

July 14, 2016

Mr. Ben Cannon
Executive Director and
Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission
State of Oregon
775 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97310-0103

Re: HECC Strategic Plan

Dear Ben:

At the Alliance, we read the HECC's strategic plan with great interest. While we recognize and value the State's different relationships with public and private schools, we are pleased that the plan reflects our collective role in improving higher education. Oregon students, and the State generally, benefit when we focus on the contributions of all the State's higher education institutions; and we appreciate the recognition of where private non-profit institutions in Oregon can contribute, engage and participate in shaping Oregon's future.

Of particular note to us in the Strategic Plan is the shared endeavor to help those in financial need attend an Oregon school of their choosing. We join you in supporting innovations that lower student and family costs while increasing quality. The Alliance also continues to further your goal of increasing awareness and completion of the FAFSA as we work with high school students statewide to submit the form during Private College Week and high school visits year round. Nearly one in three of our students receive the Pell grant, and 94% of full-time, first-time students receive institutional aid. Additionally, we were pleased to have 2,617 Oregon Opportunity Grant recipients attending our schools in the 2014-15 academic year. We appreciate that the HECC and OSAC continue to see the importance of these students having both choice and financial assistance.

The Strategic Plan also addresses the State's 40-40-20 goals, another piece on which the Alliance will certainly continue to focus. Adults returning to school, attention to under-represented populations, and reporting of outcomes and student data are continued goals as well. Some Alliance schools continue to expand their adult and online learning programs. All 18 of our institutions have joined you in focusing attention on diversity--and we can report that one in five of our students are of color and 25% of our bachelor's degrees in 2013-14 were awarded to minorities in Oregon. As we begin a pilot program with the Oregon Employment Department, we will soon be able to share more information with HECC on graduate placement and income.

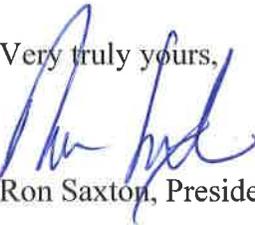
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We are proud that 60% of Alliance institution students graduate within four years as we provide more than 23% of Oregon's undergraduate degrees and 50% of Oregon's graduate degrees. Like HECC, we have concerns about STEM graduates and can report that 20% of Oregon's STEM bachelor's degrees are earned at Alliance schools.

The Alliance also joins you in an intensified focus on data, which many people desire. We continue to collect facts and figures that provide evidence of our collective work toward higher education goals, and are most recently exploring with the Oregon Employment Department methods to increase our knowledge about the employment outcomes of our graduates.

We hope to support you in all aspects of your Strategic Plan implementation and look forward to helping achieve the outcomes you have noted as your goals. Our shared vision of the future, and our partnering where possible, will increase the access to and successfulness of higher education in Oregon.

Very truly yours,



Ron Saxton, President

RS:kbb

cc: The Alliance Board of Directors