



Date: April 11, 2019
To: Higher Education Coordinating Commission
From: Lisa Fragala
Re: Community College Funding and HECC Voting Rights

Chair Bryant and HECC Members:

My name is Lisa Fragala. I am a member of the OEA Board, the Lane Community College Board of Education, and a teacher in the Eugene 4-J School District. The Oregon Education Association (OEA) represents more than 2,500 faculty and classified staff members in 17 locals at 10 community colleges across Oregon.

I am here today on behalf of community college students, faculty, and classified staff to ask you to join OEA in increasing our collective advocacy to secure at least \$647 million for the Community College Support Fund. Like their colleagues at K-12 institutions, OEA's community college members depend on state funding to be able to fulfill their missions. As you know, community colleges play a critical role in workforce development, particularly career and technical education. Oregon will never fully meet this challenge until we begin to fully fund our CTE pathway K-14.

- 92% of Oregonians believe it is important to increase funding for CTE and technical education at Oregon's community colleges, making it the number-one priority for new investment.
- 87% of Oregonians surveyed said the state should expand college scholarships and grants for low-income people.

Our members who work at community colleges are also passionate about fulfilling the mission of access and social justice. Faculty and staff members take seriously their role of providing the students they support with a pathway out of poverty and a tool for economic mobility—particularly those students who have no higher education alternative. This is the true mission we need to invest in with Oregon's community colleges.

As a Lane Community College Board member, my hope is to be able to spend my tenure helping the college expand to serve more students, to restore programming, and to make college more accessible for students. As a teacher in the Eugene 4-J School District, I want to know my students have options for accessing higher education. And as an OEA Board Member,

6900 SW Atlanta St. | Portland, OR 97223 | 503.684.3300 | www.oregoned.org

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS TO HELP STUDENTS SUCCEED



I want to advocate for my faculty and classified staff colleagues. Collective advocacy to ensure sufficient and stable funding for community college can make these dreams a reality.

As HECC board members, you know as well as I do what will happen if community colleges do not get the support they need from the legislature in 2019. They will be faced with nothing but difficult options: dramatically raise tuition rates, or start cutting the programs and support their communities and students rely upon.

Additionally, I'm also here today to ask for your support of House Bill 3280. This bill would grant voting rights to the current non-voting advisory members and add a voting position for a graduate student. It is vital that the people most affected by the decisions of this body have a say in the decisions this body makes. HECC decisions have far-reaching implications for the current non-voting members. It's time to empower all voices on the HECC.

Thank you for your service on the HECC and for your time today.

Sincerely,

Lisa Fragala
Oregon Education Association
Lane Community College Board