

**Docket Item: 7.0 - ACTION ITEM:** Columbia Gorge Community College, Chemeketa Community College, Linn-Benton Community College, Rogue Community College, and Treasure Valley Community College: Education, Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS Education)

### **Summary**

The colleges of the BASE Consortium have submitted program applications for a Bachelor of Applied Science, Education degree. This submission is Phase Three of a three-phase process. HECC staff have completed a comprehensive review of the submitted program application materials to ensure all criteria have been met. After analysis, HECC staff have approved the colleges to move to the Commission meeting for approval. The complete detailed staff summary is provided starting on page two.

### **Overview of Submission Process**

Review and approval of the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) is a three-step submission process:

- Phase One: Notification of Statement of Need
- Phase Two: Notification of Notice of Application
- **Phase Three: Final Program Approval**

### **Bachelor Of Applied Science – Education: Overview of Process, Need, and Timeline**

#### **State Context and Problem Identification**

Following legislative approval allowing Oregon community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees, school superintendents and principals, particularly those serving small, rural, and remote districts, approached several community colleges to discuss ongoing difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified, licensed teachers. In response, five colleges (Columbia Gorge, Chemeketa, Linn-Benton, Rogue, and Treasure Valley) worked with K–12 partners to document the specific barriers they were seeing in their regions. The subsections below summarize these barriers, including limited supply and high turnover, recruitment challenges in rural and remote areas, and the underuse of local school staff who are interested in becoming teachers. This work laid the foundation for the formation of the Bachelor of Applied Science – Education (BASE) Consortium.

#### **Limited Supply and High Turnover**

Rural and remote school districts continue to experience a limited supply of qualified teachers, in part because few trained educators are willing or able to relocate to these



communities. Teachers hired from outside the area often leave when positions become available closer to their home communities, creating ongoing instability for students and schools. In addition, teachers who complete online, out of state preparation programs tend to leave the profession earlier and at higher rates than teachers who are prepared in Oregon.

### **Recruitment Challenges**

Teaching jobs in rural and remote communities are often less attractive than positions in more populated areas. Prospective teachers and their families may face limited job opportunities for spouses or partners, inadequate and hard to find rental housing, and social isolation when trying to settle into small, closeknit communities. These conditions, combined with reduced access to recreation, arts, dining, shopping, and extracurricular opportunities for children, make it difficult for many districts to recruit and keep educators who did not grow up in the area.

As noted in [Recruiting Teachers in Rural and Remote Regions](#) (CCNetwork Content Center, 2026), rural educators are more likely to remain in their roles when they have personal or family ties to the community. However, staffing needs exceed these local teaching positions, particularly in regions without nearby educator preparation programs.

### **Untapped Local Workforce**

At the same time, superintendents and principals identified a strong pool of potential future teachers already working in their schools. Many of these individuals are interested in becoming licensed teachers but cannot leave their jobs, relocate, or significantly disrupt family responsibilities to attend a traditional teacher preparation program. They are also deeply rooted in their communities through homeownership, children enrolled in local schools, and partners' employment, which makes them especially likely to stay and teach locally if accessible pathways are available.

### **Institutional Response and Formation of BASE**

Prior to January 2025, five community colleges (Columbia Gorge, Chemeketa, Linn-Benton, Rogue, and Treasure Valley) evaluated the feasibility of offering a bachelor's degree in education. Each institution worked with college leadership to assess regional workforce needs, institutional capacity, and the time and cost required to develop a new program.

Across all institutions, the findings were consistent: rural communities face a significant and ongoing shortage of certified teachers; existing university-based programs do not adequately serve place-bound, working adult students; and local school



employees represent a viable and committed pipeline of future educators. Through research and direct engagement with school district leaders, the colleges heard a clear, recurring message about the need for accessible, local teacher preparation pathways. **Table 7.0a** lists districts and organizations that submitted letters of support for the BASE proposal.

### **Formation of the Consortium**

In January 2025, the five colleges formed the Bachelor of Applied Science – Education (BASE) Consortium, modeled on Oregon’s existing Bachelor of Science: Nursing Consortium structure. The consortium was designed to address shared regional workforce needs, serve rural and remote communities, provide pathways for working adults, and offer specializations in Special Education and English as a Second Language.

