



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Phone: 503-378-5690 | Email: Cheryl.L.Myers@state.or.us
255 Capitol Street NE | Salem, OR 97301
oregon.gov/HigherEd

Ben Cannon, Executive Director; Bob Brew, Deputy Executive Director bob.k.brew@state.or.us

December Agency Update:

December 2017 | Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)'s [2016-20 Strategic Plan](#) provides a foundation and scaffolding for preparing more Oregonians with the degrees, certificates, and training they need to succeed in their goals and careers. The plan defines six key priorities that guide higher education funding and policy decisions: goal setting, public college and university funding, pathways, student support, college affordability, and economic and community impact.

Recent HECC Work: The Higher Education Coordinating Commission since August has been engaged in developing a 2017-2021 [Strategic Framework](#) as a new addendum to our comprehensive 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, and we continue to seek public input on this work. The Framework describes four key strategic actions to guide our work related to reporting, funding, pathways, and outreach, as well as describing briefly HECC mission, vision, and values. We appreciate all stakeholders who have already provided input on this document, which has been discussed at the August and October public meetings of the HECC and shared with numerous partner groups in recent months.

On October 11, Governor Kate Brown announced state [priorities to achieve a vision](#) for a seamless system of education in Oregon, [expressed in a letter](#) addressed to the Chief Education Office and the directors of Early Learning, Oregon Department of Education, and the HECC. The letter details four specific directives: establish a unified education budget for the 2019-21 biennium; develop a new Statewide Early Learning Plan; achieve aggressive high school graduation goals for all student populations; and expand career pathways aligned to workforce needs. The HECC is specifically directed to focus on the unified budget and on workforce-driven career pathways, and we look forward to collaborating with our campus, business, industry, and K-12 partners to accelerate progress in these directives. The Governor's priorities, in addition to four strategic activities that we are [developing in the Commission's \(draft\) strategic framework](#), give us fresh momentum, direction and vision for our future work.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are prominent themes and guiding priorities for the HECC, and we are committed to fostering our connections and collaborations between HECC and the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon. Veronica Dujon, Director of Academic Strategies for the HECC Office of University Coordination and Dr. Carmen Suarez,

Our Commission

OUR VISION:

The Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is dedicated to fostering and sustaining the best, most rewarding pathways to opportunity and success for all Oregonians through an accessible, affordable and coordinated network for educational achievement beyond a high school diploma.

The HECC is the single state entity responsible for ensuring pathways to higher education success for Oregonians statewide, and serves as a convener of institutions and partners working across the public and private higher education arena. Established in 2011, HECC is a 14-member volunteer commission responsible for advising the Oregon Legislature, the Governor, and the Chief Education Office 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

Events

Higher Education Coordinating Commission Meeting:

December 14, 2017, Portland State University, Portland
January 11, 2017, Salem

For email notices of upcoming public Commission meetings, or to sign up for our newsletter, go to www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

Vice President, Global Diversity and Inclusion at Portland State University, and a member of the HECC Equity Advisory Council, have extended an invitation to Tribal Chairs [to meet with each tribe in coming months](#). Our intent is to engage in ongoing conversations with each Tribe to understand how we at the HECC, and in higher education, can be better partners in serving the interests of Tribes and Native American students in Oregon. Our partners can find former quarterly Government to Government updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in [Coordination with Oregon Tribes](#) located in the [Equity and Student Success](#) section of our website.

HECC Staff Training and Resources for Native American History Month: As an agency committed to lifelong learning, our Diversity and Inclusion committee hosts “Equity Connect” meetings for staff to learn about important topics related to equity and diversity. With November designated as the Native American Heritage Month, or as it is commonly referred to as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month, our November Equity Connect training was focused on Native American culture. We hosted an invited special guest (via web) [Michael Yellowbird, Ph.D.](#), Director, Indigenous Tribal Studies, North Dakota State University. Dr. Michael Yellow Bird works with oppressed communities of color, particularly Native American communities, bringing teachings of healing the trauma of colonialism. Prior to the Equity Connect meeting, the committee shared links to learning resources on Native American history, and hosted three pre-learning sessions for staff to view the following video resources, including

- [Decolonizing the Mind: Healing Through Neurodecolonization and Mindfulness, A Talk by Dr. Michael Yellow Bird](#) (PSU, 2014)
- [Broken Treaties: An Oregon Experience](#) (OPB special)
- [Urban Rez: How do Native Americans maintain their culture in a dominant society?](#) (PBS Special)

Redesigned Key Performance Metrics (KPMs) for the HECC Emphasize Equity: Every state agency in Oregon reports annually on a set of Key Performance Metrics (KPMs) to the Oregon Legislature to provide a high-level view of progress in the agency and its areas of work. Thanks to input from legislators and their staff during the 2017 Session, HECC was able to revise our set of metrics this year under the leadership of Dr. Amy Cox, Director of Research and Data, to more meaningfully reflect our priorities and goals, with an increased focus on racial equity. [A presentation featuring these metrics is attached](#), and Dr. Cox is happy to answer any questions on this data at amy.cox@state.or.us. In a recent interview featured in our [November HECC Collaborations newsletter](#), Dr. Cox shared some of the benefits of this redesign. [Read the full interview here](#). In addition to the new KPMs, staff in the Office of Research and Data are working on new state, institutional, and regional summaries of higher education in Oregon with emphases on enrollment, affordability, completion, and equity. More to come on this!

