

Oregon Financial Aid and Equity: HB 2093 and Oregon Opportunity Grant Funding

In 2021, the wealthiest Oregon student qualifying for an Oregon Promise grant received \$3,981 to attend an Oregon community college, while the most in-need Oregon student attending a state university received only \$3,612. Under the current financial aid structure, **a high-family income student can receive \$369 more in state financial aid.**

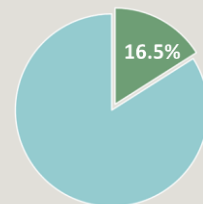
Of the approximately \$200m distributed biennially to Oregon students, about \$35m is devoted to students who do not receive the Oregon Opportunity Grant, and about **\$16m goes to students from families with incomes above \$100,000 per year.**

The minimum Oregon Promise award, granted to low income students, is frozen at \$1,000, but the maximum award increases with increases in tuition, so this inequitable distribution gets worse over time.

Meanwhile, in a decade-long period ending in 2019, Oregon only served 16.5% of OOG-eligible students.

HB 2093 seeks to make the Oregon Promise a more equitable program, by, amongst other changes: doubling the minimum award to \$2,000, indexing it to tuition cost increases, and eliminating the \$50 per term co-pay, which disproportionately impacts low income students and is a greater portion of their total award.

From 2009-2019, more than **2 million** applications for financial aid qualified as OOG-eligible.



Due to limited funds, only **16.5%** of these students received an OOG award.

But even these changes don't correct the fundamental problem: **student financial aid is critically underfunded in Oregon.**

Educational attainment	U.S. Annual earnings	White	Underrepresented Populations (Black, Hispanic, Native American, and Native Hawaiian combined)
Graduate degree	\$83,372	14%	7%
Bachelor's degree	\$64,896	23%	13%
Associate degree	\$46,124	19%	18%
Some college, no degree	\$43,316	16%	16%
High school diploma	\$38,792	22%	25%
Less than a high school diploma	\$30,784	7%	22%

Oregon is **25th** in the nation in per FTE student financial aid funding, and **34th** in the nation in per student institutional funding. Oregon's public institutions are expensive, and few students receive enough financial aid to close the gap.

Financial aid isn't just a leg up, it's a lifeline into career wage jobs and stable, lifelong economic opportunities that are too often

denied to underrepresented populations. **97% of above-average wage jobs will require a post-secondary credential this decade.**

The Oregon Opportunity Grant is the one program that