At the same time, these colleges began developing the internal structures needed to support this collaborative model, including bylaws and governance frameworks, communication and decision-making processes, and shared resource strategies and responsibilities.

### **Evidence of Rural Teacher Shortages**

Multiple data sources confirm a persistent gap between the demand for qualified teachers and the available workforce in Oregon’s rural communities. [\*Oregon workforce reports from the Oregon Longitudinal Data Collaborative\*](#) (August 2025) document ongoing challenges in teacher preparation, hiring, and retention, while national data from the [\*Learning Policy Institute\*](#) (2024) show that rural schools face greater difficulty filling vacancies, particularly in specialized subject areas. Oregon educator workforce data, including the Oregon Equity Report (2022), further highlight that shortages disproportionately affect rural communities and students of color.

### **Contributing Factors**

Several factors contribute to these shortages. Rural districts often have small local applicant pools and experience higher turnover when they hire teachers from outside the area. Geographic isolation and limited incentives for relocation reduce the number of candidates willing to relocate, while rising education costs and unpaid student-teaching requirements create additional barriers for prospective teachers. At the same time, rural schools often have fewer financial resources, making it more difficult to compete for talent and sustain long-term staffing plans.



## **Rationale for a BAS - Education Consortium**

The Bachelor of Applied Science – Education allows community colleges to offer an applied, workforce focused pathway that complements existing university programs rather than duplicating them. It provides an upper division option that builds directly on community college strengths, serving working adults, offering flexible delivery, and partnering closely with local employers to address regional educator workforce needs.

## **Role of the BASE Consortium**

The BASE Consortium provides a coordinated, community college–led response to Oregon’s educator workforce needs in rural and remote regions by expanding access to high quality teacher preparation for place bound and working adult students. It leverages existing K–12 partnerships and local school employees to build “grow your own” pathways, supports equity by improving access to licensed teachers for students in underserved communities, and aligns program capacity with documented regional shortages in Special Education and English as a Second Language (ESL).

## **Program Approval Process and Timeline**

The BASE proposal has progressed through the standard multi-phase approval process for applied baccalaureate degrees at Oregon community colleges, which includes a Statement of Need, a 90-day public and university review period, a Notice of Application, and a final Program Application for Commission decision. At each phase, submissions are reviewed, and feedback is provided by a cross-office team from the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) and the Office of Academic Policy and Authorization (APA), along with opportunities for public testimony at Commission meetings. The timeline below summarizes how the five consortium colleges have moved through these steps from January 2025 to the present.

### **January 2025**

- Decision to form a five-college consortium focused on the teacher pipeline in rural, remote, and working adult populations, and including specialization areas in Special Education and ESL.
- Launch of *Phase I: Statement of Need*

### **May 2025**

- Consortium colleges submit Statements of Need (SON) to CCWD
- Initial review by staff identified incomplete responses in four submissions. Colleges revised and resubmitted SONs



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- All five SONs are approved by staff and placed on the June Commission agenda

### **June 2025**

- Commission notified of SON approvals
- *90-day waiting period* initiated for public and university comment
- Consortium begins *Phase II: Notice of Application*

### **Summer–September 2025**

- Oregon universities submit letters expressing concerns, and the consortium meets with university partners to address concerns. **Table 7.ob** provides an overview of letters of concern that have been received regarding the BASE proposal.
- CCWD facilitates two meetings between public and private universities and consortium colleges, resulting in increased collaborative efforts for existing partnerships.
- Universities invite BASE to join the Oregon Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (OACTE) to continue the collaboration

### **October–November 2025**

- BASE actively engages and participates in the October OACTE meeting.
- Preparation and submission of Notices of Application (NOA)
- Continued collaboration with university partners
- NOAs placed on the December Commission docket

### **December 2025**

- *Advancement to Phase III: Program Application*
- Commission questions and both written and verbal public testimony, some in support and some opposed or raised concerns, lead to extending the approval timeline to April 2026.

