



House Bill 4124 (2026): Process for Development of the Higher Education Revitalization Study

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About House Bill 4124: Development of the Higher Education Revitalization Study

House Bill 4124 directs the HECC to conduct a study of the condition of Oregon's postsecondary education system and to develop detailed recommendations for the design, implementation and operation of a viable and improved institutional framework for public higher education in Oregon.

We are calling this project the *House Bill 4124 Higher Education Revitalization Study*.

[Read the full bill](#)

[View the HECC HB 4124 web page](#)

What Does House Bill 4124 Call for?

The HECC is charged with ensuring that its recommendations:

- **support access to postsecondary education institutions** for students across geographic location, including rural communities and other underserved populations;
- **fuel regional and statewide economic development and employment opportunities;** and
- **improve the financial viability** of each postsecondary education institution in Oregon and the postsecondary education system as a whole, including by addressing projected enrollment, increased personnel costs, changes in federal law or priorities, sector-specific inflationary costs.

What Does House Bill 4124 Call for? (continued)

The Study must:

- **evaluate the distinct objectives and missions** of each category of postsecondary institution in consideration of several key variables identified in the bill; and
- **identify opportunities for collaboration, restructuring, or integration in the postsecondary system.**

The study may also make recommendations on several other topics identified in the bill.

The HECC is required to consult with faculty, staff, students, and other public institution partners in the development of the report. **The HECC must provide a preliminary report to the Legislature by October 1, 2026, and submit a final report by April 1, 2027.**

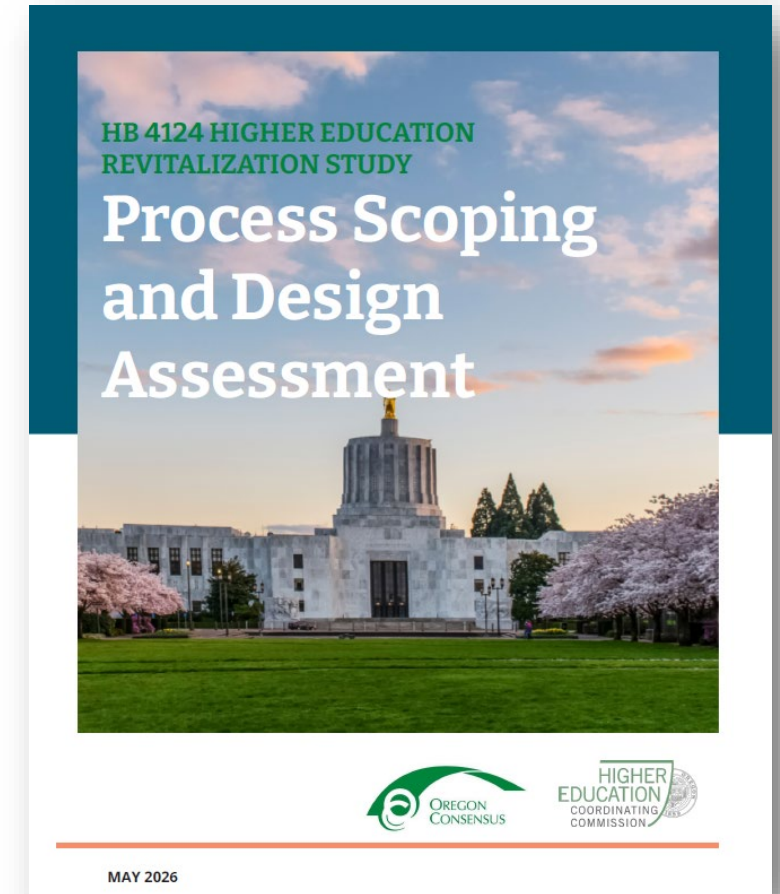
As a first step, the HECC engaged the support of Oregon Consensus to help the agency in developing a transparent, inclusive, and collaborative process for this statewide project.

How Will HECC Implement HB 4124?

HECC intends to follow the recommendations issued by Oregon Consensus (OC) in the scoping assessment it developed between March and May, 2026. Those recommendations reflect the collective responses of:

- thirteen focus groups and 33 individual interviews, with a total of 89 participants
- a broad spectrum of interests—university and community college administrative leadership and Boards of Trustees, legislators, faculty, students, unions, private foundations and community-based organizations, workforce and economic development interests, and tribal education leaders.

By summer 2026, HECC intends to engage a contractor (or contractors) that will conduct the bulk of the project, including outreach, communications, data-gathering, analysis, and recommendations.



Read the assessment: [HB 4124 Higher Education Revitalization Study Process Scoping and Design Assessment](#)

Perspectives of Interviewees : March-May, 2026

Read the summarized insights from the Oregon Consensus interviews in the full Executive Summary from page 4 in assessment: [HB 4124 Higher Education Revitalization Study Process Scoping and Design Assessment](#)

“The postsecondary educational system is experiencing an inflection moment, and there is a recognized need and opportunity to reimagine the system in Oregon. There is a sense of urgency for stabilizing the system, as well as a timely opportunity to design for transformational change. This revitalization study should focus on a longer horizon with a holistic system view, while also addressing practical and urgent needs today...”

“Political will and collaborative leadership are necessary to effect meaningful change...”

“The Oregon context matters, and we are not alone...”

“The broad scope, short timeline, and relational and structural tensions make the pathway to success challenging...”

“Trust gaps exist...”

“Broad inclusion in the conversation is needed...”

Framing the Project

Oregon Consensus recommends HECC frame the project in terms of **long-term system resiliency**, with a focus not only on the practical and urgent needs of today, but also on a **longer horizon with an aspirational and holistic system view**.

