



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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June Agency Update:

June 2023 | Our partners can find previous quarterly Government-to-Government updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in the [Coordination with Tribes](#) section of our website.

Featured Updates:

Oregon Tribal Student Support network: The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) recently convened a Tribal Student Support Network meeting at Portland State University (PSU) on May 1-2, where HECC staff, education leaders from the Tribes, and institutional education leaders came together to identify ways to better work together to support postsecondary education and workforce pathways for tribal students in Oregon. It was an inspiring, informative, and critically important conversation, and we hope it is one of many annual events to deepen our work with the sovereign Tribes of Oregon to better serve students of today and the future. We are so thankful to everyone who planned and/or participated in the event, and to all at the PSU Native American Student and Community Center where the convening was held. Dr. Terry Cross, chair of the commission, led an invocation and welcome both days and facilitated the discussion with representatives of the tribes and institutional partners. The first day was focused on fostering connections

Our Commission

OUR VISION:

The State of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) envisions a future in which all Oregonians—and especially those whom our systems have underserved and marginalized—benefit from the transformational power of high-quality postsecondary education and training. [Learn more about our vision here.](#) Oregon's [Strategic Roadmap for Postsecondary Education and Training](#), finalized in 2021, sets an ambitious path forward by describing how postsecondary systems, policies, and practices need to change in order to achieve Oregon's goals for educational attainment and equity.

The HECC is the State of Oregon's Commission and agency working to improve equitable access to and success in higher education and workforce training for Oregonians statewide. Established in 2011, and vested with most of its current authorities in 2013, the HECC is a volunteer commission responsible for advising the Oregon Legislature and the Governor on higher education policy. The Commission is supported by an executive director who oversees eight offices of the agency. To learn more about the HECC, go to: www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/hecc.aspx. [Sign up for newsletters and updates here.](#)

Upcoming Meetings:

Higher Education Coordinating Commission, August 10, 2023. **HECC Funding and Achievement Subcommittee**: August 9, 2023 (tentative). For other [upcoming public meetings of the HECC, see our website here.](#) For [Affiliated Boards \(WTDB, others, see here\)](#). For email notices of upcoming public Commission meetings, or to sign up for our newsletter, go to www.oregon.gov/HigherEd. **Grant and Contracting Opportunities**: Explore all HECC [Grants and Contracting Opportunities here.](#) **Please note HECC has issued the RFA for the second round of Future Ready Oregon Workforce Ready grants and we encourage tribal partners to apply by June 23, 2023.**

between HECC staff and tribal partners, with a welcome from PSU President Stephen Percy, an overview of the HECC by Executive Director Ben Cannon, an overview and current data on of the Oregon Tribal Student Grant by Jake Logan-Laboy from HECC's Office of Student Access and Completion, a presentation on Future Ready Oregon by Jennifer Purcell from the HECC, and a group discussion with HECC and tribal representatives. The second day also included partners from across Oregon's public colleges and universities. The agenda included a presentation on Advancing Native Student Success through Indigenizing Curricula and Urban Landscapes by Professor Judy BlueHorse Skelton and Instructor Emma Johnson from the PSU Indigenous Nations Studies program; a panel of tribal education leaders including Melissa Palanuk from Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Val Switzler of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Sandy Moody-Jurado of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and Sandy Henry, Education Director for the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians; a panel of leaders from institutions on programs underway to better serve Native populations including Dean Joseph Bull from PSU Maseeh College of Engineering, Dr. Jennifer Wilson from Oregon Institute of Technology, Daniel Liera-Huchim from TVCC, and Geneva Mayall from COCC; a panel on HECC-led state initiatives; and tabling, networking, a raffle, and more. Thanks to all involved, and for more information, contact rudyane.rivera-lindstrom@hecc.oregon.gov.

