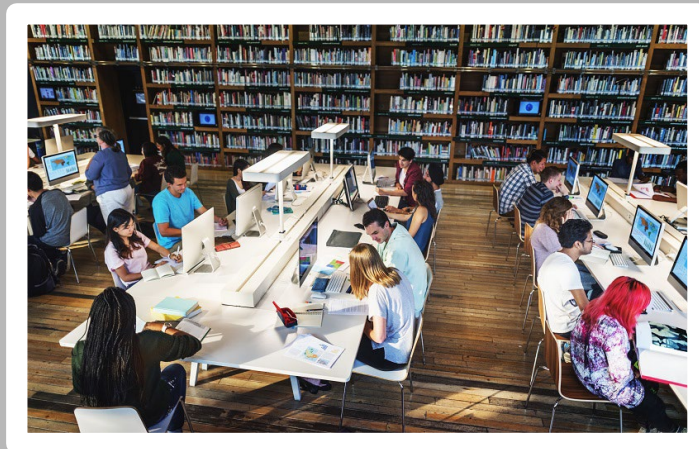


SENATE BILL 81 (2015):
Oregon Promise Grant
Biennial Evaluation, 2022



This report was prepared by Amy G. Cox, Shanda Haluapo, Shiyao Tao, Matt T. Bagwell, Olga Levadnaya, and Vern Mayfield of the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission. December 2022.

PREFACE

In 2015, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 81, establishing the Oregon Promise, a state grant program for recent graduates of Oregon high schools or high school equivalents that would cover the average cost of community college tuition. The program was signed into law by Governor Kate Brown in July 2015 and assigned to Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) for implementation. It opened for applications from high school seniors and GED® completers beginning in November of that same year, and the first cohort of students began college with the new program in fall 2016.

One requirement of the legislation is the HECC's submission of a biennial report to the Legislature each even-numbered year. This report fulfills that requirement for 2022, presenting findings from HECC's analysis of the program's progress and impacts to date. The report should be of interest to Legislators and the Governor, to students, to leadership and staff at Oregon's community colleges and public universities, and to policymakers and scholars in the field of postsecondary education.

This report was undertaken by staff in HECC's Office of Research and Data in coordination with HECC's Office of Student Access and Completion, which administers the Oregon Promise program. As the single state entity responsible for ensuring pathways to higher educational success for Oregonians statewide, the HECC sets state policy and funding strategies, administers numerous programs and over \$1.7 billion annually of state funding, and convenes partners working across the public and private postsecondary arena to achieve state goals. More information about HECC can be found at www.oregon.gov/highered and about the student financial support programs it administers at www.oregonstudentaid.gov. Questions about the HECC should be directed to info.HECC@state.or.us, and questions about this report should be directed to the Director of the Office of Research and Data, Amy Cox, at amy.cox@state.or.us.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In 2015, the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill (SB) 81 (Oregon Revised Statute [ORS] 341.522) to institute a new state financial aid program, the Oregon Promise, to support most recent Oregon high school graduates and GED® test graduates to attend community college. The program provides eligible students with an award that equals up to the average cost of tuition for 12 credits at Oregon’s 17 community colleges. When passed, the Oregon Promise was part of a national trend of programs offering community college tuition grants, known as “College Promise” programs.

SB 81 (2015) charged the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) with implementing the Oregon Promise and required the HECC to submit a report on the program to the Legislature in each even-numbered year. This report fulfills the reporting requirement for 2022 and pays particular attention to the potential impact of the program on expanding access to and completion of college for recent high school graduates.

The Oregon Promise is available to most new Oregon high school graduates and GED® test graduates. From 2015-16 through 2021-22, the eligibility requirements for students to receive the Oregon Promise were:

1. Be an Oregon resident for at least 12 months prior to college attendance
2. Be an Oregon high school graduate or a GED® test graduate
3. Have graduated with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher or with a score of 145 or higher on all GED® tests
4. Have no more than 90 college credits completed or attempted, including credits earned while students are in high school
5. Enroll at an Oregon community college within six months of graduation

To apply for the grant, students must complete an Oregon Promise Grant Application and either a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or an Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA) by deadlines that are tied to students’ graduation date. They also must list at least one Oregon community college on their FAFSA/ORSAA. To maintain their eligibility, students must be continuously enrolled in one of the Oregon community colleges for at least six credits in each of the fall, winter, and spring terms and make satisfactory academic progress. Prior to the 2022-23 academic year, Oregon Promise students were required to complete a college experience course during their first college year. In 2017, the Legislature gave authority to the HECC to use expected family contribution (EFC) as an eligibility criterion as needed to control program costs (ORS 341.522).

In the 2021-22 academic year, Oregon Promise grants ranged from \$1,000 to \$4,131 per year for full-time students, less a \$50 student co-pay per term. Individual grant sizes varied, depending on the amount a student needed to cover the average cost of community college tuition (up to 12 credits) after other state and federal grants had been taken into account. Other state and federal grants are primarily the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) and federal Pell Grant. If the tuition cost was fully covered by other state and federal grants,

then the student received the minimum \$1,000 award. Several changes to the program went into effect in 2022-23 that were designed to increase equity in college access and success. This report does not include results from those changes but covers the period through 2021-22.

