said he is unwilling to compromise on the required number of minutes but could consider a phased-in approach to meeting the standard.

He and his staff met with lobbyists representing schools and health groups Aug. 11 to discuss concerns about the law.

Schools' concerns about the requirement center on three issues: The cost of hiring additional P.E. teachers and building new space and the limited amount of instructional time, Green said. Schools faced funding rollbacks during the Great Recession and subsequent funding increases have not been enough to keep up with expenses, Green said.

The Pendleton School District recently built two elementary schools that replaced schools that used the same space for the cafeteria and gymnasium.

School administrators had to use creative scheduling, including lunch periods staggered by grade level, to accommodate lunch and biweekly physical education classes. The new schools, Washington and Sherwood elementary schools, have separate gymnasiums and cafeterias, which will make it easier to schedule additional P.E. classes, said Ronda Smith, a Pendleton principal who used to work at Washington Elementary School.

But school administrators said they also struggle to find time for the requirement in Oregon's limited school year, one of the shortest in the nation.

If schools have to provide more physical education instruction, other

subjects lose time, they said. None of those other subjects have a mandatory minimum of instructional time.

"The larger issue is we have so many hours in the school year that we can use, and we keep having different sets of expectations put on us," said Pendleton schools Superintendent Andy Kovach. "You add up the hours they're expecting of us, and where do you cut it out?"

Christina Bodamer, an Oregon-based lobbyist with the American Heart Association, which pushed for the law in 2007, said she understands the schools' dilemma but thinks the mandate needs to be a priority.

"Knowing there has been 10 years to implement this, I think an important part of a phase-in is accountability, so we don't go another three to five years and have nothing else happen," Bodamer said.

Several bodies of research suggest that physical activity can hone academic skills such as concentration, and even enhance overall academic performance, according to a review of research in 2010 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

That research has given momentum to the idea of requiring minimum instructional time in physical education, she said. Washington, D.C., has a policy similar to Oregon's, and Washington and California are considering following suit, Bodamer said.

Apart from state grants, several health organizations also have been dedicating grant money to help schools come up with creative solutions to meet the requirement, she said.

Pot plants at state fair a first for the U.S.

SALEM (AP) — Nine living marijuana plants will be displayed at the Oregon State Fair in a first of its kind event for the United States starting next Friday.

The exhibit of the non-flowering, immature plants brings pot cultivation more into the agricultural mainstream less than two years after Oregon voters legalized recreational marijuana. The Oregon Cannabis Business Council, which organized the exhibit, says it's the first time live cannabis will be shown at a state fair anywhere in the U.S.

The group last year had an informational booth about marijuana at the fair and there

were no complaints — a key factor in allowing them to go one step further and offer live plants for viewing this year, said Dan Cox, spokesman for the Oregon State Fair.

The specimens were selected by judges at a competition last weekend who chose three winners each in the sativa, indica and hybrid categories.

The entire exhibit will be housed in a translucent tent and extra security will be on hand to check identification so only people 21 and over can enter, Cox said.

None of the plants are allowed have buds, which are more potent than the leaves.

That's because the Oregon

Liquor Control Commission, which will regulate the recreational marijuana business, is still finalizing regulations for the nascent industry and it's currently illegal to transport a flowering plant, said Donald Morse, director of the Oregon Cannabis Business Council.

Those regulations and a licensing process for recreational producers are expected by 2017. The industry hopes to have plants with buds at the fair next summer, Morse said.

The event has raised some eyebrows, but Cox said the Oregon State Fair has always played a role in displaying the latest and sometimes controversial fads in agriculture and state culture. Nearly 20 years ago, he said, the fair had an exhibit on tattoo body art that caused a similar sensation.

"It is a showcase for traditional things. And yet it's always been a show place for the new, the different and the innovative," he said.



AP Photo/Gillian Flaccus

In this Aug. 13 photo, Ed Rosenthal, nicknamed the "Ganja Guru," judges marijuana plants at a competition designed to select nine specimens for display at the Oregon State Fair. The exhibit of live marijuana plants will run from Aug. 26 to Sept. 5 and will be the first time real pot plants have been open for public viewing at the annual agricultural showcase.

Corrections

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Sunny and very warm	Sunshine and very hot	Sunny and cooler but pleasant	Sunny and beautiful	Mostly sunny and nice
95° 64°	97° 60°	83° 50°	82° 51°	88° 52°

HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST
98° 60° 98° 62° 87° 48° 88° 48° 92° 49°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	86°	57°
Normals	87°	57°
Records	109° (1897)	37° (1916)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.07"
Normal month to date 0.26"
Year to date 7.39"
Last year to date 5.00"
Normal year to date 8.25"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	90°	67°
Normals	87°	57°
Records	106° (1967)	42° (1973)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.05"
Normal month to date 0.12"
Year to date 4.99"
Last year to date 3.25"
Normal year to date 6.07"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 6:02 a.m.
Sunset tonight 7:54 p.m.
Moonrise today 9:18 p.m.
Moonset today 8:42 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
Aug 24	Sep 1	Sep 9	Sep 16

