

## Grad rates improve, especially for ‘underserved’

Oregon’s high school graduation rate rose 2 percent overall last year and the rate for historically underserved groups climbed even higher, according to the Oregon Department of Education.

The four-year graduation rate for students who began high school in the 2013-14 school year is 77 percent, 2 percent higher than last year’s rate. The statewide average four-year graduation rate has increased 4.7 points over three years.

In the same period, the rate has increased by more than 7 percentage points for Hispanic students, African American students, multiracial students, special education students, English learners and migrant students.

Warrenton High School’s

2017 graduation rate was 76 percent; Astoria’s was 63 percent.

It’s important to note that not all those who don’t graduate in four years drop out. Many go on to a fifth year or earn general education credentials.

“We are encouraged by the work under way to make our schools welcoming and effective for all students, which has contributed to better performance for those who have been historically underserved,” said acting state Deputy Superintendent Colt Gill.

“However, there is much more to be done to make sure all students have the tools and support necessary to reach graduation.”

This year, the department

begin implementing a plan to address chronic absenteeism, backed by a \$7.4 million investment by the 2017 Legislature.

The state also will expand access to career and technical education (CTE) and other hands-on learning experiences.

It also plans to put best practices into place system wide, and help districts implement counseling programs and early indicator and intervention systems.

Students in CTE courses have a far higher graduation rate than the state average.

This summer, Warrenton High School will construct a building devoted to CTE classes such as welding, woodworking, auto shop and more.

## Recall affects pork sold in Oregon, Washington

An Alberta, Canada, company is recalling raw pork products that were imported without inspection upon entry into the United States, according to a bulletin issued this week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The items were shipped to retail locations and restaurants in Oregon and Washington as well as to a Department of Defense commissary in Japan. The problem was discovered Monday by an import inspector.

There have been no confirmed reports of adverse reactions due to consumption of the meat. But anyone who has purchased one of these products should not eat it and should throw it away or return it to the place of purchase, the USDA recommended.

The recall affects 4,600 pounds of raw pork products that were produced Jan. 22 through Feb. 5.

Most are Olymel brand and marked as skinless pork belly, pork back ribs, pork leg, and boneless pork sirloin. Also affected is a Willamette

Valley Meat Company product marked whole pork feet.

More information about specific case and lot numbers can be found at [fsis.usda](http://fsis.usda).

## Natural Grocers to open Feb. 28

Natural Grocers has scheduled a ribbon cutting and grand opening for the end of this month, the company announced.

“We couldn’t be more excited about this new location for Natural Grocers,” the company’s website says in announcing the opening.

“To celebrate the grand opening, we have lined up a number of free events to introduce ourselves to the community, and to get to know you – our wonderful customers.”

The grand opening is set for 8:25 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28.

Among the prizes for those

who attend is a \$100-per-week grocery gift card that the recipient can use for six months.

The company was founded in 1955 when co-founder Margaret Isely became chronically ill after the birth of her second child. She and her husband, Philip, sought a way to purchase foods that were nutrient-dense and without preservatives.

There are 140 Natural Grocers stores in 19 states, all of them west of the Mississippi River and many of them in the Northwest.

The 21,800-square-foot store will have 18 employees.



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## Get Heart Smart

It’s American Heart Month and CMH reminds you to focus on your heart. Here are three heart-friendly actions you can take today.

**1**

**Get moving**

**2**

**Skip the salt**

**3**

**Phone a friend**

CMH is here to help you make new, heart-healthy habits. Check out [columbiamemorial.org/events/](http://columbiamemorial.org/events/).

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