Oregon Tribal Student Grant: Governor Kotek included in her Governor's Recommended Budget continued funding for the Oregon Tribal Grant for 2023-25, HECC advocated for this funding this session, and **we are pleased to share that the current HECC budget bill advanced out of Ways and Means and awaiting the final legislative vote includes funding for the Oregon Tribal Grant program (see details in budget highlights below)**. The proposed legislation related to the program is in the HECC-proposed [HB 3565](#). **The Oregon Tribal Student Grant application is now open for the 2023-24 school year, with a priority deadline of August 1, 2023, for students planning to attend this fall.** The Oregon Tribal Student Grant is expected to pay for most or all public undergraduate college-related expenses—including tuition, housing, books, and other costs not covered by other grants—for eligible students who are enrolled members of Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes. Current and prospective students can [learn more and apply here](#). We thank Government-to-Government tribal partners for the close consultation and partnership with launching the grant and supporting applicants.

Funding and Policy Updates

Legislative process for the 2023-25 higher education and workforce budget: During each legislative session, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) presents to legislative committees and advises the Oregon Legislature and the Governor on topics of critical concern to Oregon postsecondary education, working in close collaboration with campus leaders and partners. View recent HECC testimony and presentations on our [2023 Legislative Resources web page here](#).

101 Report on the State of Oregon Higher Education and Training: In our recent *Collaborations* newsletter, the HECC released a [101 report on the state of Oregon postsecondary education and training today](#). This report is drawn from numerous presentations that the HECC gave in April to the Legislature's Joint Ways and Means Committee, Education Subcommittee on the impact of the state investment in the comprehensive postsecondary education and training system. The report also details Governor Kotek's recommendations for the 2023-25 state budget for postsecondary education and training. Read HECC Executive Director Ben Cannon's introduction to the report in our [April issue of HECC Collaborations](#) or [view the report directly here](#). [This 101 report](#) focuses on the impact of postsecondary education and training on individuals and communities, as well as progress on state attainment and equity goals; trends in postsecondary and training access and enrollment, affordability, completion, and economic outcomes; key initiatives that the State of Oregon is investing in to improve equity and success for Oregonians; the funding landscape, including national comparisons; and highlights of the Governor's recommendations for continuing and strategic new investments in postsecondary education and training.

HECC Budget Presentations: The HECC presented to the Joint Ways and Means Committee, Education Subcommittee during the first two weeks of April; presentations by partners and public testimony on the higher education budget followed this (see the [Committee page for details here](#), or see the [HECC presentation materials here](#)). We framed our agency budget presentation this year around four key themes:

- ECONOMIC MOBILITY: the need to drive equitable economic mobility and meet critical workforce needs;
- EQUITY: in addition to applying the Equity Lens to all Investments, the need to intentionally fund equity strategies;
- AFFORDABILITY: the need to prioritize college affordability, bolstering financial aid for those with the greatest need; and
- STUDENT SUCCESS: the need to sustain investments in institutions to serve student, state, and societal needs, including sustained funding levels for the institutions through the Public University Support Fund and the Community College Support Fund.

HECC Budget update: With the release of an unexpectedly strong revenue forecast in May, **legislators passed out of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education the HECC budget bill (HB 5025), which, if approved by the full Legislative Assembly, will represent a truly positive budget overall. Because of the lack of a quorum in the Senate, the HECC budget in HB 5025 has not yet received final approval, but it is ready for a floor vote when the full Legislature convenes.** Highlights in the bill include:

- Approximately \$1B in total public university support funding and \$800M in community college support funding.
- The Oregon Opportunity Grant would be increased by \$100M, bringing total state investment to \$308M. This major increase will allow HECC to increase award amounts to students to cover a higher proportion of college costs, increasing support for low and middle-income Oregonians.
- **The Oregon Tribal Student grant would be funded and granted permanent staff, at just over \$24M. Based on this amount, HECC will fully award students next year, and return to the legislature if further appropriations are needed.**
- Up to \$25M in investment in fiscal sustainability for regional universities and Portland State University.
- Previous one-time funding for college access and mentorship programs, including ASPIRE, would be continued, again on a one-time basis, for the biennium. Five programs will each receive \$1M.
- Future Ready Oregon would be approved to continue spending ARPA funding.
- The Strong Start program, instituted during the pandemic, would be continued into the next biennium by allowing \$6.8M in unspent funds to be utilized.
- The Oregon National Guard State Tuition Assistance program would be increased by \$800,000.
- Unspent 2021-23 funding would be carried over for HECC's IT modernization project (FAMIS).

