

Federal – State Benchmarking in the U.S.: Three Examples from Oregon

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Federal States from an International
Perspective
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Overview

1. Nature of the Federal-State Relationship
2. Three Case Studies
3. Lessons Learned

Part 1

Nature of the Federal-State Relationship

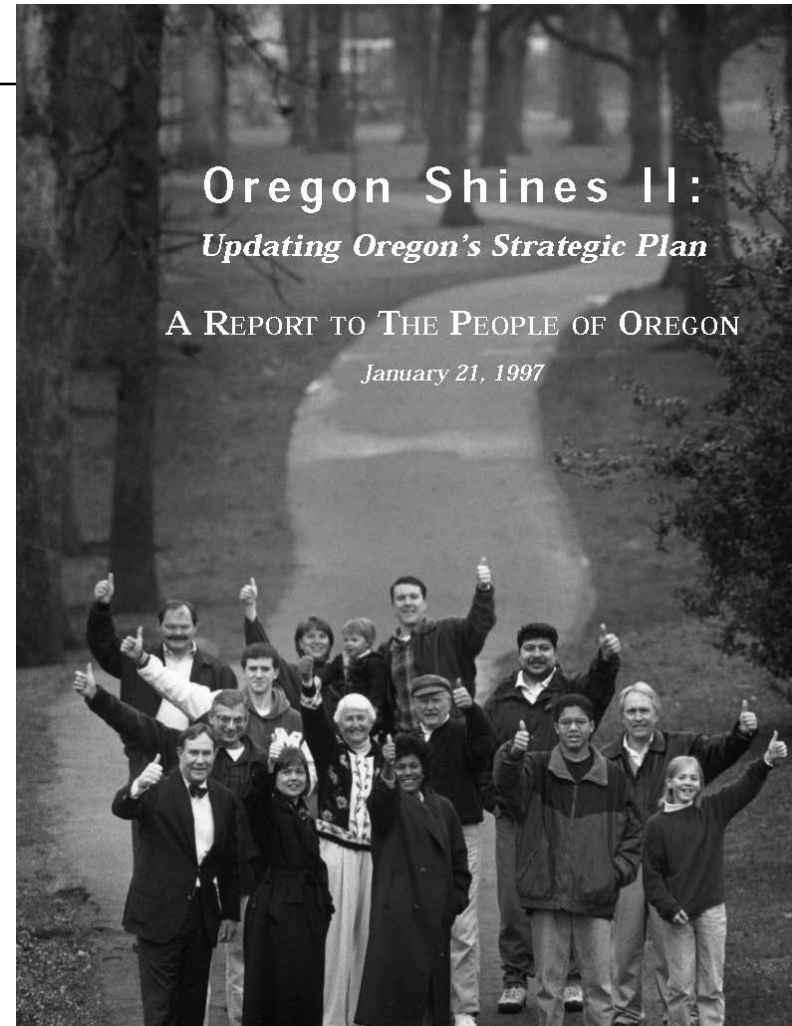


Nature of the federal – state (& local) relationship

- Most programs involve two, and often three, levels of government, including shared provision of funding.
- The sheer number of state and local governments makes across-the-board benchmarking difficult.
- States (and local governments) are fiercely protective of their independence.
- “Pure” federal-state benchmarking across states is very unusual in the U.S.

Oregon Shines: Oregon's big picture strategic vision

- First state to develop and track a big picture, statewide (not just government) vision for its future.
- The Oregon Progress Board:
 - Periodically updates the vision
 - Tracks Oregon's progress with Oregon Benchmarks
 - Help Oregonians work towards achieving the vision
- Both legislative and executive branches of state government have a role in plan monitoring and implementation.



**Oregon
Benchmarks
are the heart
and soul of
the state's
strategic
visioning
program.**

Module 1: OREGON'S PROGRESS

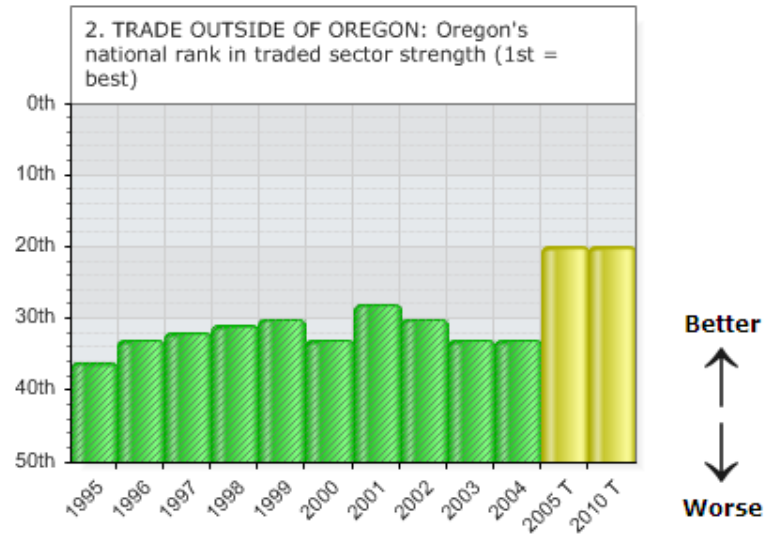
2. TRADE OUTSIDE OF OREGON

**Making
Progress?
No**

**Why this
answer**

Recent data suggest that Oregon's 2005 rank will not hit the 2005 target for trading outside its borders. Economists believe this is a key factor in Oregon's long-term economic health. Oregon remains a below-average state and continues to rank below Washington.

