



# Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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## August Agency Update:

August 2023 | Our partners can find previous quarterly Government-to-Government updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in the [Coordination with Tribes](#) section of our website.

**Featured Updates:** We are pleased to report on the outcomes of the Legislative Session for higher education and training in this update. Current and future learners will benefit from historic investments in financial aid and other critical postsecondary funding recently approved by the Oregon Legislature. We are grateful to Governor Kotek and legislators for prioritizing college affordability, student success, and workforce training for Oregonians. We also thank all our institution, community, and tribal partners who engaged and collaborated in the budget development process.

**Oregon Tribal Student Grant:** The 2023-24 Oregon Tribal Student Grant application is still open, and we encourage students to [start and complete an application at the earliest point possible](#). The Oregon Tribal Student Grant (OTSG) program is continued and funded for the 2023-2025 biennium. The HECC proposed related legislation and it was passed in HB 3565. As a result, the Oregon Tribal Student Grant (OTSG) is now part of Oregon law. The OTSG is expected to pay for most or all public undergraduate 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. Current and prospective students can learn more and

### Our Commission

#### OUR VISION:

*The State of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) envisions a future in which all Oregonians—and especially those whom our systems have underserved and marginalized—benefit from the transformational power of high-quality postsecondary education and training. [Learn more about our vision here](#). Oregon's [Strategic Roadmap for Postsecondary Education and Training](#), finalized in 2021, sets an ambitious path forward by describing how postsecondary systems, policies, and practices need to change in order to achieve Oregon's goals for educational attainment and equity.*

The HECC is the State of Oregon's Commission and agency working to improve equitable access to and success in higher education and workforce training for Oregonians statewide. Established in 2011, and vested with most of its current authorities in 2013, the HECC is a volunteer commission responsible for advising the Oregon Legislature and the Governor on higher education policy. The Commission is supported by an executive director who oversees eight offices of the agency. To learn more about the HECC, go to: [www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/hecc.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/hecc.aspx). [Sign up for newsletters and updates here](#).

### Upcoming Meetings:

**Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Oct 11-2, 2023. HECC Funding and Achievement Subcommittee:** Oct 11, 2023 (tentative). For other [upcoming public meetings of the HECC, see our website here](#). For [Affiliated Boards \(WTDB, others, see here\)](#). For email notices of upcoming public Commission meetings, or to sign up for our newsletter, go to [www.oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://www.oregon.gov/HigherEd). **Grant and Contracting Opportunities:** Explore all HECC [Grants and Contracting Opportunities here](#).

apply here. We thank Government-to-Government tribal partners for the close consultation and partnership with launching the grant and supporting applicants. We are very pleased to see the OTSG continue, now formally part of Oregon law, and we look forward to seeing it grow into the future serving more students at the undergraduate and graduate level. Current and prospective students can [learn more and apply here](#).

## **Funding and Policy Updates**

### Highlights of the State Postsecondary Education and Training Budget for 2023-25

We are pleased to report highlights of the postsecondary education and training budget approved by the Oregon Legislature in the HECC budget bill (HB 5025) as well as additional investments included in SB 5506 and HB 5005.

#### FINANCIAL AID AND ACCESS PROGRAMS

- \$100 million increase to the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG): Oregon's need-based financial aid program serving Oregonians with grants toward postsecondary expenses received a \$100 million increase for 2023-25, bringing the funding to \$308 million. With the added funding, the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) is increasing awards to up to 75 percent of average tuition for the lowest income Oregonians, and [recently posted the new OOG grant amount tables](#) with details on the tiered award amounts by need level. These need-based grants follow the students. For the first time, HECC is able to award the new 75 percent of average tuition to the highest need Oregonians whether or not these students attend a community college or a public university.
- \$24 million for continuation of the Oregon Tribal Student Grant: This recently launched grant program that reduces affordability barriers for members of Oregon's nine federally-recognized tribes attending eligible Oregon colleges is funded at \$24 million for 2023-25. Based on this amount, HECC will fully award students next year, and return to the Legislature if further appropriations are needed.
- Funding is continued at current service levels for Oregon Promise and the Oregon Student Child Care Grant. The National Guard State Tuition Assistance (ONGSTA) Program is increased by \$800,000.
- \$5 million for college access: A one-time investment of \$1 million each made in 2021-23 to five college access programs including ASPIRE (administered by HECC) is continued as another one-time investment for 2023-25.

#### PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITY FUNDS

- \$800 million for Community College Support: The educational and operational expenses at Oregon 17 community colleges (primarily through the Community College Support Fund) are funded at \$800 million, an increase above current service level.
- \$1 billion for Public University Support: The educational and operational expenses at seven public universities (through the Public University Support Fund) are funded at \$1 billion, also an increase above current service level.
- Up to \$25 million for university fiscal sustainability: Fiscal sustainability at the regional universities and Portland State University is supported by \$6.2 million that will be distributed in grants by the HECC, and up to \$18.7 million more in grant funds that may be considered by the Emergency Board.
- Funding is increased for the Statewide Public Service Programs (The Agricultural Experiment Station, Extension Services, and Forest Research Laboratory), and at current service level for the Public University State Programs and for Oregon Health and Science University with the addition of funding for certain programs.
- The Strong Start programs at the seven public universities, instituted during the pandemic to support student success, will have \$6.8 million to spend in 23-25 on a one-time basis.