Legislative Implementation Updates:

Transfer Workgroup Convenes with Momentum for House Bill 2998 Implementation: Oregon passed groundbreaking legislation in 2017 to improve transfer pathways, and the HECC convened partners in October to commence this work. House Bill 2998 (2017) is intended to create clear and comprehensive pathways for community college students in Oregon as they transfer to Oregon’s public universities, by directing Oregon public institutions to establish foundational curricula of at least 30 credits and major-specific unified statewide transfer agreements. To develop the curricula mandated by House Bill 2998 and decide the order of the first three unified statewide transfer agreements, the HECC convened representatives from Oregon’s public colleges, universities and related stakeholder groups on October 6 for the first meeting of a Transfer Workgroup. For meeting materials and more information, please see:

- [House Bill 2998 web page on the HECC Website here](#)
- [Sign up to receive updates on Transfer Pathways by email](#)

New Educational Attainment goal for adult Oregonians, and Oregon Talent Development Plan: House Bill 2311 and House Bill 3437, which require HECC to work with stakeholders to establish new educational attainment goals for adult Oregonians, and update the Oregon Talent Development Plan, are currently in a procurement phase to seek technical support and assistance for both projects. We anticipate that the public-facing portion of this work will begin in December 2017. Joining implementation for these two projects together will allow HECC to simultaneously consider career and workforce oriented attainment goals for adult Oregonians and, at the same time, engage educational institutions and employers in detailed conversations about the strategies needed to reach those goals.

Open Educational Resources: HECC staff has engaged in a series of planning meetings regarding implementation of a new Open Educational Resources law (House Bill 2729). This legislation provided up to \$1M to expand the availability of free course materials across Oregon institutions. The availability of quality, free educational materials is a critical component of a comprehensive higher education affordability strategy. Shortly, an advisory committee consisting of representatives from public institutions across Oregon will form to determine how best to spend these new resources.

Task force on Student Mental Health: Finally, HECC has begun discussions with the Oregon Health Authority on how best to begin the work of a Task Force on Student Mental

Health. Pending appointments by the Governor, we look forward to bringing task force members together soon after the holiday season, with an eye toward delivering a series of recommendations shortly before the 2019 Legislative Session.

Affordability and Financial Aid:

Scholarship Application open at OregonStudentAid.gov: HECC encourages students statewide to apply now for grants and scholarships at OregonStudentAid.gov. See our recent press release here. OSAC awards more than \$100 million each year in state-funded grants and privately-funded scholarships to help students meet their college expenses. More than 500 privately-funded scholarship opportunities are available to eligible Oregon students with a wide range of interests and needs, in addition to the state-administered Oregon Promise grant and the Oregon Opportunity Grant.

OSAC webinars and financial aid outreach: In addition to the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion's (OSAC's) administration of college access and financial aid programs for the benefit of Oregonians, OSAC offers presentations (including in person upon request), webinars, and resources for schools, tribal partners, counselors, nonprofits, students, parents, and other partners on how to plan for and afford postsecondary education. For details see the [Community & Outreach Services page of their website here](#), which includes times and topics for upcoming webinars, options for ordering publications, and a process for requesting presenters or downloading OSAC's Finding Funds for College presentation.

Oregon Promise Update, EFC Limit Implemented: At its October Commission meeting, Juan Baez-Arevalo, director of OSAC, presented to the Commission an [update on the recent changes and grant cycle for the Oregon Promise](#), the state financial grant program that helps pay for tuition expenses at Oregon's 17 community colleges for recent high school graduates and qualified GED® recipients. The state investment for the current biennium fell approximately \$8 million short of the anticipated costs to fully fund the program. Until future funding levels are sufficient, students with the highest federally-calculated EFC are now ineligible to receive Oregon Promise grant funding. For 2017-18, the HECC set this EFC limit at \$18,000. Even with the EFC limit, OSAC was able to inform approximately four out of five eligible new applicants in Fall 2017 that they were eligible for the grant. The EFC limit did not apply to continuing students who first received the grant in 2016-17 and continued to meet eligibility criteria. The HECC will re-evaluate the EFC limit each year, and may decide to adjust or eliminate the limit in future years, if sufficient funds are available.