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Low clouds and fog, then sunshine today; mostly sunny and cooler after the north.
Eastern and Central Oregon: Hot today with plenty of sunshine. Mainly clear tonight. Very hot tomorrow.
Western Washington: Plenty of sunshine today; patchy fog at the coast during the morning.
Eastern Washington: Plenty of sunshine today. Clear tonight. Plenty of sunshine tomorrow.
Cascades: Plenty of sunshine today; very warm. Mainly clear tonight. Sunny tomorrow.
Northern California: Clouds, then sun at the coast today; hot in central parts. Mostly sunny elsewhere.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sun.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	73	57	s	69	56	pc
Baker City	89	40	s	93	46	s
Bend	93	55	s	91	47	s
Brookings	67	52	pc	66	50	pc
Burns	93	47	s	94	48	s
Enterprise	90	52	s	92	50	s
Eugene	100	52	s	89	49	s
Heppner	93	55	s	95	55	s
Hermiston	98	60	s	98	62	s
John Day	96	62	s	99	61	s
Klamath Falls	95	64	s	92	48	s
La Grande	92	46	s	96	53	s
Meacham	89	47	s	91	50	s
Medford	107	64	s	103	60	s
Newport	62	51	s	60	49	pc
North Bend	65	52	pc	64	52	pc
Ontario	92	54	s	96	59	s
Pasco	96	56	s	100	57	s
Pendleton	95	64	s	97	60	s
Portland	101	62	s	85	57	s
Redmond	95	48	s	95	45	s
Salem	101	56	s	89	54	s
Spokane	91	62	s	91	58	s
Ukiah	91	45	s	91	44	s
Vancouver	100	61	s	84	55	s
Walla Walla	96	66	s	97	64	s
Yakima	99	59	s	98	55	s

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Sun.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	89	72	pc	93	74	s
Hong Kong	90	82	t	89	80	t
Jerusalem	88	70	s	88	70	s
London	70	58	c	73	61	c
Mexico City	73	56	t	73	55	t
Moscow	75	59	sh	76	60	pc
Paris	76	57	pc	71	57	pc
Rome	84	67	s	83	66	s
Seoul	94	78	c	91	77	pc
Sydney	65	47	pc	68	49	s
Tokyo	84	78	t	88	80	t

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Sunday
Boardman	SSW 3-6	WSW 8-16
Pendleton	NNW 4-8	W 8-16

UV INDEX TODAY

1 4 6 6 4 1

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme
The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2016

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary: Showers and locally heavy storms will extend from the Great Lakes to the Gulf Coast today. Much cooler air will invade the Plains, while warmth and humidity build in the East and heat holds in the West.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 108° in Imperial, Calif. Low 33° in Leadville, Colo.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sun.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	83	61	t	84	60	t
Atlanta	87	74	t	87	69	t
Atlanta City	85	74	pc	84	70	pc
Baltimore	90	72	pc	86	65	t
Billings	79	53	s	89	58	s
Birmingham	85	74	t	84	69	t
Boise	92	63	s	95	63	s
Boston	80	67	s	81	70	s
Charleston, SC	93	78	t	96	76	t
Charlotte, WV	85	71	pc	80	60	pc
Chicago	78	60	t	74	56	pc
Cleveland	88	69	pc	78	63	pc
Dallas	81	70	t	83	71	t
Denver	77	52	s	87	57	t
Detroit	86	64	t	77	58	pc
El Paso	94	69	t	88	68	t
Fairbanks	59	51	c	66	51	c
Fargo	69	47	pc	75	58	pc
Honolulu	86	76	sh	86	75	pc
Houston	92	74	t	89	74	t
Indianapolis	80	62	t	75	57	pc
Jacksonville	97	73	t	97	74	pc
Kansas City	76	55	t	80	59	s
Las Vegas	103	82	s	98	79	s
Little Rock	85	71	t	85	66	pc
Los Angeles	82	63	pc	82	63	pc
Louisville	83	68	t	80	62	pc
Memphis	84	73	t	85	68	pc
Miami	92	78	pc	92	76	t
Millwaukee	80	61	t	75	58	sh
Minneapolis	67	55	sh	71	59	s
Nashville	83	71	t	83	61	pc
New Orleans	91	78	t	90	77	pc
New York City	86	75	pc	84	68	pc
St. Louis	82	60	pc	85	61	pc
Omaha	75	54	pc	79	62	s
Philadelphia	90	74	pc	88	68	t
Phoenix	103	81	pc	102	81	pc
Portland, ME	79	61	s	78	64	pc
Providence	82	67	s	81	69	pc
Raleigh	88	74	t	91	68	t
Rapid City	70	46	pc	81	54	s
Reno	97	63	s	93	63	s
Sacramento	91	60	s	90	60	s
St. Louis	82	63	t	81	63	s
Salt Lake City	90	64	s	95	70	pc
San Diego	78	67	pc	79	67	pc
San Francisco	73	58	pc	71	57	pc
Seattle	94	59	s	78	55	s
Tucson	96	73	t	95	74	t
Washington, DC	93	75	pc	90	70	t
Wichita	77	57	pc	84	60	s