- Increase of \$1.8 million to the Sports Action Lottery, which is dedicated primarily to scholarships for underrepresented and women’s intercollegiate athletes and graduate student scholarships.

#### ADDITIONAL WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION INVESTMENTS

- Reauthorization of Future Ready Oregon funds: The Legislature reauthorized \$111.8 million Other Funds in ARPA funding to continue HECC’s implementation of Future Ready Oregon, an investment package passed in 2022 that supports education and training Oregonians need for family-wage careers, with a focus on historically underserved communities.
- Continued funding for the Oregon Workforce Development System supporting regional workforce development activities directed by Oregon’s nine local workforce development boards and Youth Workforce Development investments administered by the HECC. A one-time investment of \$10 million made in 2021-23 the Oregon Conservation Corps is continued as another one-time investment for 2023-25.
- HECC IT Modernization Project is funded with expenditure limitation authority for bond proceeds from 21-23 biennium and the authority for new bond funding for Phase 2 of the Project.

#### CAPITAL BONDING AUTHORITY

- University Capital Funding: The budget funds additional bonding authority for Public University Capital Improvement and Renewal at \$100 million, along with bonding authority for six university projects totaling \$243.7 million, including the first three prioritized projects on the HECC capital list: University of Oregon’s Friendly Hall, Oregon State University’s Collaborative Innovation Complex, and Portland State University’s Vernier Science and Gateway Projects. In addition, the Legislature approved funding for the PSU Smith Memorial Union and the Oregon Tech Geothermal System Emergency Renovation.
- Community College Capital Funding: The budget funds bonding authority for five new community college (CC) capital construction projects totaling \$37.5 million, including Lane CC Science, Math, Engineering Building Renovation, Southwestern Oregon CC SUCCESS Project Building Remodels, Columbia Gorge CC The Dalles/Hood River Facility Renovations, Umpqua CC Welcome Center & Medical Careers Training Hub, and Portland CC Rock Creek Building 2 Complex. It also reauthorizes six existing community college capital projects through the upcoming sale of Article XI-G bonds.

#### **Other Affordability and Financial Aid News**

Oregon Student Aid Website: The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) continues to encourage visiting the Oregon Student Aid website at [OregonStudentAid.gov](https://oregonstudentaid.gov), the state website where Oregonians can go to apply for state-administered grants and scholarships to help afford their college goals, and to get help planning for college, training, or careers.

Application Open for Oregon Tribal Student Grant for 2023-24: As noted above, the [Oregon Tribal Student Grant application](https://oregonstudentaid.gov/grants/oregon-tribal-student-grant/) is now open for the 2023-24 school year for students planning to attend this fall. Current and continuing students who are members of Oregon’s nine federally recognized Tribes are eligible and encouraged to apply: <https://oregonstudentaid.gov/grants/oregon-tribal-student-grant/>.

Financial Aid Applications: To be eligible for most types of financial aid, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA). These applications compile financial information and other details about students and families, which the U.S. Department of Education and the State of Oregon use to determine financial need and eligibility for various financial aid opportunities. OSAC encourages Oregonians to [complete the FAFSA or ORSAA](#) and to apply for state grant programs at [OregonStudentAid.gov](https://oregonstudentaid.gov).

Oregon Promise Grant: Learn about applying for the [Oregon Promise Grant here.](#) The application for students who graduate between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 will open in mid-September 2023. [Deadline varies by graduation date for new students.](#) Renewal students simply submit the 2024-25 FAFSA or ORSAA by June 1, 2024.

OSAC offers the FAFSA Plus+ program for schools, community-based organizations, and other sites that work with a specific student population. Becoming a FAFSA Plus+ site allows an organization to upload a roster of students and then be able to see the FAFSA filing status for those students. Learn more and [sign up to become a FAFSA Plus+ site](#) for free.

OSAC continues our outreach and presentations across the state. Go online to [request support](#) from OSAC at an upcoming event or in a classroom, or to provide training to your students and communities. OSAC outreach is available to students, families, and career/college access staff across Oregon to provide support and guidance. [You can also sign up to receive our e-newsletters here.](#)

- [Free Publications and Posters](#): Order or download free posters and brochures here including the OSAC Poster—a quick reminder for students to apply for financial aid, including the FAFSA/ORSAA, grants, and scholarships. English and Spanish versions available.
- [Webinars](#): OSAC hosts a variety of webinars throughout the year for students, parents, and career/college practitioners. Our webinars provide up-to-date information about programs we serve.

Tribal Access to Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver: HECC-OSAC continues to be available to ensure tribal foster youth have access to the Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver program, which waives tuition and fees for the equivalent of four years of undergraduate studies after other public grants and any school aid are applied. Learn more about eligibility at [www.oregonstudentaid.gov](http://www.oregonstudentaid.gov). OSAC representatives would be pleased to help any tribal staff. Please contact [Kristin.Vreeland@state.or.us](mailto:Kristin.Vreeland@state.or.us).

