

LATINOS IN CENTRAL OREGON

A COMMUNITY PROFILE IN STATISTICS & STORIES

Education



**LATINO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
OCTOBER 2020**



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EDUCATION

Education is an area where disparities between majority and minority groups are sometimes glaring and persistent. Fortunately, the State Department of Education and Central Oregon school districts provide current information to help us understand the status of Latino students in the region, their recent progress and continued challenges. The Oregon Community Foundation (2016) report stated:

“Academic success among Oregon Latinos can be measured in several ways. For the youngest students, school readiness can determine future achievement. For students in elementary, middle and high schools, test scores, attendance and credit accumulation can help predict whether Latinos graduate from high school. Finally, among adults, high school completion and further educational attainment play large roles in successful futures. While Latino students have made some gains in these areas, the achievement gap persists, starting in early childhood and culminating in fewer Latinos receiving postsecondary degrees.”

We will explore this achievement gap throughout this section, comparing differences between Oregon Latinos generally, and our Latinos residing in Central Oregon.



La Clase de Lectura en Español at Vern Patrick Elementary School, Redmond, 2010.



Raices after-school Spanish literacy class, Jewell Elementary, Bend 2018.

READINESS TO LEARN

When bright-eyed kindergartners begin their new life at school, their teachers (or a testing specialist) observe each student for signs that they are ready to learn. The test, called the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment, measures early literacy, early math, and a child's approach to learning. Can the child follow directions and complete tasks without prodding from adults (self-regulation)? Does the child interact well with other children and adults and express thoughts and feelings in a considerate way (interpersonal skills)? Together, these scores represent a child's learning approach, which is measured on a scale of 1 to 5.

To gauge early math skills, the teacher or tester shows the child pictures of shapes and asks them to count and add small numbers. The test contains 16 questions. Then the teacher shows pictures of English letters and asks the child to identify the letter and its sound. This measure of early literacy is scored from 1 to 26 in each category.

In Central Oregon, Latino kindergartners closely match their white peers in self-regulation, interpersonal skills, and learning approach. Moreover, their performance roughly aligns with statewide averages. However, when it comes to recognizing letters of the English alphabet and letter sounds, Latinos trail behind white kindergartners statewide, and also score lower on early math readiness. This translates into a rougher ride through elementary school as these children strive to learn basic skills that they need to master subjects in middle and high school.

Table 23
Central Oregon Kindergarten Assessment 2018-2019

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Bend-LaPine		Crook Co.		Culver		Jefferson Co.		Redmond		Oregon All students
	White	Latino	White	Latino	White	Latino	White	Latino	White	Latino	
Number of students assessed	974	147	168	35	29	12	90	76	352	97	41,005
Learning approach											
Self-regulation, score 1-5	3.4	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.2	3	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.5
Interpersonal skills, score 1-5	3.6	3.5	3.8	4.1	3.6	3.7	4	4.2	3.7	3.7	3.7
Learning approach, score 1-5 (combination of two previous scores)	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.3	3.4	4.7	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.6
Early math, score 0-16	12.2	10.4	12.1	9.4	12.7	10.1	9.7	8.7	11.6	9.8	11.1
Early literacy											
Uppercase letter recognition, score 0-26	17.4	10.3	15.8	7.8	16.6	13.2	11.2	7.4	14.5	10.1	14.3
Lowercase letter recognition, score 0-26	14.4	8.3	13	5.4	14.3	10.4	8.6	5	11.7	8.1	11.7
Eng. letter sound recognition, score 0-26	10.4	5.9	9.4	3.4	12.7	6.9	4	1.6	8.2	4.2	7.7

Source: Kindergarten Assessment 2018-2019, Oregon Department of Education

TEST SCORES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) sets the metrics for third grade English proficiency and eighth grade math performance. By third grade, students should reach a comfort level in reading and writing English, because they will need a strong foundation to understand the academic content in grades 4 and higher. The scores for Language Arts for each district represent the percentage of students who achieved level 3 or above in reading, writing, and comprehension. As stated in the ODE literacy framework (2009):

“The most important reading goal for every Oregon school should be to ensure that ALL students read at grade level or higher each academic year, no later than in grade 3.”