### **December 2025 – January 2026**

- Submission of Program Applications via Webforms
- Staff review team approves all five applications with no revisions for Commission's consideration.
- Applications are placed on the April 2026 Commission docket



## **Review and Revision Process**

For Phase I and Phase II submissions, colleges use standard rubrics—applied consistently across all applied baccalaureate proposals—to develop their materials, and staff use those same rubrics to review submissions for completeness and alignment with approval standards. If needed, submissions are returned with comments, and colleges typically have about one week to revise and resubmit. Common revision needs include sections that assume more background knowledge than readers are likely to have and rubric components that are not fully addressed. These revisions do not change program design; they are intended to improve clarity, completeness, and responsiveness to the stated criteria.

## **University Partnerships and Collaboration**

During the 90-day review period, HECC staff convened meetings that brought together consortium representatives, public and private four-year teacher education leaders, and HECC staff. Topics of conversation included potential duplication, program quality, the impact of new community college bachelor's degrees on existing educator preparation programs, and the use of limited state resources. The meetings provided a forum for focused discussion of program alignment and gaps. They led to an increased recognition that existing four-year programs do not fully meet the needs of place-bound adult learners.

As the proposal advanced, some of these concerns were also shared through public testimony at Commission meetings. At the same time, the collaboration led to several positive next steps: two university representatives joined the BASE advisory committee, and the consortium was invited to participate in the Oregon Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACTE). These partnerships support ongoing coordination and alignment across educator preparation systems.

## **Alignment with the Five Standards of Program Approval**

HECC staff reviewed the BASE Consortium proposal for alignment with the five program approval standards, Need, Alignment, Collaboration, Design, and Capacity. The Standards are used to determine whether the program is consistent with statutory and policy expectations for new community college bachelor's degrees. The individual answers can be found at: [Columbia Gorge Community College Five Standards](#); [Chemeketa Community College Five Standards](#); [Linn-Benton Community College Five Standards](#); [Rogue Community College Five Standards](#); and [Treasure Valley Community College Five Standards](#). The sections below summarize how the proposal addresses each standard.



### **Standard 1 – Need**

Oregon Employment Department data, surveys of principals and superintendents, and evidence of student interest all point to a clear and ongoing need for additional teacher preparation capacity, with strong demand for flexible, part-time options that work for place-bound and working adult students. Persistent shortages are most acute in rural areas and in Special Education and English as a Second Language, and Oregon Educator Report data indicate that more than 2,000 underprepared teachers have been hired under emergency or restricted licenses in recent years. Existing university programs help meet some of these needs but often require relocation for coursework and student teaching. In addition, alignment with community college transfer patterns or the schedules of working adults still need refinement.

### **Standard 2 – Collaboration**

Program development has included extensive engagement with K–12 leaders and school districts, as well as input from current and prospective students. Colleges have sought guidance from the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and the nationwide Community College Baccalaureate Association. They have also convened an active advisory committee with members from across regions. Collaboration with universities through the Oregon Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACTE) supports ongoing coordination and alignment across educator preparation providers.

### **Standard 3 – Alignment**

The proposed curriculum is aligned with the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) licensure requirements and guided by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) and the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) standards. It builds on strong transfer pathways from Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer (AAOT), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) programs, with additional dual-credit pathways from high school. The program supports Oregon’s “Grow Your Own” initiatives by incorporating place-based practicum and paid clinical experiences where possible and offering flexible delivery options, including evening, hybrid, and work-based learning formats.

### **Standard 4 – Design**

The program’s design includes upper-division coursework in pedagogy, child



development, and instructional practice, paired with progressive clinical experiences that move from classroom observations to practicum and then to full-time residency. Clinical placements are local whenever possible, often in students' current workplaces, and are supported by a capstone seminar, action research, performance-based assessments, and continuous program improvement informed by data and advisory input. Student supports include dedicated advising and career services, flexible scheduling, and paid internship opportunities, where available.

