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**Docket Item:**

2023-25 Agency Request Budget (ARB) Development – Discussion of Proposed Financial Aid Policy Option Packages: (1) Oregon Tribal Student Grant and (2) Expansion of Oregon Opportunity and Oregon Promise Grants

**Summary:**

**Oregon Tribal Student Grant (OTSG):**

The Oregon Tribal Student Grant is new state financial aid program supported by the Oregon Legislature's 2022 historic investment in equitable college access and success for tribal students. It is designed to pay for public college-related expenses—including tuition, housing, books, and other costs not covered by other grants—for eligible students who are enrolled members of Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes. To date, 420 students have visited the application site and begun the process of applying for aid. In total, HECC anticipates that the program will serve approximately 700 Oregon tribal students in the 2022-23 academic year at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The Education Sub-Committee of the Joint Emergency Board has recommended disbursing the full amount requested, \$19 million, in the current biennium. HECC anticipates that this one-time funding will be approved by the full committee for the current biennium on 6/3/22.

To continue this historic investment and assist in meeting the state's equity goals, HECC is submitting the Oregon Tribal Student Grant Policy Option Package, to ensure that the program continues and receives approximately \$40 million to continue to serve both new and existing tribal students who are eligible for the program. Without this continuation package, many students who enroll this year will be left without the funds to complete their programs and no new students will be able to apply.

**Proposed Expansion of Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) and Oregon Promise (OP):**

HECC is continuing to pursue enhancements to the current Oregon Opportunity and Oregon Promise Grant programs. These enhancements will help to close the affordability gap for students, ensure sustainable funding for the program, and advance policy objectives important to the Commission.

Overall, the enhancements to the state's largest financial aid programs would be designed to increase investment in the program to provide students with tiered awards based on financial need and allow students to start in terms other than the fall. Award amounts would be designed to provide students with the highest needs the cost of tuition, fees, books, and supplies. Maximum EFC to receive OOG would be set at \$10,000, but awards would be prorated based on need. Overall estimated cost: \$530-734 million.

Some of the enhancements being considered for inclusion are:

- Establish permanent dedicated funding for degree completion. OOG statutes would allow for the change, but would require legislative changes to the Oregon Promise statute. Estimated cost: \$1 million.
- Expand OP to qualified students to enroll at any Oregon-eligible postsecondary institution, specifically four-year institutions. Estimated cost: \$38 million.
- Remove discounted accelerated credits for Oregon Promise program. Estimated cost: \$3.6 million per cohort.
- Remove OP grant's minimum GPA requirement. Estimated cost: \$3.3 million.
- Decouple tuition equity requirements from OOG eligibility requirements and align residency requirements for undocumented students with residency requirements for US citizens. Estimated cost: \$1.8 million.
- Create 1/4 and 3/4 time award amounts for OOG. Estimated cost to be determined.

**Docket Material:**

#3.3a OOG and Oregon Promise proposal modeling worksheet.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff is providing information on two priority policy option packages and specifically seeking input on any suggested modifications and/or prioritization of elements within the OOG/OP package.