In its math assessment process, Oregon sets lofty goals for eighth-graders. A student must call upon knowledge from different domains, often from earlier grade levels, to solve a mathematical problem in a real-world context. The test requires proficiency with expressions and equations, functions, and geometry and geometric measurement, according to the Smarter Balanced Mathematics Expandable Blueprints for Grade 8 on the ODE website. The scores show the percentage of students who scored at level 8 or above.

Table 24
Central Oregon Student Test Scores by District
Percent at proficiency 2018-2019

District	3rd Grd. Lang. Arts	8th Grd. Math
Bend-La Pine		
White	66	50
Latino	45	25
Crook County		
White	56	46
Latino	28	27
Culver		
White	47	21
Latino	45	15
Jefferson Co.		
White	56	40
Latino	42	18
Redmond		
White	59	44
Latino	30	33
Oregon		
All students	46.5	38.3

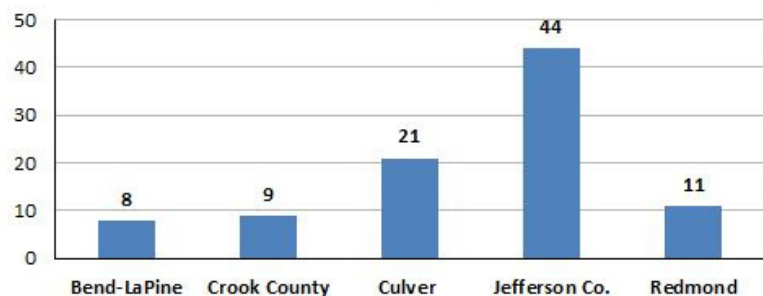
Oregon Dept. of Education, At-A-Glance District Profiles 2018-2019



Childcare at Bend English classes, winter 2017

Looking at the English and math indicators, the percentage of Latino students attaining these ODE objectives is far below the percentage for white students. As Table 24 shows, except for the Culver School District, where white and Latino students are roughly equal in third grade reading, the gap between the two groups in math is significant.

Chart 3
Percent of ELL Students by School District (2019)



*Source: Oregon Department of Education website, Reports and Data
 Oregon At-A-Glance District Profiles 2018-2019*

But far fewer than 100 percent of white students are meeting ODE benchmarks for 3rd grade English and 8th grade math. Indeed, nowhere in Central Oregon are more than 66 percent of white students (in the Bend-LaPine District) meeting English or math goals.

One reason for lower test scores among Latinos may be the numbers of those students who begin school as English language learners (ELLs). The figures in Chart 3, reported by Central Oregon school districts, include all languages, but the overwhelming majority of “ever ELLs” in our region begin school speaking Spanish.



LCA English class graduates in Bend

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

To measure graduation rates, the Oregon Department of Education tracks a cohort, or group, of students, from the beginning of their first year to the end of their fourth year in high school. Students who entered high school in 2015 and graduated in 2019 make up the most recent four-year cohort listed on the ODE website.

Across the state, graduation rates are rising. Approximately 80 percent of all Oregon students in this cohort graduated in 2019, compared with about 72 percent in 2014, according to ODE. There is a significant gap in graduation rates between white and Latino students in the Bend-La Pine School District. But the graduation rates for Latino students in other Central Oregon school districts are encouraging.

Table 25
2019 Graduation Rates for Four-Year Cohort

<u>School District</u>	% White Students	% Latino Students
Bend-LaPine	83	69
Crook County	71	90
Culver	92	95
Jefferson Co.	71	89
Redmond	85	80
Oregon	81	76

Source: Oregon Department of Education website, Reports and Data Students, 2019 Cohort Graduation Rates

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Table 26 provides a snapshot of educational attainment for adults. In Oregon, Latinos have graduated from high school (or obtained a GED) and earned a college degree at lower rates than white residents. However, the same data offers some encouraging signs for Latinos in Central Oregon.

