



HECC STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Reporting Period: Q2, 2026

Date: May 1, 2026

Goal 1: Relevance

Goal Sponsor: Amy Cox

Strategy 1: Foster Equitable Workforce Outcomes

Description: Prioritize programs and experiences that connect underserved learners with sustainable wages, in-demand careers, and equitable advancement opportunities.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/ Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
1.1	Identify existing HECC mechanisms that support this Strategy, as well as ones that could be created. Consult the report of the Joint Legislative Task Force for Underrepresented Students Success in Higher Education (JTUSSHE).	Staff have identified areas where HECC work is and is not advancing JTUSSHE recommendations and completed a report detailing this.	No additional work is underway as the activity is complete. HECC can use the report's conclusions as criteria for deciding projects/programs/grants to pursue.	Competing priorities have limited new investments, but this work clarifies where agency work needs to expand to support underserved learners and prepare them for strong employment outcomes.	Complete
1.2	Develop graphical reports that show employment/earnings outcomes by major/institution. Develop an approach for sharing these reports with institutional leaders.	Prototype reports have been workshopped by multiple offices within the agency.	Finalizing prototype reports and incorporate feedback from agency leadership. Staff anticipates final versions will be ready to publish within one to two months.	Two things have slowed the work over the last two months: A staff member leaving HECC & migration of the community college data system (for security reasons) have temporarily diverted staff to mandated work.	Nearly on track



Strategy 2: Connect Postsecondary Education and Training to Workforce Needs

Description: Facilitate and streamline partnerships between employers and postsecondary education and training, prioritizing essential employability and in-demand technical skills.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/ Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
2.1	Establish a common approach to Talent Assessments, including common research questions and framework.	A framework was completed in Q4, 2025.	None, activity completed.	Not applicable, activity complete.	Complete
2.2	Create, update, and/or significantly expand access for 1-5 industry-related credentials.	Activity was included on all of the industry consortia work plans for 2026-27. Diane Vidmantas, Manufacturing Consortium Strategist, is building a workforce supply/demand dashboard to assist the consortia in making data-informed decisions about which credentials should be prioritized. Future Ready Oregon and WTDB staff have drafted RFAs that will fund the development, modification, and expansion of short-term, Workforce Pell aligned credentials in key industries.	RFAs will be posted in the next month. Data dashboard needs to be validated by R&D.	Doing this work through the industry consortia maximizes relevance, buy-in, & probably implementation, as necessary parties are at the table. The same factors that support the work (working with industry consortia where necessary parties are present) can also make decisions & implementation take longer than staff-only work.	On track



Strategy 3: Contribute to Solving Community Problems

Description: Increase the proportion of postsecondary learners who work to solve public problems and can collaborate across different perspectives and experiences.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/ Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
3.1	Creation of a Statewide Series of Civic Engagement Training Modules	This work is in planning stages and is incorporating institutional requirements and the results of Strategic Activity 1.1 (comparison of agency work to recommendations of JTUSSHE report).	Completed the compilation of institutional requirements and combined them with AmeriCorps materials to form draft module content.	The results of Strategic Activity 1.1 clarified that centralizing materials can help advance the JTUSSHE recommendations and supported this work.	On track

Goal 2: Alignment

Goal Sponsor: Jim Pinkard

Strategy 5: Support transitions for high school students, GED completers, and adults into postsecondary education and training.

Description: In collaboration with partners, establish a shared goal for postsecondary participation and implement practices, programs, and policies to achieve it.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/ Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
5.1	Hold monthly, cross-office learning sessions for HECC staff who work on programs and	Staff have been delving into the HECC-administered programs for adult learners. In January and February, staff researched	Staff to explore how the lessons learned from the Future Ready Oregon Workforce Benefits	The challenges are related to the indeterminate impact on the adult learner workgroup of the Title I and WIOA move to OED from the HECC.	On track