This report is centered around four questions:

1. Has the Oregon Promise led more high school graduates to enroll in college, indicating an increase in access to college?
2. Who are the students receiving and utilizing the Oregon Promise grant?
3. What are the financial impacts of the Oregon Promise?
4. Has the Oregon Promise led to more progression/momentum and completion?

To answer these questions, we begin with a review of related research on College Promise programs in general and on the Oregon Promise in particular and then analyze recent data on Oregon students. We use six sources of data specific to the Oregon Promise program: Student records provided by Oregon community colleges and public universities, similar student records from private, nonprofit institutions, Oregon high school graduate records from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and grant disbursement records from the Oregon Promise program and the related FAFSA/ORSAA records. We examine characteristics and outcomes of students receiving the Oregon Promise and characteristics and outcomes of the entire high school graduating class. Because some high school graduates who may otherwise have chosen to enroll in a bachelor's-degree granting institution may choose to begin at a community college because of the Oregon Promise, we examine enrollment and completion for all high school graduates before and after the program was implemented.

PRIOR RESEARCH

Whether and how College Promise programs affect access to and success in college has been of national interest. Across the country, these programs cover tuition, but they differ in both scope and design. Regarding scope, some apply to a specific college, others apply only to high school graduates in a specific school district, and still others to multiple public institutions for high school graduates statewide. Regarding eligibility, requirements vary around student residency, high school grade averages, application materials and fees, enrollment levels, and income limits.¹

In the initial years of these various programs, evaluations found increased college enrollment associated with both local and statewide College Promise programs.² However, more recent research has found that College Promise programs do not consistently sustain these increases in enrollment, citing differences in eligibility

¹ Anderson, C. (2019). Local-level, place-based scholarships: a review of the literature. *Educational Review*, 1-24.

² Anderson, C. (2019). Local-level, place-based scholarships: a review of the literature. *Educational Review*, 1-24. Li, A. Y., & Gándara, D. (2020). The promise of “free” tuition and program design features: Impacts on first-time college enrollment. *Improving research-based knowledge of college promise programs*, 219-240.

requirements.³ Programs that have eligibility requirements consistent with students who are most likely to go to college have not produced long lasting enrollment increases.

Though the relative newness of College Promise programs limits the research on college completion, recent studies suggest that student supports (e.g., advising, mentoring, and other educational supports) are an important intervening factor.⁴ Programs with more minimal eligibility requirements in particular did not demonstrate increases in postsecondary credential attainment without additional support resources.⁵

Prior research has shown limited impacts of College Promise on equity in college access and success. Programs with eligibility requirements that are consistent with the characteristics of those already likely to attend college maintain existing inequities.⁶ Those structured as last-dollar programs show minimal to no improvements in equity.⁷

Consistent with national research, previous studies of the Oregon Promise showed initial increases in college-going rates followed by a return to their pre-program levels. Also consistent with national research, these studies demonstrated improved affordability from the Oregon Promise but minimal impacts on reducing equity gaps in enrollment. Analyses of completion were limited to the first cohort of Oregon Promise recipients and suggested those students might have earned credentials somewhat more quickly than earlier high school graduating classes.

³ Dowd A. C., Rosinger K. O., Castro M. F. (2020). Trends and perspectives on finance equity and the promise of community colleges. In: Perna L. (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 35, pp. 517–588). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-31365-4_7.

⁴ House E., Dell M. (2020). Keeping the promise: Early outcomes of Tennessee’s tuition-free college initiative. In Perna L. W., Smith E. J. (Eds.), *Improving research-based knowledge of college promise programs* (pp. 151–172). American Educational Research Association. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvxw3phv.10>.

Perna, L; Wright-Kim, J and Leigh E. (2020). Is a College Promise Program an Effective Use of Resources? Understanding the Implications of Program Design and Resource Investments for Equity and Efficiency. American Educational Association. SAGE Journals: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858420967633>.

⁵ Perna, *ibid*.

⁶ Millett C., Saunders S. R., Fishtein D. (2018). Examining how college promise programs promote student academic and financial readiness. Education Testing Service Research Report Series, 2018(1), 1–24.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ets2.12229>. Perna, L; Wright-Kim, J and Leigh E. (2020). Is a College Promise Program an Effective Use of Resources? Understanding the Implications of Program Design and Resource Investments for Equity and Efficiency. American Educational Association. SAGE Journals: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858420967633>.

⁷ Perna, L; Wright-Kim, J and Leigh E. (2020). Is a College Promise Program an Effective Use of Resources? Understanding the Implications of Program Design and Resource Investments for Equity and Efficiency. American Educational Association. SAGE Journals: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858420967633>.

RESULTS

Our first question addresses college access and asks whether the Oregon Promise has led more high school graduates to enroll in college. Examining the college-going rate for recent high school graduates before and after the program's implementation, we did not find evidence of increases in enrollment beyond the first year. College-going rates rose in the first year of the Oregon Promise but declined over the next five years. The most recent two cohorts of high school graduates finished high school during the pandemic, when college-going declined across all age groups nationally, especially at community colleges.