Table 26
Educational Attainment 2018
Percent of Adults Age 18+ with Diplomas or Degrees

High School +	Oregon	Crook	Deschutes	Jefferson
Latinos	64.2	64.6	74.4	69.8
Male	62.1	65.9	62.3	71.3
Female	66.4	63.1	86.2	68.1
Whites	93.7	89.2	95.2	89.9
Male	93.1	84.9	94.8	87.3
Female	94.3	93.3	95.6	92.6
Bachelor's +				
Latinos	15.1	7.8	22.1	14.8
Male	13.6	10.8	18.1	11
Female	16.8	4.2	26	19
Whites	34.5	16.9	35	20.7
Male	34.4	16.8	34.5	22
Female	34.7	17.1	35.4	19.5

Source: American Community Survey 2018 5-Year Estimates, Table S1501

Here are some key points drawn from the table:

- Statewide, the percentage of white adults with a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree was significantly higher than Latinos, regardless of gender.
- However, in Central Oregon, the percentage of Latinos in both Deschutes and Crook counties earning high school diplomas or college degrees exceeded the statewide average for Latinos, regardless of gender.
- More Latinas in Deschutes County earned a high school diploma or better, at a rate higher than the average for Latinas statewide by a wide margin. They also had an advantage over their male counterparts in Deschutes County.
- Latinas in Jefferson and Crook counties not only lagged behind the statewide average for their gender in this category, but also behind their male counterparts in their respective counties. But Latino male students in Jefferson and Crook counties exceeded the statewide Latino average for their gender for having a high school diploma.
- For those holding a bachelor's degree or better, white students had a significant advantage over their Latino counterparts in Central Oregon. However, more Latinos in Deschutes County earned a bachelor's degree or better than Latinos statewide.

EDUCATION SUMMARY

- Latino children start kindergarten eager to learn, but many cannot recognize English letters and sounds
- Latino third graders lag behind their white classmates in English language arts. By 8th grade, they score lower on math tests
- Latino students graduate at a lower rate than white students in Bend-LaPine schools, but at slightly higher rates in Jefferson and Crook counties
- Fewer Latino adults earn high school diplomas or college degrees than their white peers in Central Oregon



LCA English as a Second Language class in Redmond



Raices Spanish literacy class graduation, Silver Rail Elementary, Bend 2017

ROBERTO IRICHE

WORKING STUDENT, PRINEVILLE

During summer 2019, working student Roberto Iriche logged almost 60 hours a week at a manufacturing company in Redmond. But in late September, he returned to his studies at Central Oregon Community College, carrying a load of 16 credits at campuses in Redmond and Bend.



Now his hard work has paid off. He was accepted to the Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls and began classes this fall.

Roberto was 11 when his family left Morelia, Michoacán, Mexico, to escape gang violence, and then joined his father who was already working in Prineville. A ranch owner provided a three-bedroom house for the family with a real back yard, Roberto said. He studied hard and graduated from Crook County High School in 2008.

He started college but could not get financial aid because he lacked a green (permanent resident) card. So he left to live and work in Portland for two years, and then tried living in Chicago and Palm Springs, Calif.

In 2015, Roberto obtained temporary residency and a work permit under DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), he said. That program, created by President Obama, is now in legal limbo. When he returned to the place he calls home – Prineville – Roberto qualified for a scholarship from COCC to study applied science in manufacturing technology.

Opportunities abound in that field, but he can't land any kind of federal job with his DACA permit, Roberto said. He hopes his studies will lead to a job that pays well for work he enjoys.

Roberto is devoted to outdoor life in Central Oregon, especially hiking, kayaking and paddle boarding. He also cares deeply about the community that nurtured him.

“Since the COVID-19 outbreak, I have noticed the lack of resources for people of color in my community,” he said. “I want to give back to the community, like the way people are helping me now.”