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/ Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
	initiatives that serve adult learners.	the ways Title I and Title II supports adults. In March and April, staff discussed the impact that moving WIOA, Title I to OED would have on the workgroup. Staff are in the process of discussing how the revisions in state's goals for educational attainment will shape the activity. For now, staff have adopted targeted universalism as the framework to identify priorities for adult learners.	Navigators program can help build awareness of programs and connection with those that can benefit.		
5.2	By mid-2026, report on (a) existing ASPIRE activities and impact; (b) steps that ASPIRE has taken during 2025-26 to increase impact on learners despite resource constraints; and (c) 5 year goals for the development of the program. Development of a related 2027-29 POP.	ASPIRE has taken several steps outlined in the activity including only conducting site visits to sites in establishing phase, sending weekly emails with resources, hosting virtual meetings for site support, fewer fall conferences down from 2 to 1, not recruiting new sites, being reactive to sites instead of proactive, and putting middle school programming on hold.	ASPIRE continues drafting of a five-year strategic plan for review by OSAC leadership.	ASPIRE staff is facing reduced grants by 43% and increased caseloads, affecting their ability to support activity 5.2.	Nearly on track
5.3	A proposal for a state FAFSA completion	HECC and ODE explored options for including FAFSA/ORSA completion	HECC staff are preparing to provide webinars to ODE	After OSAC consultation with the SB3 team at ODE, there is limited capacity to advance	Delayed

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/ Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
	requirement for high school seniors.	as a high school graduation requirement as part of SB3. ODE ultimately determined that this would be a better fit for inclusion in the standards for the .5 credit required under SB3, but not a statutory graduation requirement.	covering FAFSA/ORSAA elements and financial aid implications, which will inform ongoing ODE efforts to promote completion.	legislation mandating FAFSA/ORSAA completion as part of HS graduation requirements, with efforts pivoting to education strategies through the mandated .5 credit addition.	
5.4	A plan for a broad public information campaign that increases awareness about and engagement in postsecondary education, which should include options for a sustained effort, and should emphasize lower-cost, high-visibility campaign options.	Staff have met with graduate school marketing department partners and discussed a model for student participation and support in campaign development. Structures to support such an engagement have been mapped out, including an internship model or part-time employment opportunities for students.	Coordination has been delayed due to staffing bandwidth to prepare a structure in time for spring term. Staff to reengage partners with a proposal in the summer for target implementation in the 2026 academic year.	None reported.	Delayed



Strategy 6: Connect learning across the education continuum.

Description: Partner with K-12 and postsecondary education and training providers to align standards in support of straightforward transitions, including simplified transfer pathways.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
6.1	Establishment of a transferable lower division block, likely organized around learning outcomes, that satisfies general education requirements at all 24 public institutions.	The scope of the charge has been refined with input from the Transfer Council; the block will now provide guaranteed completion of all lower-division general education requirements and allow for upper-division requirements at the institutions that have them.	The Transfer Council approved a faculty subcommittee charge and HECC approved a summer stipend for the faculty. HECC staff is recruiting for the subcommittee with anticipated appointment by the Council at their May meeting. Work to begin in June.	None reported.	On track
6.2	Analysis of HECC outreach efforts, with particular attention to gaps and opportunities.	Staff have redefined focus of outreach efforts, determined outcomes, and met with HECC internal partners to review.	Next steps include cataloging outreach efforts within HECC offices, focusing on community outreach separate from HECC learner communications, and collecting data from OSAC/ASPIRE sites on use of publications and outreach.	Learnings so far include agreement on a strong definition of community engagement, and a common understanding of next steps to understand HECC outreach	On track



Strategy 7: Strengthen Postsecondary to Employment Transitions

Description: Identify, encourage, and incentivize programs that support education to career transitions.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
7.1	Stabilize and incentivize the IET Model. IET combines Career Pathways, Adult Basic Skills, and Career Technical Education.	The Strategy Team presented recommendations to the HECC Executive Team in Q1 of 2026, and the Executive Team advanced the activity to implementation with consideration of certain budget constraints.	The Strategy Team is in the process of developing an implementation plan for the activity within the policy and budget parameters expressed by the Executive Team upon activation.	None reported.	On Track

Strategy 8: Grow State Investment in Learners and Institutions

Description: By increasing financial aid for students and support for institutions, target state investments to ensure that low- and middle-income Oregon residents can afford postsecondary education and training.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
8.1	Establish a statutory set-aside from appropriated financial aid funds for student basic needs.	There is a draft Legislative Concept that has been presented to the Financial Aid Advisory group.	This Legislative concept is being considered by the Commission.	None reported.	On track

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
8.2	Eliminate the Oregon Promise and Transfer funds to Oregon Opportunity Grant.	A Legislative Concept has been drafted and presented to the Financial Aid Advisory Group	This concept is currently being considered by the Commission	Audiences have significant concerns about the removal of this program and are requesting that community colleges be insulated from the impacts of removing this funding stream.	On track