ASPIRE Program: The ASPIRE (Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement) program helps educate Oregon students to become career and college ready. ASPIRE offers education, resources, and mentoring opportunities for all students. Student supports include 1:1 and group mentoring, activities that focus on career exploration, career and college research, admissions applications, scholarships, and financial aid. Tribes are welcome to join ASPIRE. [Learn more here.](#)

Join us for ASPIRE Conferences: This year OSAC is hosting three ASPIRE Fall Conferences, <https://oregonstudentaid.gov/aspire/events-and-training/> and we hope that many Oregon Tribal Representatives are able to join us, travel reimbursement is available, here are the specific registration links:

- [Portland- September 29th](#)
- [Bend- October 6th](#)
- [Ashland- October 13](#)

PARTNER NEWS: More Oregon Students Now Qualify for Affordable Child Care Program: The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) and Early Learning Division (ELD) of the Oregon Department of Education in early 2023 announced expanded eligibility for affordable childcare through the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program. Many families will qualify for more childcare assistance, including students for study time and caretakers who work night shifts. [Learn more here.](#)

### **Supporting Learner Pathways and Student Success**

Commission Adopts Rules on Policy-making Processes Related to Streamlining Student Transfer: Through statewide faculty collaboration, the HECC and Oregon's public institutions are working together to streamline the transfer of credits from community colleges to universities in order to save transfer

students time and money, and support their success. The collaboration, public processes, and consensus-building work to develop statewide transfer articulation policies is currently performed with the [Transfer Council](#), a Council that advises the HECC on establishing transfer policies. The legislation that created the Transfer Council, SB 233 (2021), requires all public higher education institutions to better align high-demand majors like Business and Computer Science by the creation of Major Transfer Maps to help students transfer successfully. At its [August 10 Commission meeting](#), the Commission unanimously approved administrative rules defining institutional participation and the process for creating Major Transfer Maps. These rules were developed after a year of discussions with the Transfer Council and institution partners. The new rules will help ensure that the alignment of the first two years of some high demand majors are completed in a timely manner. To stay updated on this work, [subscribe to the new Transfer Hub newsletter](#).

Future Ready Oregon Industry Consortia: The HECC has started convening the Industry Consortia, a component of the Future Ready Oregon investment package. Three separate, statewide industry consortia represent the healthcare, manufacturing, and technology industry sectors. The consortium meetings are [public and details can be found here](#). The purpose of each consortium is to establish strategic partnerships, develop structured processes to address mutual industry goals, identify industry-specific workforce needs in this state, develop recruitment strategies to increase equitable participation, and promote workforce development programs and activities in the priority industry sectors.

Academic Program Approvals: At its June and August Commission meetings, the HECC approved the following new academic programs at Oregon's colleges and universities. Read more about these programs in the [meeting materials here](#).

#### Community Colleges:

- Blue Mountain Community College: Unmanned Aircraft Systems, AAS
- Central Oregon Community College: Community Health, Certificate of Completion (less than one year)
- Chemeketa Community College: Fire Suppression, AAS; Firefighter-EMT, CC (less than one year); Education Support Professionals, CC (less than one year); High School CTE Technology License, CC (less than one year)
- Clackamas Community College, Project Management, AAS
- Southwestern Oregon Community College: Agroecology, AAS; Water Quality Treatment, AAS  
Umpqua Community College: Accounting Certificate, CC (one year); Expert Systems, Automation, Machine Learning and Robotics, CC (less than one year); Mechatronics, AAS; Mechatronics Certificate, CC (one year); Medical Assisting Certificate, CC (one year); and Water Quality Technology, AAS

#### Public Universities:

- Eastern Oregon University: Masters of Social Work
- Portland State University: BA/BS Chicano/Latino Studies; BA/BS Business Economics

### **New Reports and Other Updates**

Impact of Past Oregon Public Higher Education Investments (Fiscal Year 2022) Highlighted in National SHEF Report: The State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)'s [FY2022 State Higher Education Finance \(SHEF\) report](#) examines the trends, context, and consequences of state higher education funding decisions through fiscal year 2022. The HECC Office of Postsecondary Finance and Capital has [highlighted key Oregon funding trends based on this national report in a short summary here](#). The HECC uses this report frequently because it reflects the most reliable available data for national comparisons of overall public investment in higher education. The experience of individual Oregon institutions or sectors is likely to differ from this overall picture. The SHEEO [press release on national trends](#) can be read here, and the [SHEEO dashboard on Oregon data is available here](#).

101 Report on the State of Oregon Higher Education and Training: In April, the HECC released a [101 report on the state of Oregon postsecondary education and training today](#). This report is drawn from numerous presentations that the HECC gave in April to the Legislature's Joint Ways and Means Committee, Education Subcommittee on the impact of the state investment in the comprehensive postsecondary education and training system.