

# Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)

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# HECC Team

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## Who we are...

- A Governor-appointed, volunteer public Commission that sets strategic direction and policy priorities for postsecondary education and training, and oversees the HECC agency.
- A focus on coordination, not governance, of public postsecondary institutions to achieve outcomes for student access and completion.
- The HECC serves this purpose through equity-centered:
  - Data and evaluation.
  - Budget/policy leadership.
  - Agency administration of financial aid, workforce, and other state programs.
  - Administration of approximately \$3.0 billion state and federal funds per biennium.

# Vision and Strategy

## **Vision Statement (2017)**

“The 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...”

## **From the HECC Strategic Roadmap (adopted 2021)**

“Postsecondary education in Oregon and nationally must undergo fundamental transformation to heal a society riven by wealth and ideology gaps that higher education has helped to create ... we must insist that those whom our systems have collectively failed to serve well – including emerging bilingual Oregonians, members of Indigenous communities, immigrants, and others from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds – represent the State’s greatest potential and deserve its focus.”

# Programs Included

- Public university and community college state funding
- Oregon Opportunity Grant
- Oregon Promise
- Oregon Teacher Scholars Program
- Oregon Student Child Care Grant
- ASPIRE student mentorship program
- Oregon Youth Corps
- Oregon Conservation Corps
- Oregon Youth Employment Program
- OregonServes

# Background and Engagement Principles

## HECC Equity Lens (2013, updated 2021)

Beliefs and practices to ensure we make equity-informed decisions, actions, targeted interventions, investments, and enact systemic change to improve equitable educational outcomes ... that intentionally places racial equity at the forefront.

# Background and Engagement Principles

*We will directly reach out to organizations and individuals who represent diverse communities for ideas and partnership opportunities.*

*We will directly engage with partners in vetting our staff-generated requests.*

*We will thoroughly examine equity impacts utilizing the HECC Equity Lens.*

*Through outreach efforts and discussions with new partners, we will create deeper opportunities to co-create concepts.*

*We will achieve meaningful collaboration and empowerment with those we can build relationships with and are impacted by our collective work.*

# Engagement Objectives and Scope

**Overall objective:** To ensure that priority 2023 HECC budget and policy requests are grounded in community-identified needs and opportunities.

**Related objectives:** To deepen existing relationships with community members; and to expand our circles of meaningful community partnership.

# Engagement Objectives and Scope

We will welcome engagement in all programs/areas for which the HECC is responsible, but we will focus our outreach on emerging opportunities for strategic state investments in *affordability* and equitable *student/learner* success.

We will *inform, consult, involve, and collaborate* with our engagement partners. Our community-based Commission is statutorily required to make final decisions on our 2023 priorities.

# HECC Engagement History and Context

## HECC Community Engagement Background

Since HECC's creation in 2013, we have steadily increased outreach to and engagement of community partners and tribal governments.

In 2019, we hosted 12 roundtable meetings with diverse communities statewide, engaging participants from PK-20 organizations, business, foundations, local and state government, health and cultural community organizations.

The creation of the HECC's first DEI position in 2019 enhances planning, structure, and accountability for our community engagement efforts.

Under the leadership of HECC Chair Terry Cross, we now invite and support diverse community leaders to participate with formal agenda time at every HECC meeting.

HECC's recent publication of [racial equity briefs](#) supports future engagement with diverse communities.

# Risk, Challenges, and Mitigation Strategies

## Risks / Challenges

Historic and continuing marginalization of underrepresented communities by higher education has fostered mistrust.

Some community members may feel alienated by a culture that too often confers legitimacy or respect on the basis of one's level of formal educational attainment.

We frequently and unnecessarily employ acronyms, complexity, and jargon that may unfairly exclude from meaningful participation almost anyone who isn't already an insider.

It is often challenging to translate from the actual experience of students "on the ground" to state policy and budget.

