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**Docket Item:**

Interim update on National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) study of Oregon's higher education landscape

**Background and Summary:**

In 2021, Governor Kate Brown encouraged Oregon's public colleges and universities to undertake a comprehensive study, conducted by nationally recognized experts, to utilize evidence and knowledge of emerging patterns to make recommendations for increased financial stability and collaboration among institutions to strengthen the entire ecosystem of higher education in Oregon.

In January, 2022 the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) and Oregon Council of Presidents (OCOP) contracted with NCHEMS to undertake a study to inform Oregon's statewide vision for higher education and increase partners' understanding of what is needed to effectively serve current and future students and the state and its various regions.

OCCA and OCOP requested that the study reflect the following principles shared by the organizations:

- All Oregonians should have access to quality, affordable higher education in every region of the State, with the understanding that the size, scope and structure of that education will vary depending upon the region's needs and demographics.
- Higher education institutions in Oregon must be committed to combating racism and other discriminatory ideologies, actively promoting and pursuing diversity, equity and inclusion.
- High quality learning experiences and student success are the paramount anchors of work in higher education.
- Higher education institutions in Oregon must be prepared to serve the needs and educational interests of all Oregonians including traditional and non-traditional students, learners from under-represented minority communities, and first-generation students – recognizing that the learning and student support needs of students will vary.
- Oregon, and its public higher education institutions, should utilize public dollars in the most effectively way possible to maximize outcomes, especially student access and success.
- Higher education institutions play a pivotal role in preparing the state's workforce and empowering a vibrant and sustainable economic future for Oregon.
- Knowledge generated by research can spur economic expansion, seed new companies with higher paying jobs, and support the economic vitality of the state.

In March, NCHEMS staff began to acquire and analyze student data, including from HECC. In May, NCHEMS staff undertook site visits to public universities and community colleges, meeting with institutional leadership, faculty and staff, students, leaders from community-based organizations, and stakeholders representing regional employers and economic and workforce development partners. Later this month, they will meet with HECC leadership. NCHEMS will conduct additional outreach to representatives from communities of color in July 2022 and will share draft recommendations with OCCA and OCOP at the beginning of August before finalizing their report by mid-August 2022.

Today, the Commission will receive an interim briefing on the study from Oregon Institute of Technology President Nagi Naganathan and Mt. Hood Community College President Lisa Skari.

**Staff Recommendation:**

For information and discussion only. No action is required at this time.