We also found no evidence to suggest that equity gaps in college-going narrowed with the Oregon Promise. The differences across racial and ethnic groups were similar before and after the Oregon Promise was implemented, and these gaps widened during the two years of the pandemic. The gap between rural and urban high school graduates' college-going is wider since the program began, as college-going rose among students from urban/mixed counties but not among those from rural counties. Finally, the college-going gap by gender has also widened since the program was implemented.

Next we asked about the students receiving Oregon Promise grants. We compared the characteristics of students who received Oregon Promise grants with those of their high school graduating class and with those of their high school graduate peers enrolled at the community colleges and at the public universities. We found that Oregon Promise recipients are generally representative of their high school graduating class, though they are somewhat more likely to be women, Latino/a/x/Hispanic, from low-income backgrounds, and from urban areas. As in earlier evaluations, we also found that most Oregon Promise dollars go to students from middle- and upper-income backgrounds, even though nearly half of the students are from low-income backgrounds.

We addressed the third question by examining the impacts on affordability for the state and for students. By design, the program maximizes federal financial aid coming into Oregon for those who receive the Oregon Promise grant. These federal dollars have declined in the last decade, corresponding with a decline in enrollment, especially at the community colleges. While the Oregon Promise does not appear to have reversed this trend, Pell grants awarded to Oregon Promise students comprise only a fraction of Pell grants awarded to community college and public university students. For students, the program slightly reduces the percentage of students facing unaffordable costs. Nonetheless, nearly two out every five students receiving the Oregon Promise still cannot meet the expected cost of attendance at their college even with the grant, and almost two-thirds of students from low-income backgrounds cannot meet the cost of attendance even with the grant.

The fourth question, measuring momentum and completion, examined the degree to which all high school graduates complete postsecondary credits and stay enrolled in colleges and universities as well as earn a postsecondary credential. We found no association between the Oregon Promise program and the number of terms enrolled or credits earned among recent high school graduates. In addition, we found no lasting increases in completion rates coinciding with implementation of the Oregon Promise program, though the number of cohorts and years available to assess this question are still limited.

IMPLICATIONS

Together, these findings suggest that the Oregon Promise has not led to lasting increases in enrollment, momentum, completion, or equity—at least in the context of the pandemic and with the program requirements in place through 2021-22. These findings are consistent with the findings reported in 2020 and

are aligned with national research, which has found early but not sustained increases in enrollment and limited or no increases in equity and completion. The main benefit of the Oregon Promise appears to be in its support of college affordability for students. This is an important impact, given the long-term negative consequences of student loans for individuals and the State.

Both the findings reported here and some of the national research identify eligibility requirements as an important intervening factor in College Promise programs. When eligibility mirrors characteristics of college-going students, the programs can help with affordability but do not necessarily entice more students to enroll in college nor support students in sufficient ways to raise graduation rates. Eligibility requirements in the first six years of the Oregon Promise reflect some college-going characteristics, namely requiring a cumulative high school grade point average of 2.5 and a \$50 copay per term.

Significant changes to the Oregon Promise program beginning in the 2022-23 academic year change some of these eligibility requirements. These changes include lowering the minimum high school grade point average to 2.0, eliminating the \$50 per-term cop-pay, and raising the minimum award level. These changes are aimed at expanding enrollment and completion for students who might not otherwise be planning or able to go to college. In addition, Oregon's community colleges have implemented a number of student supports in the last few years that, if paired with the Oregon Promise grant awardees, may improve momentum, completion, and equity. These changes are aligned with national research that show improved equity in access and completion when College Promise programs are accompanied by student support. Future reports will assess whether these program changes lead to higher enrollment and completion and for whom.

Finally, while at this stage the findings here do not indicate many positive impacts of the Oregon Promise, they do demonstrate the impact that financial aid has on the affordability crisis that students face, especially for those from low-income backgrounds. The great experiment of the Oregon Promise and other College Promise programs may still be evolving, but the need for greater financial support of students is clear. This is an investment not only in students but in the State, as postsecondary certificates and degrees bring greater financial stability, greater tax revenue, and greater civic engagement. These public returns come to fruition only when the road to certificates and degrees is financially accessible to Oregonians from any background—racial/ethnic, geographic, income background, and other backgrounds with educational equity gaps.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report would not have been possible without the work of many people. We are grateful for our HECC colleagues in the Office of Student Access and Completion who work with institutions, students, and families to implement the program. We also wish to thank our colleagues in the Oregon Department of Education, who provided data on high school and those in both high schools and community colleges who work with HECC staff, students, and families to implement the program. Finally, we are indebted to the students whose hard work inspire all of us.

ABBREVIATIONS

EFC	Expected family contribution
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
GED®	General Educational Development
GPA	Grade point average
HECC	Higher Education Coordinating Commission
ODE	Oregon Department of Education
OOG	Oregon Opportunity Grant
ORS	Oregon Revised Statute
ORSAA	Oregon Student Aid Application
OSAC	Office of Student Access and Completion at the Higher Education Coordinating Commission
SB	Senate Bill

INTRODUCTION

In 2015, the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill (SB) 81 (Oregon Revised Statute [ORS] 341.522) to institute a new state financial aid program, the Oregon Promise, for most recent Oregon high school and GED® test graduates to attend community college. The program provides eligible students with grants that cover up to 12 credits of tuition at any of Oregon’s 17 community colleges. When passed, the Oregon Promise was part of a national trend of programs offering community college tuition grants, known as “College Promise” programs.