## Mitigation Strategies

*We will attempt to mitigate through plain language, "translation," and modelling inclusion.*

*But the single most effective way for the HECC to mitigate these risks is by building authentic, durable, consistent, open-ended relationships with community groups and community members.*

# Identified Community Partners

## Community-Based Organizations

- Latino Network
- SEI
- NAYA
- APANO
- IRCO
- Oregon Campus Compact
- Coalition of Communities of Color
- United Way Network
- Oregon Partnership for Educational Justice
- Various college access providers

## Intergovernmental

- Oregon's nine federally-recognized tribes

## Advocacy Groups

- Stand for Children
- Technology Association of Oregon
- Oregon Workforce Partnership
- Oregon Business and Industry
- Portland Business Alliance
- ASC/States4Service
- Oregon Business Council

## Students

- Oregon Student Association
- Oregon Student Voice

## Philanthropy

- Ford Family Foundation
- Oregon Community Foundation
- PGE Foundation
- Foundations for a Better Oregon / Partners for Educational Justice
- Meyer Memorial Trust

## Boards and Councils

- Racial Justice Council (Education Recovery Committee)
- State Board of Education
- STEM Investment Council
- Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board
- Oregon Conservation Corps Advisory Committee
- Oregon Youth Corps Advisory Board
- Oregon Serves Commission
- Financial Aid Advisory Committee

## Postsecondary Education Institutions

- Public Universities
- Community Colleges
- Private Degree Granting Institutions
- Private Career Schools

# Engagement Methods and Implementation Plan

- Personal outreach and virtual meetings and presentations.
- New GovDelivery system that will allow us to reach more partners
- Planning of engagement forums and coordinating opportunities for partners to connect to the work happening.
- Documentation of the ideas to support legislative process
- Use of our Equity Lens tools
- We are currently in the process in creating accessible materials to support the navigation of our state process

# Phases and Timeline

Date	Event
November 2021-February 2022	Community and organizational partners are invited to identify issues in higher education and workforce training they want addressed. Staff work with organizations to gather information on the problem and its impact to generate a POP/LC interest form.
January to April, 2022	Agency executive team determines which staff will lead in concept development for each identified concept. Team works to build a table for collaboration on the development of each concept with stakeholders.
February to June, 2022	Ongoing consultation with stakeholders to socialize and refine concepts.
Early-June (date TBD)	Final submission deadline for legislative concepts.
July-September , 2022	Finalizing legislative language with legislative council.
August, 2022	Final list of POPs approved by the Commission as part of ARB adoption.
September 1, 2022	Final Agency Request Budget due. All POPs are finalized once included in ARB.
November 10, 2022	Commission approves concepts for Governor's office approval and introduction.

# Commission Prioritization

The Commission's Equity Lens commits it to evaluating and prioritizing each budget and policy option based on answers to a set of “guiding questions” including:

- How the proposal affects racial/ethnic and other underserved groups
- Potential unintended consequences for equity
- Whether/how affected communities have been consulted
- How progress will be evaluated and communicated

In the presentation of recommendations to the Commission, HECC staff must address these and other questions.

## Data Use

HECC draws from its data systems of individual (deidentified) student records to analyze and report on trends, gaps, and opportunities for postsecondary education and workforce.

The HECC-administered State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) connects K-12, higher education, and employment records.

HECC reports and key performance measures consistently present *disaggregated* data by race/ethnicity.

[Racial equity briefs](#) (published January 2022).

# Closing the Loop with Community

- HECC was recently analyzed for strengths and opportunities in how we conduct equity work.
- Findings included strengths in addressing disparities and prioritizing equity strategies in the work. Through our community engagement focus group process, we identified the need to create deeper relationships, expand the voices, and conduct transparent follow-up.
- With the addition of a new Director of DEI and team, we will be better able to coordinate a more complete process of engagement for the agency, build capacity in our commitment, and serve as points of contact for our existing and new partners.
- HECC leadership is currently developing plan of action for this priority.