HECC Priority Legislation This Session: **Because of the lack of quorum in the Senate, policy bills are currently on hold.** The HECC's priority legislation this session has included: [HB 3565](#) – Oregon Tribal Student Grant Program. The legislation codifies the Oregon Tribal Student Grant program for the first time, following program parameters the HECC established at the time of program creation in 2022. Note: while this bill is important as it establishes the program as a permanent program in law, HECC has sufficient authority to continue to award grants, and will likely seek repeat legislation in a future session if the bill does not pass due to a lack of quorum in the Senate. [HB 3561](#) – Early Childhood Care and Education Scholarship. This language modifies the existing scholarship program for early childhood care and education professionals to ensure that individuals studying early childhood behavioral and mental health qualify for scholarships. Other HECC-Sponsored-Legislation: [SB 217](#) – Cosmetology Curriculum. [HB 3563](#) – Oregon Youth Works. [HB 3560](#) – Statutory Immunity. [HB 3564](#) – Commission Membership and Other Minor Revisions.

Workforce Ready Grant Opportunity

Tribal Partners Encouraged to Apply for Future Ready Oregon Funding to Advance Equity in Education and Employment: [In a recent press release](#), the HECC announced that the Request for Applications (RFA) is now open for Future Ready Oregon's Workforce Ready Grants. This funding opportunity, which promises to be the largest Future Ready Oregon investment to date, will advance innovative and collaborative workforce development programming and partnerships that center the needs of Oregon's historically underserved communities. Up to \$35 million may be awarded to community-based organizations and workforce service providers to develop education and training programs that connect individuals to the resources they need for good-paying jobs and

meaningful careers in key sectors of Oregon’s economy—healthcare, manufacturing, and technology. Go to the HECC [Grants and Contracting Opportunities webpage](#) to view the Request for Applications (RFA) materials (in English and Spanish), to find biographies and contact information for Technical Assistance Providers, or to view Information Session recordings. Applications are due June 23, 2023.

Other Affordability and Financial Aid News

Oregon Student Aid Website: The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) continues to encourage visiting the Oregon Student Aid website at [OregonStudentAid.gov](#), the state website where Oregonians can go to apply for state-administered grants and scholarships to help afford their college goals, and to get help planning for college, training, or careers.

Application Open for Oregon Tribal Student Grant for 2023-24: The [Oregon Tribal Student Grant application](#) is now open for the 2023-24 school year, with a priority deadline of August 1, 2023, for students planning to attend this fall. Current and continuing students who are members of Oregon’s nine federally recognized Tribes are eligible and encouraged to apply. The Oregon Tribal Student Grant provides funding for eligible Oregon tribal students to offset the cost of attendance at eligible Oregon colleges and universities. Program funding for 2023-25 will be determined by the Oregon Legislature. Additional details including information on eligibility, along with application instructions, are on our website: <https://oregonstudentaid.gov/grants/oregon-tribal-student-grant/>.

Financial Aid Applications: To be eligible for most types of financial aid, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA). These applications compile financial information and other details about students and families, which the U.S. Department of Education and the State of Oregon use to determine financial need and eligibility for various financial aid opportunities. OSAC encourages Oregonians to [complete the FAFSA or ORSAA](#) and to apply for state grant programs at [OregonStudentAid.gov](#).

Oregon Promise Grant: [Oregon Promise Grant](#) awarding began April 19 to new students (Class of 2023) who will begin college in fall 2023. There is no EFC limit for the Class of 2023 to be considered for Oregon Promise. Regardless of income, all students must apply by their deadline in order to be considered for the grant. All students only have one opportunity to apply for Oregon Promise, [based on their graduation date](#). Please read the following Fact Sheets regarding Oregon Promise 2023-24, also available on our website: [Fact Sheet for New Students and Families](#), [General Fact Sheet](#).

OSAC offers the FAFSA Plus+ program for schools, community-based organizations, and other sites that work with a specific student population. Becoming a FAFSA Plus+ site allows an organization to upload a roster of students and then be able to see the FAFSA filing status for those students. Learn more and [sign up to become a FAFSA Plus+ site](#) for free.