Rather than being based on financial need or academic merit, the primary focus of College Promise programs is to create a reduced-or zero-tuition path to postsecondary education and training for particular students, usually through a combination of federal and state grants.⁸ This “last-dollar” design involves using other public financial aid to cover the cost of tuition first, and then using the College Promise award to cover the remaining tuition cost. The Oregon Promise follows this last-dollar model but also guarantees a minimum grant of \$1,000 that students can use for other college costs beyond tuition, if their other public grants cover the cost of 12 credits of tuition (this minimum was raised beginning in the 2022-23 academic year, which is not covered in this report).

SB 81 (2015) charged the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) with implementing the Oregon Promise and required the HECC to submit a report on the program to the Legislature in each even-numbered year. This report must include:

- completion rates for students receiving the Oregon Promise
- the amount of federal grant aid received by students receiving the Oregon Promise
- the financial impact on school districts that had students receiving Oregon Promise grants
- the financial impact and enrollment impact on Oregon community colleges and universities

⁸ Mishory, J. 2018. *The future of statewide college promise programs*. Washington, DC: The Century Foundation.

THE OVERALL SUCCESS RATE AND FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

This report fulfills the reporting requirement for 2022 and pays particular attention to the potential impact of the program on expanding access to and completion of college for recent high school graduates. This year is the second report to examine initial credential completion rates of students receiving the Oregon Promise, with six academic years complete since the first cohort of students participated in the program. Student outcomes (in terms of both college enrollment and completion) are key potential impacts of the Oregon Promise program.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows. We describe the Oregon Promise program, summarize previous research, and describe the report's research questions and methodology in this introductory chapter. We then present findings about the program's impacts on enrollment, about the students who receive the grant, and about the program's financial and completion impacts in subsequent chapters. We conclude with a summary of the findings and a discussion of their implications for public policy.

BACKGROUND ON THE OREGON PROMISE

Oregon Promise Eligibility

The Oregon Promise is available to most new Oregon high school graduates and GED® test graduates. In particular, students had to meet the following eligibility criteria to receive the grant (prior to 2022-23).

- Be an Oregon resident for at least 12 months prior to college attendance
- Be an Oregon high school graduate or a GED® test graduate
- Have graduated with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher or with a score of 145 or higher on all GED® tests
- Have no more than 90 college credits completed or attempted, including credits earned while students are in high school
- Enroll at an Oregon community college within six months of graduation

To apply for the grant, students must complete an Oregon Promise Grant Application and either a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or an Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA)⁹ by deadlines that are tied to students' graduation date. They also must list at least one Oregon community college on their FAFSA/ORSAA. To maintain their eligibility, students must be continuously enrolled in one of the Oregon community colleges for at least six credits in each of the fall, winter, and spring terms and make satisfactory

⁹ The ORSAA is a mechanism for students who are not eligible for federal financial aid (e.g., students who are undocumented, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and Temporary Protected Status) to apply for state grants and private scholarships managed by the state.

academic progress. In their first college year, students must also complete a first-year college experience requirement.

In 2017, the Legislature gave authority to the HECC to use expected family contribution (EFC) as an eligibility criterion as needed to control program costs (ORS 341.522). The EFC is an amount calculated in the FAFSA/ORSA based on students' family incomes and expenses related to college costs (e.g., family size). When needed in an academic year, the HECC establishes EFC limits and applies these only to the new cohort for that year. For example, HECC instituted an EFC limit of 22,000 for the 2020-21 academic year because the COVID-19 pandemic had led to reduced state revenue. New Oregon Promise applicants for the 2020-21 year needed an EFC less than or equal to 22,000 to be eligible for the program, but students who participated in previous years and renewed for 2020-21 were not subject to the 22,000 EFC limit.¹⁰ The EFC requirement was eliminated for the 2021-22 academic year.

Below is a summary of EFC limits enacted in the Oregon Promise program, by year:

- 2016-17: No EFC limit.
- 2017-18: In the fall term, an EFC limit of 18,000 was instituted. After fall term, the EFC limit rose to 20,000, and grants were retroactively awarded to students who had valid applications, had an EFC between 18,000 and 20,000, and had enrolled in at least six credits during fall term.
- 2018-19: No EFC limit.
 - Additionally, grants were manually awarded to all new Oregon Promise recipients from the prior year (2017-18) who had an EFC greater than 20,000, who attended a community college all year in 2017-18 without an Oregon Promise grant, and who had only been rejected for an Oregon Promise grant because of the EFC limit. These students were awarded grants beginning fall 2018 if they had not reached the 90-credit limit (all attempted prior credits were counted toward the 90-credit limit).

