

First-Year Effects of Early Indicator and Intervention Systems in Oregon

Although Oregon has made recent gains in its overall high school graduation rate, 21 percent of public school students entering grade 9 in 2014 did not graduate within four years, by 2018. To improve graduation rates, Oregon voters approved Ballot Measure 98 in 2016 to fund dropout prevention and college and career readiness initiatives in high schools. Many districts used the additional funding to adopt an early indicator and intervention system (EIS). Districts can use an EIS to identify students who are not on track to graduate on time by monitoring related indicators, such as chronic absenteeism, disciplinary infractions, course progression, and academic performance, through a frequently updated data system. After identifying students who are not on track, educators assign interventions designed to support the specific challenge students are experiencing, such as daily first period check-ins to address chronic absenteeism. Districts then monitor student response to interventions and modify supports as needed.

Conducted in partnership with the Oregon Department of Education, this study sought to better understand the early effects of EIS adoption on student outcomes and to inform efforts to boost statewide graduation rates. The study looked at first-year effects during the 2018/19 school year on chronic absenteeism, disciplinary infractions, course progression, and academic performance by comparing the outcomes in 65 districts that adopted an EIS to the outcomes of a set of similar districts that used the additional funding for other dropout prevention or college and career readiness initiatives. This study provides information to the Oregon Department of Education and Oregon districts that are adopting or considering adopting an EIS, as well as to other interested state and district education leaders who are considering a similar system.

Key findings

- **The adoption of an early indicator and intervention system, when compared with the adoption of other initiatives, appears to have reduced the overall percentage of high school students who were severely chronically absent.** EIS adoption is estimated to have reduced the proportion of severely chronically absent students from 20.0 percent to 16.7 percent.
- **The adoption of an early indicator and intervention system, when compared with the adoption of other initiatives, appears to have increased the rate of disciplinary infractions for students in grade 9.** EIS adoption does not appear to have appreciably changed the proportion of students in grades 10–12 who were suspended or expelled. However, there was a 2.8 percentage point increase in the proportion of grade 9 students with disciplinary infractions in districts that adopted an EIS compared with districts that adopted other initiatives.
- **The adoption of an early indicator and intervention system, when compared with the adoption of other initiatives, does not appear to have affected course progression or academic performance.** EIS adoption does not appear to have affected the proportion of students who had earned enough credits by the end of grade 9 to be considered on track for on-time graduation. EIS adoption also does not appear to have affected the percentage of grade 11 students who scored proficient or above on Oregon state standardized assessments in math and English language arts.