OSAC continues our outreach and presentations across the state. Go online to [request support](#) from OSAC at an upcoming event or in a classroom, or to provide training to your students and communities. OSAC outreach is available to students, families, and career/college access staff across Oregon to provide support and guidance. [You can also sign up to receive our e-newsletters here.](#)

- [Free Publications and Posters:](#) Order or download free posters and brochures here including the OSAC Poster—a quick reminder for students to apply for financial aid, including the FAFSA/ORSAA, grants, and scholarships. English and Spanish versions available.
- [Webinars:](#) OSAC hosts a variety of webinars throughout the year for students, parents, and career/college practitioners. Our webinars provide up-to-date information about programs we serve.

Tribal Access to Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver: HECC-OSAC continues to be available to ensure tribal foster youth have access to the Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver program, which waives tuition and fees for the equivalent of four years of undergraduate studies after other public grants and any school aid are applied. Learn more about eligibility at www.oregonstudentaid.gov. OSAC representatives would be pleased to help any tribal staff. Please contact Kristin.Vreeland@state.or.us.

ASPIRE Program: The ASPIRE (Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement) program helps educate Oregon students to become career and college ready. ASPIRE offers education, resources, and mentoring opportunities for all students. Student supports include 1:1 and group mentoring, activities that focus on career exploration, career and college research, admissions applications, scholarships, and financial aid. Tribes are welcome to join ASPIRE. [Learn more here.](#)

PARTNER NEWS: More Oregon Students Now Qualify for Affordable Child Care Program: The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) and Early Learning Division (ELD) of the Oregon Department of Education in early 2023 announced expanded eligibility for affordable childcare through the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program. Many families will qualify for more childcare assistance, including students for study time and caretakers who work night shifts. [Learn more here.](#)

Supporting Pathways and Student Success

Commission Revises Community College Funding Distribution Model to Help Drive Student Success and Equity: At its June 8 public meeting, the HECC approved a major revision to the way in which over \$550 million annually in local and state taxpayer funding is distributed to the state's 17 community colleges. Developed after a year-long collaborative process, the new student-focused distribution model dedicates a proportion of taxpayer funds to support student success and equity outcomes for Oregon community college students. This is the first time in a generation the community college funding formula has been extensively reviewed in relation to statewide and community goals, and the changes reflect an intentional focus on improving success of underserved populations. [Learn more in our press release and links to documents here.](#)

U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Oregon Youth Corps Build Trails and Community with Tribal Youth Programs ([Excerpt reprinted from a Bureau of Land Management press release available here](#), *Author: Maya Fuller, Bureau of Land Management, State Youth Program Lead, Oregon State Office.* "On a cloudy morning in early May, Bureau of Land Management staff joined students from the Chemawa Indian School on a trail maintenance project as part of the Indian Youth Service Corps initiative. The meeting was about much more than the project at hand...." [Read the full story here.](#)

The [Transfer Council](#), convened in October 2021, has made considerable progress on streamlining the credit transfer process from two- to four-year institutions to save students time and money. Since convening in October 2021, the Transfer Council and its subcommittees have focused on developing a common course numbering system, advancing the work on Major Transfer Maps, and other credit transfer-related issues. The Transfer Council is also moving forward the [Oregon Transfer Compass](#) Maps that started with HB 2998 (2017). To stay updated on this work, [subscribe to the new Transfer Hub newsletter!](#) You can [read the latest issue of this quarterly newsletter](#) focused on Oregon's statewide policy work and promising practices for improving transfer pathways.