¹⁰ Due to the unpredictable impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on both the state budget and community college enrollment, HECC staff needed to establish and then change the EFC based on evolving circumstances. In March 2020, a tentative EFC was set at \$34,000 in anticipation of significant budget cuts for the high school graduates of 2020. Students were notified that the final decision was to be made in July 2020. Returning Oregon Promise students, i.e., those who graduated from high school prior to 2020, were awarded Oregon Promise grants without an EFC limit in June. In July 2020, HECC was notified that the Oregon Promise grant might be cut by \$3.6 million, as one of many line items in a comprehensive state budget. All high school graduates of 2020 who applied for the Oregon Promise grant with an EFC of \$34,000 and higher were notified they would not be eligible for an Oregon Promise grant. HECC also notified 2020 high school graduates with EFCs between \$18,000 and \$33,999 that their Oregon Promise grant may be revoked based on the final state budget cuts. In August, the Oregon Promise was cut by \$3.6 million. High school graduates of 2020 who applied for the Oregon Promise grant with EFCs between \$22,000 and \$33,999 were notified they would not receive the Oregon Promise grant. High School graduates of 2020 who applied for Oregon Promise with an EFC of \$18,000 through \$21,999 were notified they would be funded the Oregon Promise grant.

- 2019-20: No EFC limit.
- 2020-21: EFC limit of 22,000.
- 2021-22: No EFC limit.
- 2022-23: No EFC limit.

In the 2021-22 academic year, Oregon Promise grants ranged from \$1,000 to \$4,131 per year for students taking at least 12 credits, less a \$50 student co-pay per term. Individual grant sizes varied, depending on the amount a student needed to cover the average cost of community college tuition (up to 12 credits) after other state and federal grants had been taken into account. Other state and federal grants are primarily the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) and federal Pell Grant. If the tuition cost was fully covered by other state and federal grants, then the student received the minimum \$1,000 award.

The maximum Oregon Promise award amount is determined by the average cost across the community colleges of 12 credits of tuition. If a student's tuition cost is below this average, the grant award amount is up to their college's actual tuition cost. If a student's tuition is above the average or if a student enrolls in more than 12 credits per term, students are responsible for the greater cost.

In 2022, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1522, which introduced several changes to the program designed to increase equity in college access and success. These changes went into effect in the 2022-23 academic year and include:

- The grade point average requirement lowered to a cumulative, unweighted 2.0, beginning with 2022 high school graduates.
- The \$50 per-term co-pay was eliminated.
- The minimum award rose from \$1,000 to \$2,000 for full-time, full-year students, and it will increase each year at the same rate as the maximum award.
- The First-Year Experience course was eliminated as a requirement to renew the Oregon Promise grant.

This report does not include results with these changes but presents findings through the 2021-22 academic year. Future reports will assess the impact of these program changes, including on how they affect college access and student success.

PREVIOUS FINDINGS

National Findings

Whether and how College Promise programs affect access to and success in college has been of national interest. Across the country, these programs cover tuition, but they differ in both scope and design.¹¹ Regarding scope, some apply to a specific college, others apply only to high school graduates in a specific school district, and still others to multiple public institutions for high school graduates statewide. Regarding eligibility, requirements vary around student residency, high school grade averages, application materials and fees, enrollment levels, and income limits.

In the initial years of these various programs, evaluations have found increased college enrollment associated with both local and statewide College Promise programs.¹² However, more recent research has found that College Promise programs do not consistently sustain these increases in enrollment, citing differences in eligibility requirements.¹³ For example, College Promise programs with eligibility requirements that are consistent with students who are most likely to go to college have not produced long lasting enrollment increases. Moreover, the many programs that focus on community colleges have simply shifted enrollment from one type of institution to another (e.g., students who would have started with a university are now starting at a community college).

The relative newness of College Promise programs limits research on their impacts on college completion. Initial studies that examined completion rates among students who participate in College Promise programs found evidence that programs substantially increase completion rates.¹⁴ More recent studies suggest that the educational outcomes of College Promise students depend on program design and resource investment.¹⁵ Perna, et.al (2020) identified student support sources (e.g., advising, mentoring, and other educational supports) as an important intervening factor. They found that programs with minimal eligibility requirements that had demonstrated greater college access for students who were less likely to attend college after high school only showed greater educational outcomes when these additional resources were allocated.

Prior research has shown limited impacts of College Promise on equity in college access and success. Without considering the impact of eligibility requirements, the College Promise program allocates resources to students already likely to enroll, who are more relatively advantaged. Programs with eligibility requirements that are

¹¹ Perna, L; Wright-Kim, J and Leigh E. (2020). Is a College Promise Program an Effective Use of Resources? Understanding the Implications of Program Design and Resource Investments for Equity and Efficiency. American Educational Association. SAGE Journals: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858420967633> .

¹² Anderson, C. (2019). Local-level, place-based scholarships: a review of the literature. *Educational Review*, 1-24. Li, A. Y., & Gándara, D. (2020). The promise of “free” tuition and program design features: Impacts on first-time college enrollment. *Improving research-based knowledge of college promise programs*, 219-240.

¹³ Dowd A. C., Rosinger K. O., Castro M. F. (2020). Trends and perspectives on finance equity and the promise of community colleges. In Perna L. (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 35, pp. 517–588). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-31365-4_7.

¹⁴ Swanson, E., & Ritter, G. (2018). Start to finish: Examining the impact of the El Dorado Promise on postsecondary outcomes. Tennessee Higher Education Commission. (2020). Tennessee Promise Annual Report 2020.

