

---

**Docket Item:**

February Legislative Update

*Legislative Session Underway*

The even-year short session is now underway, having convened February 1. The majority of legislation must pass out of its first committee no later than February 14, and if required to be passed to a second policy committee, be again passed no later than February 24. March 7 sees the constitutional end of session, although it is possible that session will adjourn *sine die* prior to the constitutional deadline.

The short timeline means a flurry of activity is underway, constricted only by limits on the number of bills that can be introduced by members and committees. Despite these limitations, the HECC policy agenda is robust. This is unusual for a short session, as there is not a statewide policy or budget development process in advance of the short session. The HECC agenda is the result of direct engagement with the Governor's office and in being an agency responsible for the management of the priorities of the Governor as she works through what will likely be her final legislative session in office.

*HECC and Governor's Office Supported Legislation*

SB 1545 – Future Ready Oregon: Governor Brown's \$200 million workforce investment providing training assistance and support for targeted sectors. Information on Future Ready Oregon is contained in a subsequent docket item. STATUS: Vote scheduled in Senate Labor and Business 2/10.

SB 1522 – Senate Education Omnibus Package: HECC supports this bill for provisions it contains modifying the Oregon Promise program in the following ways:

- Doubling the minimum award amount from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and indexing increases to future tuition hikes
- Eliminating the \$50/term co-payment
- Decreasing the GPA requirement from 2.5 to 2.0
- Eliminating the first year experience requirement

In addition to these provisions, the bill also contains provisions that:

- Allow employees of education service districts to serve on the Transfer Council
- Provide in-state tuition and eligibility for state financial aid to individuals on humanitarian parole, asylum status, temporary protected status, or conditional permanent residency
- Align state tuition law with federal law with regard to tuition charged to veterans
- Alter the provisions of HB 3294 (2021) allowing the Commission to develop a more nuanced rule regarding the placement of free menstrual products on campuses
- Require the Department of Corrections to develop a plan to deploy equipment and infrastructure in Coffee Creek Correctional Facility and Snake River Correctional Institution to provide online access to education programs
- Ease the burden of calculating faculty eligibility for health care benefits and altering the calculation to account for faculty with highly uneven term-to-term schedules

(STATUS: Vote scheduled in Senate Education 2/10)

Bill Number TBD – Tribal Student Grant: Gov. Brown is advocating for a \$30m investment to fund the higher education expenses of enrolled members of Oregon-based tribes. This investment would:

- Provide a grant to any recognized member of an Oregon-based tribe, regardless of current state of residency
- Support students as they work toward their first associates, bachelor's, and master's degrees.

- Improve access to Oregon public and non-profit institutions of higher education
- Eliminate unaffordable costs students face by providing grants that ensure the most significant sources of educational expenses are covered
- Allow Oregon tribes to continue to support their member students however they choose
- Create a dedicated fund that can receive private and tribal donations, to help ensure the longevity of the program

(STATUS: Stakeholder engagement ongoing. Language expected to be inserted in SB 1522 or another bill in the Ways and Means Committee or Education Subcommittee)

*Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education*

The legislative Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education is on hiatus for the duration of the February session. However, it held two large group planning meetings in January to gather input on its schedule and activities. As a result, the Task Force has established a tentative work plan. The currently proposed schedule of activities from March to July is as follows:

Region/Topic	Cities	University	Community College	Time Frame
Portland Metro, (virtual)		PSU*, OIT-Wilsonville, OHSU	PCC, MHCC, Clackamas CC*	March 30/31?
Willamette Valley (virtual?)	Eugene, Corvallis, Albany, Salem, Monmouth	UO, OSU, WOU	Lane CC, LBCC, Chemeketa CC*	April 13/14?
<b>Admissions</b>				<b>April 21</b>
Eastern Oregon (I-84)	The Dalles, Pendleton, La Grande, Ontario	EOU	CGCC*, BMCC*, TVCC*	May 10/11/12?
<b>Financial aid</b>				<b>May 19</b>
Central Oregon	Bend, Klamath Falls	OSU Cascades, OIT	COCC, KCC	June 1/2?
<b>Retention</b>				<b>June 16</b>
Oregon Coast & Southern Oregon	Coos Bay, Ashland, Grants Pass	SOU	SOCC, RCC, UCC	July 20/21
<b>Graduation &amp; workforce</b>				<b>July 20</b>

Meeting dates highlighted in gold are task force meetings. Other meetings are site visits.

HECC staff is encouraged that the Task Force is electing to separate site visits and deliberative meetings, as this division allows for a greater examination of specific higher education topics, as is apparent in the above table. HECC has also been given the assignment of working to program Task Force meetings, by bringing in voices who are expert in either the topics of specific meetings, or issues of underrepresented student success or campus climate.

Site visit days (which may be multiple days per window) will be robust, with a tentative schedule as follows:

- Meeting with community leaders (1 hour)
- Meeting with faculty (1 hour)
- Meeting with student support staff (1 hour)
- Meeting with classified staff (1 hour)
- Student roundtable (2.5 hours)



- Site tours (1 hour)
- Public hearing (2 hours)

At the conclusion of the site visit period in July, the task force is expected to work on crafting recommendations for the 2023 legislative session.

**Staff Recommendation:**

No Commission action is required. This is an informational item.