1995	36th
1996	33rd
1997	32nd
1998	31st
1999	30th
2000	33rd
2001	28th
2002	30th
2003	33rd
2004	33rd
2005 TARGET	20th-25th
2010 TARGET	20th-25th





Results-focused Programs

- Type 1 – Cooperative (Oregon Option)
Characterized by establishment of long-term working relationships between federal and state agencies aimed at achieving jointly-held outcomes.
- Type 2 – Soft Prescriptive (Healthy People)
 - *Characterized by voluntary acceptance of nationally established targets accompanied by modest incentives.*
- Type 3 – Hard Prescriptive (No Child Left Behind)
 - *Characterized by federal mandates requiring state performance accompanied by a combination of performance-related incentives and penalties.*

Part 2

Three Case Studies



Type 1 – Cooperative: Oregon Option

- Created during the early days of the Clinton Administration which had extremely high hopes regarding government reform.
- Based on the notion that the federal government would provide regulatory and spending flexibility in exchange for better performance in achieving Oregon Benchmark targets.
- Three issue clusters were the focus on the work: family stability; child health; workforce development.

Harley the drug sniffing pig's transformation embodies the idea behind the approach.

“Vice President Al Gore makes Harley an honorary dog to cover drug sniffing training costs.”



“Making the Difference Together”

Portland Police Bureau
1994


Photo by Pat “Oh Baby” Pollak

Affordable Excellence Printed with Pride™
FitzCo. Graphics • 801.645.9235 • Pioneer Graphics

Officer
Ron Cash and Harley



1994



Despite the fanfare, its accomplishments were modest.

- While some modest improvement in outcomes in clusters of focus occurred, no causal relations were identified.
- Some change in the results-orientation of relationships between some federal agencies and Oregon occurred.
- Little lasting improvement in the results-focus of the federal, state or local agencies involved that can be ascribed to the Oregon Option.
- It was a very important experience for many involved.




Why?

- The two principal leaders (vice president & governor) could not maintain the momentum.
- Federal bureaucracy never bought into the shared outcomes.
- Benchmark data was too high level to see the effect of interventions.
- Too few wins for too much effort.



Type 2 – Soft Prescriptive: Healthy People

- Established by the federal Department of Health and Human Services in 1979 as a way to create diverse teams working together toward shared outcomes.
- Establishes national targets for over 400 health objectives, provides analysis and encouragement to players at all levels including the public.
- States are encouraged to develop their own implementation plans.



Healthy People has been a useful guide but has driven little change in Oregon.

- While the national targets inform Oregon Benchmark targets, the federal government appears to take little notice of relative progress.
- Perhaps due to its extremely broad scope, much of Healthy People's data is quite old.
- State coordinators have little or no contact with one another.
- Despite the apparent loss of momentum over the years, the federal government is preparing Healthy People 2020.



Why?

- Having ready-made, well researched measures and targets is extremely useful.
- Lack of focus? How could any initiative encompass over 400 objectives successfully?
- There were no consequences, either good or bad, relating to actual performance.
- The federal government appears have to lost interest over the years but holds on to the idea.

Type 3 – Hard Prescriptive: No Child Left Behind

- Established by the U.S. Congress in 2002; requires schools receiving certain types of federal assistance to achieve performance targets for all their children.
- Targets are set by each state and are not crafted with regard to other states.
- Federal government monitors performance of individual students and uses a set of incentives and penalties to change school behaviors.
- The law is up for renewal this year.



Despite criticism, NCLB has forced schools to pay attention to disadvantaged children.

- NCLB has given state governments, usually weak players in education, “better opportunities to force change.”
- States are not encouraged to work or learn together; the basic dynamic is each state relating to the federal government.
- Major achievement: children are no longer passed on from grade to grade before they’re ready.



Why?

- **GOOD -**
 - The focus has been on very specific individual outcomes.
 - The law has real consequences.

- **BAD –**
 - The one-size-fits-all approach constrains creativity.
 - NCLB does not encourage a learning culture; it's all about getting over the line.
 - States can “work” the system by setting low expectations.

Part 3

Lessons Learned



Type 1 – Cooperative: Oregon Option

- Desired outcomes must truly be shared by all parties.
- Accountability for results must be carefully defined.
- True systems change can only occur over the long haul.



Type 2 – Soft Prescriptive: Healthy People

- Data alone is not enough.
- Focus is critical.
- Soft incentives, like recognition of performance among peers, are worthwhile.



Type 3 – Hard Prescriptive: No Child Left Behind

- Even mandates should be soft around the edges.
- Mandates alone won't create a performance culture.
- When using mandates, the theory of change must be apparent.



Thank you.

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