¹⁵ House E., Dell M. (2020). Keeping the promise: Early outcomes of Tennessee’s tuition-free college initiative. In Perna L. W., Smith E. J. (Eds.), *Improving research-based knowledge of college promise programs* (pp. 151–172). American Educational Research Association. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvxw3phv.10>.

consistent with the characteristics of those already likely to attend college maintain existing inequities.¹⁶ Those structured as last-dollar programs show minimal to no improvements in equity.¹⁷

Implementation and Impacts of the Oregon Promise

Previous research on the Oregon Promise program in particular has focused on program implementation, impacts on student enrollment and completion, impacts on the amount of federal aid supporting Oregon students, and impacts on equity.

After the legislation was signed in July 2015, the HECC began implementation and outreach for a fall application period beginning November 2015 and running through March 2016.¹⁸ There was widespread program awareness, though also some confusion as students and institutional staff learned program requirements.¹⁹ Students' and institutions' knowledge of the program and its requirements appeared to stabilize by the second year, as the number of applicants remained similar across the second and third cohorts.²⁰

The program has not shown a net increase in enrollment in its first four years.²¹ Early evaluation of the program found more Oregon high school students continuing their education into postsecondary than prior to the program. The increase in college-going was limited to community college enrollment and suggested at least some students' shifting from enrollment at public universities to enrollment at community colleges after high school. However, these early increases did not sustain, as college-going returned to pre-program levels after four years. Further, the Oregon Promise did not appear to reduce equity gaps in college-going consistently. Disparities across racial/ethnic groups were slightly narrower after four years, but disparities by geography (rural/urban) had widened during the same period. Finally, other indicators of enrollment, including number of terms and number of courses, were nearly identical before and after the Oregon Promise.

Regarding the number of students participating in the program, the 2020 evaluation identified Oregon Promise recipients as generally representative of the high school graduating class, though they were somewhat more likely to identify as Latino/a/x/Hispanic and as women. The program served a diverse array of students,

¹⁶ Millett C., Saunders S. R., Fishtein D. (2018). Examining how college promise programs promote student academic and financial readiness. Education Testing Service Research Report Series, 2018(1), 1–24.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ets2.12229> . Perna, L; Wright-Kim, J and Leigh E. (2020). Is a College Promise Program an Effective Use of Resources? Understanding the Implications of Program Design and Resource Investments for Equity and Efficiency. American Educational Association. SAGE Journals: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858420967633>.

¹⁷ Perna, L; Wright-Kim, J and Leigh E. (2020). Is a College Promise Program an Effective Use of Resources? Understanding the Implications of Program Design and Resource Investments for Equity and Efficiency. American Educational Association. SAGE Journals: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858420967633>.

¹⁸ Cox, A., et al. December 2016. Senate Bill 81 Legislative Report: The First Term of the Oregon Promise. Oregon: Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

¹⁹ Hodara, Michelle, Julie Petrokubi, Ashley Pierson, Manuel Vazquez, and Sun Yoon. 2017. "Fulfilling the Promise? Early Findings on Oregon's New College Grant Program." Education Northwest.

²⁰ Cox, Amy G., Elizabeth Martinez, Shiyao Tao, Balaji Rajaram, Betsy Simpkins, Olga Levdnaya, Vern Mayfield, Amy Keir, and Dean Crews. December 2018. *Senate Bill 81 (2015): The Oregon Promise - Report from Year 3*. Oregon: Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

²¹ Cox, Amy G., Elizabeth Martinez, Shiyao Tao, Balaji Rajaram, Betsy Simpkins, Olga Levdnaya, Vern Mayfield, Amy Keir, and Dean Crews. December 2018. *Senate Bill 81 (2015): The Oregon Promise - Report from Year 3*. Oregon: Higher Education Coordinating Commission. Gurantz, O. 2020. "What does free community college buy? Early impacts from the Oregon Promise." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 39(1), 11-35.

including those from some groups who were underrepresented in postsecondary education and training, including students identifying as Latino/a/x/Hispanic, those from rural counties, and those from low-income families. Consistent with the design of the program, the Oregon Promise disproportionately served students from low-income backgrounds, though most program funds went to other students, continuing questions about the equity of diverting most resources to students who do not have the greatest financial need.²²

Regarding completion, the 2020 report found that a majority of students who received the Oregon Promise earned a credential or were still enrolled at a community college or public university in their second, third, and fourth years after graduating from high school and made comparable progress to other recent high school graduates.²³ The first cohort of students appeared to have earned credentials somewhat faster than recent high school graduates did before the Oregon Promise, as more high school graduates earned a postsecondary certificate or degree and fewer were still enrolled in college or university four years after high school graduation. The report only examined this level of completion for the first cohort of students because the program had only been in place for four years.

Finally, the 2020 report also examined financial impacts.²⁴ It found that the Oregon Promise program slightly reduced the number of students estimated to be facing unaffordable costs, and this impact was greater for historically underserved racial/ethnic groups. Further, because the program's design maximizes the use of federal aid to support students who receive Oregon Promise grants, the many lower income students it serves means that millions of dollars in federal Pell grants came into the state each year of the program. However, Oregon Promise recipients comprise only a small fraction of students in the state who receive Pell grants.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF REPORT

This fourth biennial report to the Legislature uses available data to evaluate the impact of the Oregon Promise on student enrollment, completion, and equity. We also report on financial impacts of the program for the State, for colleges and universities, for school districts, and for students.