Roberto is intrigued with 3-D printer technology, especially with its ability to produce the components to build small affordable homes, he said. “If I get accepted to OIT, that's going to be my senior project.”

MARIA TERESA MENDOZA
PARENT ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST
FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER, BEND

Maria Teresa Mendoza is a professional who helps families and their children take the first steps in their education. She has an associate's degree in Early Childhood Education. But as a child, she harvested crops along a migrant trail that took the family from Michoacán, Mexico, through California and up to Hood River and The Dalles, Oregon, each year.



As they followed tomatoes, cucumbers, strawberries and cherries, Maria Teresa enrolled in one school district after another. “It was very difficult (to stay on track in school),” she said.

Her father worked in the *bracero* program and brought his family to the U.S. legally when Maria Teresa was 5, she said. Eventually, they settled in Stockton, Calif., where they went on strike in the tomato fields for higher pay in the 1970s when she was 16. Union leader Cesar Chávez came to fast in support, she said. “We got what we wanted and two clean bathrooms (in the field).”

Maria Teresa married and moved to an avocado ranch in San Luis Obispo County, where the couple worked and raised two children. “We were in heaven,” she said about the 800-acre ranch on the central California coast that was home for 25 years.

The couple’s son graduated from college and moved to Bend to train as an ultra runner, Maria Teresa said. When they came to visit, “my husband fell in love with Bend,” she said. They moved here in 2013. He found work in RV sales and she went to work for the Family Access Network (FAN) through the High Desert Educational Service District.

Maria Teresa enjoys exploring trails, rivers and lakes, but the winter weather is difficult, she said. With their savings from the ranch, they bought a home in Bend and paid off the mortgage.

“We are so blessed,” she said. “I have found that life in Central Oregon is more difficult for Latino families and undocumented people,” harder for them to find work and housing than in California.

Schools here now have dual language programs, but struggle to recruit bilingual teachers, Maria Teresa said. She emphasized the partnership of family and school. “Parents need to be involved in education since kindergarten if they want their child to succeed.”

SOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

Links to data sources utilized for this report:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<https://oregoncf.org/community-impact/research/latinos-in-oregon-report/>
https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/hispanics_in_oregon/#.XImRVCJKjIU
<https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/power-of-the-purse-how-hispanics-contribute-to-the-u-s-economy/>

POPULATION

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a survey of randomly selected households the Census Bureau conducts yearly between the official 10-year Census counts. Because it is based on a sample, rather than the entire population, the ACS produces estimates. To aid data users, the Census Bureau calculates and publishes a margin of error for every estimate. For guidance on making comparisons, please visit data.census.gov

EMPLOYMENT

Estimates of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers 2018 update
<https://www.ohdc.org/uploads/1/1/2/4/11243168/05-24-18-awhft-oregon-msfw-enumeration-study.pdf>

HEALTH

Data on lack of health insurance comes from the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2014-2018, accessed from the Communities Reporter Tool on Jan. 29, 2020.
<https://oe.oregonexplorer.info/rural/CommunitiesReporter/>

Mosaic Medical:

<file:///G:/My%20Drive/Marketing/REPORT%20%20Latinos%20in%20Central%20Oregon/HEALTH/2017%20Mosaic%20Medical%20Health%20Center%20Profile.html>

Volunteers in Medicine:

https://www.vim-cascades.org/file_download/inline/39f45056-9e0c-47ad-81eb-b87b5b9e821f

EDUCATION

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/assessment/Pages/Kindergarten-Assessment.aspx>

To view a profile and test scores for a particular school district, visit:

<https://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reportcard/reports.aspx>

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/reports-and-data/students/Pages/Cohort-Graduation-Rate.aspx>
Select School Year 2018-2019, Cohort Graduation Rate 2018-2019 Media File

HOUSING

From the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, 2019, page 3

<https://coic2.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/housing-for-all-april-2019-materials-packet.pdf>

From the 2016-2019 Central Oregon Regional Health Improvement Plan, page 38

https://www.deschutes.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/health_services/page/1863/rhip_2016-2019.pdf