Frame the Project: “Long-Term System Resiliency.”			
Take an aspirational viewpoint.	Acknowledge the external forces impacting postsecondary institutions.	Include the Oregon context.	Do not apply a one-size-fits-all approach

Framing the Project (continued)

Oregon Consensus recommends HECC frame the project in terms of **long-term system resiliency**. Framing clear project goals and topics for study was identified as important to supporting successful outcomes of this project.

Frame the Project: “Long-Term System Resiliency.” *Process Considerations:*

Design the process to meet the primary direction from the Legislature to study the “distinct objectives and missions... and identify opportunities for collaboration, restructuring, or integration.”

Set clear direction and charge for this work.

Work with an established advisory group, additional ad-hoc design teams, and consultants to establish shared guiding principles, co-learn and, where possible, co-create options.

Working with a Consultant

As HECC works to secure services from a third-party consultant to conduct the study (as directed by the Legislature), interviewees focused on the need for **competency, transparency, and trust.**

Work with a Trusted, Visible, and Engaged Consultant.

Competency, Transparency and Trust as evidenced by:

- Experience in postsecondary education (and for some, specific experience in the Oregon context);
- Direct engagement and shared sense-making with identified groups; and
- Drawing from sources inside and outside of the state.

Additional feedback is detailed in the assessment regarding: 1) System structure and financial resilience, and 2) Alignment with needs.

Working with a Consultant (continued)

As HECC works to secure services from a third-party consultant to conduct the study (as directed by the Legislature), Oregon Consensus has made several **recommendations and considerations on how to approach this relationship.**

Work with a Trusted, Visible, and Engaged Consultant. *Considerations:*

Be intentional and **transparent in the recruitment and selection** of contracted services.

Keep the scope of services broad enough that further scoping direction can occur.

Ensure the contractor(s) can take an independent, objective, flexible, participatory approach and **orient them as a supporting resource rather than the driver of solutions.**

Combine outside research with the collective knowledge in the Oregon system.

In addition to fiscal analysis, **consider the exploration of deeper social and/or cultural analysis.**

Consider working with more than one firm to meet this balance and multiple needs.

Foundational Principles

Interviewees share input on an initial set of guiding principles. While most interviewees did not object to these, many emphasized the importance of honoring and legitimizing them if they are to be held up as foundational to success.

Build Foundational Principles Together. *Process Considerations:*

Foundational principles can serve as a common framework for:

- establishing collaborative engagement,
- setting directional goals, and
- identifying and evaluating solutions.

Use the principles in early organizing discussions to clarify and agree on a shared purpose and north stars for the work.

The principles can be used as a reference point for ongoing deliberations, analysis, and informing policy ideas.

Foundational Principles (continued)

Interviewees shared refinements and new ideas on the foundational principles. A refined draft is available, which the Advisory Group can further refine and work with to guide their deliberations over the next year.

Build Foundational Principles Together. *Refinements and new ideas...*

An updated, ‘first draft’ for refinement by the Advisory Group is included on the HECC HB 4124 web page and in the Assessment.

Some considerations:

- Focus on student and community needs should be the primary ‘north star.’
- Frame the conversation around the hypothesis that postsecondary education is valuable and necessary...

See more recommendations in the full Assessment.

Other Collaborative Process Considerations

Oregon Consensus offers process recommendations for organizing the project, including multiple tiers of engagement.

Process Considerations

HECC is encouraged to lead with purpose and position itself as a collaborative partner in the process, rather than a compliance authority or passive coordinator.

Participants in the process are encouraged to take a collaborative leadership stance and focus on the interdependencies (of people, institutions, and economies) that exist across the system.

Participants are also encouraged to **value and contribute to the collective effort** it will take to work together to find durable solutions.

Other Collaborative Process Considerations (continued)

An HB 4124 Advisory Group will serve as a core, collaborative deliberative forum of members representing various interests and authorities.

Process Considerations: HB 4124 Advisory Group

Serves as core, collaborative deliberative forum of members representing various interests and authorities in the system.

Specific of membership representation recommended in the Assessment.

**Members self-selecting from invited entities.
Expectations of members detailed.**

One member each may represent:

- **4-year public higher education institutions in Oregon**
- **community colleges in Oregon**
- **education unions in Oregon**
- **faculty**
- **staff**
- **postsecondary students**
- **philanthropic organizations**
- **workforce development and economic interests**
- **HECC Commission**
- **K-12 perspective on the continuity of learning in Oregon**
- **An organization that represents underrepresented communities**
- **each of Oregon's 9 Federally-Recognized Tribes**

Other Collaborative Process Considerations (continued)

Oregon Consensus offers process recommendations for organizing the project, including multiple tiers of engagement.

Process Considerations: *In addition to the Advisory Group, Multiple Tiers of Engagement*

Ad-Hoc Design Groups
to focus design work on specific components of the system.

A Student Voices Group
to offer student perspectives to inform HECC's research, analysis, and writing.

Postsecondary Institution Finance and Academic Administrators Group to meet quarterly in an informed, concept-review capacity.

Collaborative Process Considerations (continued)

Oregon Consensus offers process recommendations for organizing the project, including multiple tiers of engagement.

Process Considerations: *In addition to the Advisory Group, Multiple Forums*

Utilize numerous existing forums and channels for additional engagement.

An ad-hoc legislative forum for keeping legislators informed of progress.

Regional community gatherings centering regional voices and needs.

Formation of a Project Support Team to help organize, facilitate, and support engagement efforts.