Specifically, we organize our evaluation around the following questions:

1. Has the Oregon Promise led more high school graduates to enroll in college?
2. Who are the students using the Oregon Promise grant?
3. What are the financial impacts of the Oregon Promise?
4. Has the Oregon Promise led to more postsecondary momentum and completion?

²² Cox, Amy G., Elizabeth Martinez, Shiyao Tao, Balaji Rajaram, Betsy Simpkins, Olga Levadnaya, Vern Mayfield, Amy Keir, and Dean Crews. December 2018. *Senate Bill 81 (2015): The Oregon Promise - Report from Year 3*. Oregon: Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

²³ Cox, Amy G., Elizabeth Martinez, Shiyao Tao, Balaji Rajaram, Betsy Simpkins, Olga Levadnaya, Vern Mayfield, Amy Keir, and Dean Crews. December 2018. *Senate Bill 81 (2015): The Oregon Promise - Report from Year 3*. Oregon: Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

²⁴ Cox, Amy G., Elizabeth Martinez, Shiyao Tao, Balaji Rajaram, Betsy Simpkins, Olga Levadnaya, Vern Mayfield, Amy Keir, and Dean Crews. December 2018. *Senate Bill 81 (2015): The Oregon Promise - Report from Year 3*. Oregon: Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

Data and Methods

We draw on five sources of data to answer these questions. The first two sources are student records provided by community colleges and public universities that we use to analyze enrollment rates, student characteristics, and student outcomes. The institutions regularly submit these data to the HECC, and the records include descriptive information about student characteristics, enrollment, and completion. From the community colleges, we focus on students who are recent Oregon high school graduates and enrolled in for-credit courses. From the public universities, we include Oregon resident, admitted undergraduates who are recent Oregon high school graduates.

Third, we use similar student records from private, nonprofit, bachelor's degree-granting colleges and universities in the analysis of enrollment rates. These data began to be submitted to the HECC in 2020, and we use them in a limited capacity for this report. They include only Oregon resident admitted undergraduates who submitted a FAFSA/ORSAA.

Fourth, we use student records of Oregon high school graduates from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to analyze enrollment, student characteristics, and completion. These records include high school graduation year and descriptive information about student characteristics.

The final source of data is Oregon Promise application and grant disbursement records that are part of operating the program and the related completed FAFSA/ORSAA records. We use these financial aid records to identify students who receive the Oregon Promise and track them throughout the analyses.

We link students across these data sources to compare characteristics, track outcomes, and estimate program impacts. The analyses that follow examine characteristics and outcomes of students who receive the Oregon Promise and of the entire high school graduation class. We examine enrollment and completion not only for community college students receiving the Oregon Promise but for all high school graduates, and we identify impacts of the program by examining changes across high school graduating classes before and after the program was implemented. This is because we cannot compare students receiving the Oregon Promise with any single group of students to determine whether the program has had impacts, as some high school graduates who may otherwise have chosen to enroll in a bachelor's-degree granting institution may choose to begin at a community college because of the Promise.

We examine equity in education with racial/ethnic and gender identities, geographic origin (i.e., rural-urban status), and income background. Definitions for race/ethnicity and gender are not consistent across the sectors. At the secondary level (i.e., high school), both measures are reported by students or their families, and federal policy requires that a racial/ethnic identity be reported for all students, with schools reporting an identity if students and families do not.²⁵ At the postsecondary level, these are self-reported measures with an option of not reporting an identity. For the high school graduating classes, we measure rural-urban status with a 2018-19 classification of rural high schools from the federal Department of Education for all sectors.²⁶ Finally, we measure income level with receipt of the means-tested federal Pell grant. In 2020-21, Pell grants

²⁵ U.S. Department of Education, August 2008. "Policy Questions on the Department of Education's 2007 Guidance on Collecting, Maintaining and Reporting Data by Race or Ethnicity." <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rschstat/guid/raceethnicity/questions.html#noresponse> .

²⁶ National Center for Education Statistics. 2006. "School Locale Definitions," <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled/definitions.asp> . We use the 2018 assignments for public high schools.

were available to students with EFCs below \$5,711, and in 2021-22, they were available to students with EFCs below \$5,846.

Together, the analyses evaluate the current state of the Oregon Promise program, with an increased focus on completion this year. We note that causal relationships have not been explored; variables examined here may be related to one another or to external forces that are not measured here.

HAS THE OREGON PROMISE LED MORE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES TO ENROLL IN COLLEGE?

One goal of the Oregon Promise is to open the door to college more widely. If the program could entice more students to continue their education by covering most or all of tuition, it would expand access to postsecondary education and training. We examined this with the college-going rate of recent high school graduates, which we define as the percentage of high school graduates who enroll in an Oregon college or university within six months after high school graduation. We include enrollment in Oregon’s 17 community colleges, seven public universities, and 11 private, nonprofit bachelor’s degree-granting institutions for this measure. We count only enrollment as an admitted undergraduate in the public universities and private institutions and only enrollment in for-credit courses in the community colleges. If graduates are enrolled in more than one institution, we count them only one time.