Academic Program Approvals: At its April and May Commission meetings, the HECC approved the following new academic programs at Oregon's colleges and universities. Read more about these programs in the [April 13 and May 11 meeting materials here.](#) Community College New Programs: Clackamas Community College: Emergency Medical Technology One-Year Certificate (CC1); Part-Time Welding Certificate of Completion (CC). Columbia Gorge Community College: Medical Assisting, CC0; Professional Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems, CC. Lane Community College: CNC Machining and Inspection AAS; Energy Management with Building Controls Technology AAS; Front Office Support Specialist CC. Linn Benton Community College: AAS Surgical Technology, AAS; CAD Mechanical and Prototyping – One-Year Certificate (CC1); CAD Tech AEC (Architectural-Engineering-Civil) CC1; Computer Aided Drafting and Design AAS. Rogue Community College - Human Services, AAS; Addiction Studies CC. Southwestern Oregon Community College: Human Services AAS. Tillamook Bay Community College: Nursing AAS. New Programs at Universities: Southern Oregon University: BA/BS Human Services; BFA Digital Cinema Production Arts; BA/BS Power and Politics, BA/BS Media Innovation. University of Oregon: BA/BS in Popular Music; BS in Cybersecurity. Western Oregon University: BA Ethnic Studies. In addition, the Commission approved Lane Community College's proposal for the Applied Business Management BAS to move to Phase Three of the approval process for applied baccalaureate programs.

New Reports and Other Updates

Oregon Youth Works Tribal Engagement: [The Oregon Youth Works programs](#) within the HECC Office of Workforce Investments awarded \$2.57 Million to tribes, directly and indirectly through youth workforce providers within the 21-23 biennium, including \$2.98 million through the Oregon Conservation Corps (OCC) and \$476,000 through the Oregon Youth Corps (OYC). Oregon Youth Works staff, in partnership with Oregon Office of Indian Education Tribal Student Success Act staff and Career Connect Learning's Tribal Liaison, are conducting collaborative outreach to tribal partners to learn how best to engage tribal youth in education and workforce development opportunities. They are also supporting the Indian Youth Corps with the AntFarm/Bureau of Land Management/OYC partnership (see article featured on previous page). The Oregon Conservation Corps will be opening up an RFA for grants in June ([see all HECC grant and contracting opportunities here](#)), and we will ask applicants to specifically consider outreach to and/or partnerships with their local tribes in an effort to expand partnerships.

Statewide Computer Science Implementation Plan Engagement Sessions: The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) are hosting engagement sessions on June 15 and June 20 to share preliminary recommendations under consideration for inclusion in the [Statewide Computer Science Implementation Plan](#). The purpose of these sessions is to provide an opportunity for feedback while the plan is in draft form, prior to its expected release in September 2023. Students, families, educators, community members, industry professionals, and anyone with an interest in computer science education in Oregon are encouraged to attend. Registration links and more information is available on *the* [CS Initiative website](#).

Volunteers Needed to Review Applications for Workforce Ready Grants, Round Two: The HECC is calling for volunteers to join the Evaluation Review Committee. This committee will score eligible applications using criteria established in the [Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#). Scores will inform funding and award decisions for Workforce Ready Grants, Round Two. Evaluation Review Committee members will receive training and written instructions prior to starting the review process. Before volunteering, please consider the [guidelines detailed here](#) on important dates, time commitment, training/orientation, method of evaluation, and conflicts of interest. Interested in volunteering? Submit a [volunteer interest form](#) by June 30th. Any questions should be directed to: FutureReadyOregon@hecc.oregon.gov

New Report Shows Oregon's Investment in Open Educational Resources (OER) is Paying Off for Thousands of Students: Oregon's statewide investment in textbook affordability has a measurable impact that is making higher education more affordable, as detailed in a [new report on Open Educational Resources](#) recently approved by the HECC and submitted to the Oregon Legislature. Among other findings, the report shows that according to initial data the current OER grant cohort supports 48 projects at 25 institutions for a total cost of \$479,017. At the time of the report, 5,537 students were estimated to have saved \$815,083 as a result of this funding, approximately \$1.70 in student savings per \$1 spent, and these impact numbers will grow when the reporting period is complete.

Industry Consortia: The HECC has started convening the Industry Consortia, a component of the Future Ready Oregon investment package. Three separate, statewide industry consortia will represent the healthcare, manufacturing, and technology industry sectors. The consortium meetings are [public and details can be found here](#). The purpose of each consortium is to establish strategic partnerships, develop structured processes to address mutual industry goals, identify industry-specific workforce needs in this state, develop recruitment strategies to increase equitable participation, and promote workforce development programs and activities in the priority industry sectors.