### **Standard 5 – Capacity**

The consortium builds on existing faculty expertise, facilities, and partnerships, and uses hybrid and online delivery to minimize additional infrastructure needs. A shared consortium model reduces costs and supports a target student-to-faculty ratio of approximately 30:1, with an initial cohort of approximately six students from each consortium college. Additional capacity is provided through technology and digital learning tools, ongoing updates to the curriculum and assessments, access to research databases, and partner contributions, such as practicum placements, mentor teachers, and site-based supervision. Library resources, including research databases, eBooks, streaming media, and textbook and technology lending, further support student learning and program delivery.

### **University Program Landscape**

Oregon universities offer a range of teacher preparation programs with varying levels of flexibility. Some include online or hybrid coursework, but many require synchronous participation or in-person components, and student teaching placements are often geographically restricted. Lower-division coursework frequently must be completed on campus.

While these programs exist and generally have capacity, they do not consistently meet the needs of place-bound students, working adults, and rural communities that cannot easily access campus-based or geographically limited options. **Table 7.0e** provides a brief overview of programs that were easily identifiable and are provided by universities.

### **Workforce Gap vs. Layoffs: Key Consideration**

Recent layoffs in some large school districts have raised understandable questions about the overall need for additional teacher-preparation capacity. The key distinction is that urban areas tend to experience cyclical staffing changes tied to budget conditions, while many rural regions continue to face persistent, long-term shortages. Statewide data continue to show shortages in Special Education and English as a Second Language, and many rural districts rely on long-term substitutes or underprepared teachers to fill classrooms. When teachers relocate to rural areas and later return to positions closer to



where they live, it further destabilizes staffing in rural schools. See **Table 7.0c** Commission Meetings Public Comment Summary – In Person or Online; and **Table 7.0d** Commission Meetings Public Comment Summary – Written.

### **Assessment of Ongoing Need**

Taken together, the approval process to date, alignment with the five program approval standards, analysis of the existing university landscape, persistent workforce gaps, and feedback received through public testimony indicate a clear and ongoing need for the BASE Consortium. *The core issue is not the overall number of licensed teachers in Oregon, but the distribution and retention of educators, particularly in rural communities, alongside budget-driven staffing reductions in some districts.* By focusing on place-bound individuals already embedded in their communities, the BASE Consortium strengthens local workforce stability. It supports the long-term retention of qualified teachers in hard-to-staff regions. The BASE Consortium is committed to reviewing the enrollment and student outcomes being achieved by this innovative model. As part of the ongoing assessment of the need, the BASE consortium will work with HECC staff to review data and make recommendations for any programmatic changes approximately three years after the start of the first cohort. This should allow a preliminary baseline of data for continuous program improvement and continued work in alignment and strengthening partnerships with already existing programs. In addition, the BASE Consortium agrees to cap enrollment in the program at 50 students per cohort, statewide, for the first three years.

### **Conclusion**

The BASE Consortium represents a comprehensive, data-informed response to Oregon’s educator workforce challenges. By aligning program design with regional workforce needs and removing barriers for place-bound students, the consortium expands access to teacher preparation, strengthens rural educator pipelines, improves retention through community-based pathways, and supports a more equitable distribution of qualified teachers across the state.



**Material:**

- 7.0a - Letters of Support for BASE Table
- 7.0b - Letters of Concern for Bachelor of Applied Science – Education Table
- 7.0c - Commission Meetings Public Comment Summary – In Person or Online Table
- 7.0d - Commission Meetings Public Comment Summary – Written Table
- 7.0e - Services Provided by Universities Table
- 7.0f - Presentation of Education Consortium Bachelor of Applied Science PowerPoint

**Staff Recommendation**

The HECC Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development recommends the approval of the following programs: Columbia Gorge Community College, Chemeketa Community College, Linn-Benton Community College, Rogue Community College, and Treasure Valley Community College: Education, Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS Education). In addition, it is recommended that staff continue to participate in the BASE Consortium meetings and actively engage in the ongoing need assessment as outlined above.

**Recommended Motion**

Move to approve the following programs: Columbia Gorge Community College, Chemeketa Community College, Linn-Benton Community College, Rogue Community College, and Treasure Valley Community College: Education, Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS Education).