Strategy 9: Help Learners Meet Their Basic Needs

Description: Increase public investment and coordination of services such as advising, counseling, housing, dependent care, mental health, and food security.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
9.1	Expand Benefits Navigators Infrastructure.	While discussions are underway, there is uncertainty around opportunities to expand the infrastructure of Benefits Navigators due to the current budget constraints.	The program is continuing to highlight promising practices within institution implementation models. These design efficiencies and promising practices will be documented when expansion becomes possible.	Budgetary constraints pose an obstacle to expansion as contemplated by the activity.	Delayed

Goal 3: Affordable Access

Goal Sponsor:

Strategy 10: Support Institutional Efficiency

Description: Provide incentives and support for public education and training institutions to lower costs and increase quality through innovative models such as shared services and collaborative program delivery.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/ Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
10.1	By June 30, 2026, prepare detailed recommendations to agency leadership for using existing HECC authorities – or proposing new ones – that can expand the utilization of shared administrative services at public universities and community colleges.	This work is underway and will be presented to the Commission in June of 2026	Recommendations will be presented at the June 2026 Commission meeting.	Two HECC staff traveled to New Mexico to learn about a shared services model that included establishing a 501c3.	On track
10.2	Prepare detailed recommendations to agency leadership for policy incentives HECC could create (or ask the Legislature to create) for public institutions to work towards shared academic programs.	This report was presented to HECC's Executive Team by the original Strategy Team.	Staff are awaiting guidance from leadership on recommendation activation.	Team members have researched program alignment strategies, shared program delivery, administrative efficiencies, and approaches to accelerated degree/credential pathways in other states, including MN, NM, CO, MT, KS, HI, WI. NCHEMS and SHEEO have also been helpful in examining what is happening across the national landscape.	On track

Goal 4: Belonging

Goal Sponsor: Julia Pontoni

Strategy 11: Empower Students

Description: Gather and utilize student feedback at the institutional level and the HECC to understand and shape institutional and state policies and initiatives that support belonging.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
11.1	Through partnership with PSU's Oregon Kitchen Table, an analysis of rural, minority, and adult learners' perspectives on belonging, generating actionable insights to strengthen inclusivity and belonging across all Oregon institutions.	HECC has signed a contract with Oregon Kitchen Table (OKT) to conduct an engagement process and keystone factor analysis around belonging. The project team has met nearly weekly with OKT, which has conducted "community connector interviews" to inform a broader engagement process that will employ community conversations and a survey. OKT launched the belonging survey and HECC issued a press release encouraging participation and or/for folks to host community conversations around belonging.	Survey and community conversations are ongoing	None reported.	Nearly on track

Goal 5: Leadership

Goal Sponsor: Tom Riel

Strategy 16: Identify and Respond to Partner Needs

Description: Work with industry, education, labor, and community partners to identify barriers to equitable access and completion of postsecondary education and to inform recruitment, retention, and advancement strategies that are equitable and supportive of a diverse workforce.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
16.1	Develop the policy framework for a “Workforce Innovation Support Fund” to be reflected in a potential 2027 POP/LC that would allow the State of Oregon, through its partners, to rapidly respond to specific workforce training needs. Consider lessons from Workforce Readiness Grants, OWI / LWDB funding, and the Governor’s continuing workforce priorities.	Submission of the Workforce Innovation Support Fund concept to HECC Legislative leadership in December 2025.	The activity is delayed and on hold for the subsequent budgetary cycle. The submitted Policy Option Package will not be advancing in 2026 due to budgetary constraint and prioritization factors.	None reported.	Delayed



Strategy 17: Support Business Recruitment and Retention

Description: Collaborate with federal, state, and local economic development agencies to ensure postsecondary education and training are contributing to business recruitment and retention.

