



HB 2681 FINAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

House Bill 2681¹, passed by the Oregon Legislature in 2015 directed the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) and the State Board of Education (SBE) to convene a workgroup of stakeholders to “recommend effective processes and strategies for placing students in community college, including consideration of whether to use a statewide summative assessment for students who are entering a community college directly after high school.” The legislation required the HECC and SBE to jointly submit to the interim legislative committees on education a preliminary report on February 1, 2016 and a final report on September 15, 2016.

The final report in response to the requirements of House Bill 2681 (2015) advances the preliminary HB 2681 report through an overview and compilation of the activities undertaken and information gathered by the HB 2681 workgroup and agency staff to examine and recommend effective processes and strategies for placing students in community colleges. To underscore the equity imperative that undergirds placement reform, the report provides demographic data on student enrollment in developmental education and a spotlight focus on English Language Learners.

Results of a survey administered to community colleges in May 2016 are included; these results demonstrate that colleges have already begun to implement the primary recommendation of the HB 2681 workgroup that colleges move toward a system of multiple measures rather than using only a standardized assessment as the default placement tool for all students. It is noted that the academic achievement measures of high school course grades and cumulative grade point average are unreported at the state level, limiting the ability to research the predictive validity of these measures as placement indicators or to provide them for direct placement consideration; however, there appears to be widespread interest in the use of both self-reported and official grade information to support students’ seamless transition from high school into college courses. Systematic test preparation, review, and study materials are encouraged as a means to establish a strong foundation of support for those students who do take college placement tests.

Consistent with the intent of HB 2681 in its emphasis on the statewide summative assessment within the consideration of effective processes and strategies for student placement in community college courses, implementation of the 2015 community college agreements to incorporate use of the state’s summative assessment in placement processes is discussed; the first cohort of students entering community colleges with scores on the Smarter Balanced assessment will begin in Fall 2016. The report observes the need for ongoing research to monitor and evaluate the impact and costs of a multiple measures approach.

¹ HB 2681 Text: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2015R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2681/Enrolled>