



Dear Superintendents, Principals and ESD's,

The purpose of this message is to highlight changes to Oregon attendance laws from the 2019 legislative session and share next steps in developing guidance and rules around these laws.

During the 2019 session, there were two amendments to [ORS 339.065](#) (changes are in bold print). These two amendments clarify reasons students may be excused from school.

The first amendment, [HB 2191](#), amended Section 2aA to read:

(A) The pupil's sickness, **[by] including the mental or behavioral health of the pupil;**

The second amendment, [HB 2556](#), amended this same statute, and added a section 2 to read:

(b) In addition to the reasons identified in paragraph (a) of this subsection, a principal or teacher:

(A) Shall excuse not more than seven days of absences during the school year if the pupil is a dependent of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States who is on active duty or who is called into active duty. For the purpose of this subparagraph, "Armed Forces of the United States" includes: (i) The Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard of the United States; (ii) Reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard of the United States; and (iii) The National Guard of the United States and the Oregon National Guard.

Districts and schools should continue to use current practices and policies set forth by the local school board when documenting and reporting absences, both excused and unexcused.

The department values feedback from all communities and encourages the public to attend the listening sessions scheduled January-March 2020, throughout Oregon. ODE will gather input from all stakeholders during these sessions and use this information when writing rules for the department, districts, and schools to fully implement HB 2191 and HB 2556. We will provide more information in the coming weeks about the dates and locations of the sessions.

Please feel free to provide your feedback and share this [link](#) with other educators, family, students and community members. Thank you for making a positive difference in the lives of our students and upholding our shared commitment to equity and excellence for every learner.

January 9, 2020

HB 2556 and HB 2191 Rule Making Process



Sincerely,

Scott Nine, Assistant Superintendent
Office of Education Innovation and Improvement
Oregon Department of Education

Survey link: <http://bit.ly/HB2191Feedback>

QR Code for Survey



January 9, 2020