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
17.1	Establish a HECC position that will serve as the agency's liaison to Business Oregon and other economic development agencies.	Celia Nunez, CCWD Deputy Director, has been established in this role. In this capacity, Celia has established and strengthened agency partnership with Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) to supported cross-sector collaboration, contributed to the development of the 2026 OEDA Collaboration Summit, and coordinated development of two featured sessions aligned with HECC strategic priorities. Celia has facilitated alignment between workforce, education, and economic development stakeholders to ensure coordinated messaging and priorities and supported integration of statewide workforce strategies (e.g., talent pipeline development, sector-based partnerships) into summit programming.	Celia will continue to coordinate the CTE Panel and the State of Workforce in Oregon panel, meet with panelists to review session objectives, structure, and expectations. Celia will ensure panel content is aligned with statewide workforce, education, and economic development priorities, and coordinate closing remarks for Director Lewelling to ensure consistency and alignment across summit programming.	Successes: established strong cross-agency and cross-sector collaboration with Oregon Economic Development Association to support the 2026 Collaboration Summit. Secured participation from senior leaders across the Oregon Employment Department, Oregon Business Development Department, Governor's Office, higher education, and industry partners. Learnings: Early and direct outreach to senior leaders has been critical in securing participation and ensuring alignment across workforce, education, and economic development systems. Clear framing of panel value (policy relevance, workforce alignment, and employer needs) increases engagement and responsiveness. Challenges: Ensuring alignment of messaging across multiple agencies and perspectives requires continued coordination prior to panel development.	On track.

Other New Strategic Activity (Cross-Goal, Cross-Strategy)

Sponsor: Ben Cannon

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
0.1	Develop and advance new state statutory goals for postsecondary education and training.	Staff joined Lumina's State Attainment Collaborative and attended in-person Collaborative kick-off workshop. Staff further convened a Postsecondary Attainment Goal Steering Committee comprising representatives of higher education, workforce, economic development, labor, the legislature, CBOs, etc. So far five monthly Steering Committee meetings have been held.	The Steering Committee is to approve draft statewide postsecondary attainment goal(s) and other related goals for postsecondary education and training. HECC will then draft a Legislative Concept based on new goal(s).	The number in the goal doesn't matter that much. It's the drive toward a number and the related initiatives that will matter. How can we make progress in an era of budget cuts? How do we get good data on non-degree credentials? What credentials should count? What age range should be the focus of our measurement?	On track.
0.2	Determine which short-term credential programs will qualify for the new Workforce Pell Grant	Staff have created a summary document of Workforce Pell legislation and draft rules, provided an orientation briefing to the Commission, Workforce and Talent Development Board, community college presidents, and other partners, joined the National Governor's Association's Workforce Pell Policy Academy, and launched	The next steps are to finalize the Talent Assessment with eligibility definitions, draft required written policies for Workforce Pell and circulate for partner feedback and issue a series of small RFAs for short-term	Challenges include federal regulations and processes which are still not finalized; institutional financial aid systems currently don't "talk" to the systems in which many eligible programs are currently tracked; difficult to	Nearly on track

Action Item	Description	Work Completed	Work Underway/Next Steps	Successes/Learnings Challenges/Needs	Status
		<p>Oregon’s biennial Talent Assessment process through a contract with ECONorthwest. The Talent Assessment will define key eligibility criteria for Workforce Pell, including high wage, high skill, and in demand occupations and industries. Staff have further convened and held regular meetings with a community colleges liaisons group to facilitate information sharing and a feedback loop.</p>	<p>credential development, modification, or expansion in key industries that align with Workforce Pell. Next steps further include developing a program application approval platform and process and providing program eligibility and application training for the field.</p>	<p>balance swiftness (getting the program approval process up and running) with integration (e.g., with the ETPL, existing program approval processes, etc.) Additional needs include a need to identify staff resources to manage the program approval process.</p>	
<p>0.3</p>	<p>Consider potential reorganization of HECC agency structure to better support Strategic Plan implementation and cross-sector activity.</p>	<p>A realignment plan has been presented to and reviewed by the Executive Team. Phase One of realignment will focus mainly on creation of a Project Management Office to support the work and changes in duties/focus for Management Team members. It will also change meeting structure and provide opportunities for more planning time involving those directly responsible for office duties. Modest budget structure changes have been submitted to CFO to be built into next biennium's budget. A communication plan has been drafted with key messaging.</p>	<p>The budget structure has been modified. Project Management Office is fully staffed and has been briefed on expectations and given assignment to locate training resources. Communication plan has been drafted and is awaiting finalization and activation.</p>	<p>The planned transfer of Title I and WTDB programs to the Employment Department has caused brief delay in timing of rollout. The rollout plan was further modified based on a need to have more in-depth discussion about exactly how structural changes in program and policy area should be organized.</p>	<p>Nearly on track</p>