In addition to reporting on the implementation of the EFC limit, Director Baez-Arevalo reported that pursuant to recent legislation, a 6-month enrollment waiver process has been established for rare circumstances of student hardship, active military duty or training (including National Guard), and service in certain career and technical student organizations relating to farming (including Future Farmers of America).

Tribal Organizations invited to join FAFSA Plus+ Program: HECC-OSAC is still expanding the FAFSA Plus+ program. School districts, high schools, TRIO programs, Tribal Education Agencies, Indian Organizations, or community-based organizations are invited to complete the non-competitive [FAFSA Plus+ Application](#). FAFSA Plus+ is a year-round program that includes FAFSA completion activities and support, FAFSA completion events, financial literacy information, scholarship resources, award letter help, and other college access information. OSAC shares student-level FAFSA data and best practices with sites, allowing site staff to provide targeted assistance to their students who need to complete and submit a FAFSA, make corrections, and notify students who have been selected for verification. Please direct any questions to FAFSAplus@osac.state.or.us

Supporting Pathways and Student Success:

At its October meeting, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission approved the following academic programs at Oregon's community colleges:

- Clackamas Community College, Basic Engine Technician, Certificate of Completion
- Linn-Benton Community College, Computed Tomography Technology, Certificate of Completion
- Lane Community College, Fitness Specialist, Certificate of Completion

GED Educator of the Year: For the first time, at this year's Annual GED Summit, we honored an individual in our community with the GED Educator of the Year Award. This award was designed to honor an outstanding educator who:

- Is an expert in their field who guides students of all background and abilities to achieve excellence
- Collaborates with colleagues, students, and families to create a school culture of respect and success; and
- Demonstrates leadership and innovation in an outside of the classroom walls that embodies lifelong learning

The recipient this year was Patrick Jordon, Lead Classroom Instructor at Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council. GED Plus Program in Bend. Patrick Jordon has been a GED instructor for the last seven years at COIC, where he has helped his organization excel in GED student success. He is lauded for the individualize time, care, and attention he gives to students, his ability to support students of diverse backgrounds, barriers, and abilities, and his continuous efforts to improve his teaching practice.

Economic and Community Impact:

Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) continues with its emphasis on business-led strategies that serve a breadth of individuals including traditionally underserved populations: rural, communities of color, second/multiple generation impoverished and special populations such as the disability community.

Events and Other Updates:

New Commissioners: Vanessa Becker, former chair of the Umpqua Community College Board of Trustees, was has been appointed to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission voting position and her appointment was confirmed by the Senate in November; she will begin her service in January, 2017. Ms. Becker's appointment will fill the position currently held by Betty Duvall, who has served the HECC since it was first formed in 2011, and will be concluding her service in December. Sandra (Sandy) Rowe was appointed to the Commission's vacant voting position. Rowe is an editor and civic leader who served as editor of *The Oregonian* newspaper from 1993-2010 and led the newspaper to five Pulitzer Prizes. Kali Sullivan was appointed to the non-voting university student position. Sullivan; Kali is a Portland State University (PSU) student majoring in Political Science who recently transferred from Rogue Community College and Southern Oregon University where she was a dual-enrolled student. Commissioners Rowe and Sullivan were appointed and confirmed in September.

HECC Convenes two conferences in November: Thanks to all who attended [The 4th Annual GED Summit: Connecting Students for a Better Future](#), organized by the HECC Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD), Oregon High School Equivalency Program, on November 7-8, 2017, in Tigard, OR. Thanks also to all attendees of the [ASPIRE Fall Conference](#) on Friday November 3rd, at Lane Community College.

New Tool for Researchers: Custom Data Searches of Oregon Community College Data: We are very pleased to announce that researchers and members of the public can now search a wide variety of Oregon community college data on the [Oregon Community College Data platform](#). Users can enter the parameters of their search on this website and view custom data compilations according to their interests.

Statement on DACA: The HECC, Oregon's seven public universities and OHSU represented by the Oregon Council of Presidents, 17 community colleges represented by the Oregon Community College Association, and 18 private nonprofit institutions represented by the Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities issue a [joint statement after the September announcement terminating the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals \(DACA\) program](#). Undocumented students in Oregon, including students with DACA status, may qualify for state grants such as the Oregon Opportunity Grant and the Oregon Promise, as well as some private aid. Our Office of Student Access and Completion hosts a webpage focused on [financial aid resources for undocumented students](#) here.

HECC News Clips service: The HECC provides a regular email service including a selection of news clips primarily related to Oregon postsecondary education. If you wish to sign up for this email, please [subscribe to news clips here](#).

For more on current work of the HECC, please see recent meeting materials, or go to oregon.gov/HigherEd.