



Board Talking Points

December 2024

I hope you enjoy the holiday season! This is a special time of year. Make sure and attend the wonderful winter concerts and performances provided by our talented students and staff!

State Funding The December revenue forecast painted an optimistic picture for state government. Economists anticipate an additional \$982 million available for the 2025-2027 biennium, compared to the September 2024 forecast. Key takeaways are as follows:

- Even with the positive revenue news, K-12 advocates still need to make a clear and convincing case to invest in our public schools to meet the increased, and increasingly complex, needs of our students in the 2025 Session. Districts are facing significant cost increases due to inflation, PERS, and state mandates.
- This is positive news for Governor Kotek as she works to finalize her Governor's Recommended Budget for release in early December. Her budget team has significantly more revenue than anticipated to invest in key sectors and programs; and
- The new Economist noted that there is still significant uncertainty at the federal level as we await potential changes to economic policies, federal taxes, potential new tariffs, and changes in funding for federal entitlement programs. These federal level economic policies can have significant impacts on Oregon's economic outlook and the state budget in 2025.

School Accountability Over the past year, ODE led a task force to analyze Oregon's school accountability system. The group is finalizing a report to the Governor and legislature. LaGrande Superintendent George Mendoza and Umatilla Superintendent Heidi Sipe represented our region and were instrumental in providing feedback from the school district perspective. This report will be important as Oregon determines how it will measure future investments in our public schools.

Special Education Stipends ODE recently received funding for SB 5506, which provides \$8.9 million for providing stipends to licensed educators and school employees working in special education during the 2024-2025 school year. Our districts are working through the process of informing ODE of staffing numbers to assist in the distribution process. It is anticipated staff will receive these stipends in the spring.

MISSION

To provide outstanding customer service to our school districts in four areas: special education, technology, school improvement, and administrative services.

VISION

IMESD strives to ensure the success of every child by providing equitable services to close the opportunity gap. We are committed to the values of antiracism and multiculturalism.