The Oregon Promise does not appear to have increased college access beyond the first two years. After the initial increase in college-going for the first two years of the program, college-going among recent high school graduates in Oregon has steadily declined (see Figure 1, below). During years three and four of the program, the percentage of recent high school graduates who enrolled in Oregon’s postsecondary institutions declined to rates similar to what they were before the program began. Significant media attention accompanied the first year of the program, which amplified the State’s early marketing, but public media attention did not continue beyond the first year. Further, instability in program funding complicated later marketing efforts. During these last two years, these rates declined further. These most recent two years also reflect the first two high school classes who graduated during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the pandemic had negative effects on college-going nationally. It is possible that these rates may rise again as the pandemic continues to wane. However, the results thus far indicate that while the Oregon Promise led to an initial increase in college-going among high school graduates, this shift has not sustained thus far.

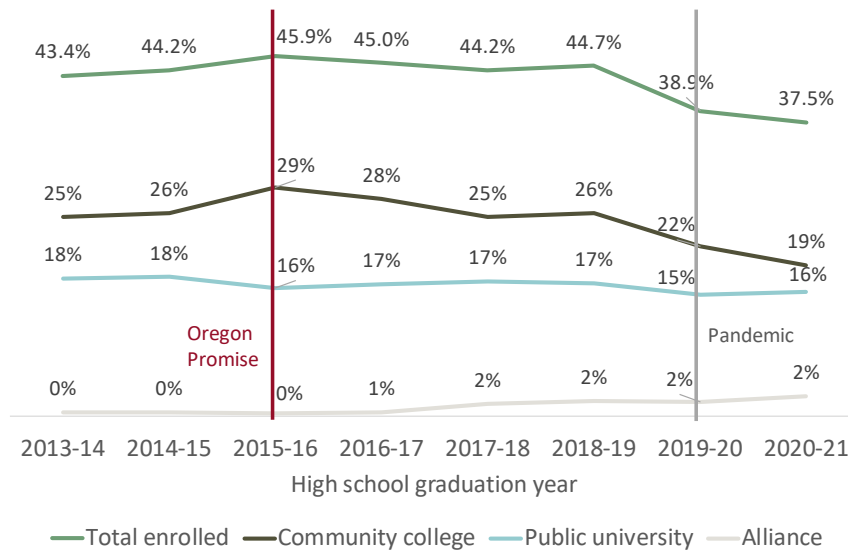


Figure 1. Percentage of high school graduates enrolling in college within 6 months of high school graduation, by sector and year.

Racial/ethnic gaps in college-going were similar before and after the implementation of the program, at least until the pandemic, as shown in Figure 2 below. College-going rose for Black/African American and for Latino/a/x/Hispanic graduates, but this increase began before the Oregon Promise. Rates also rose for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and for White graduates when the program began, but these rates then declined. Since the pandemic, college-going has fallen for most groups, especially for Latino/a/x/Hispanic, Native American/Alaska Native, and White students.

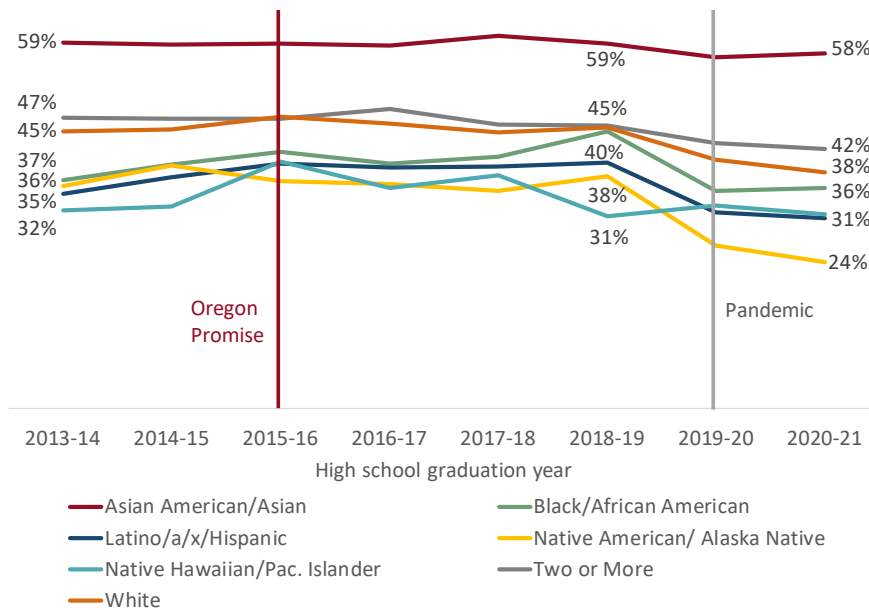


Figure 2. Percentage of high school graduates enrolling in college within 6 months of high school graduation, by race/ethnicity and year.

Since the program began, college-going rates rose among students from urban/mixed counties but not among those from rural counties (see Figure 3). Since the pandemic, this gap has widened further, as rates fell for both groups but more sharply for rural students.

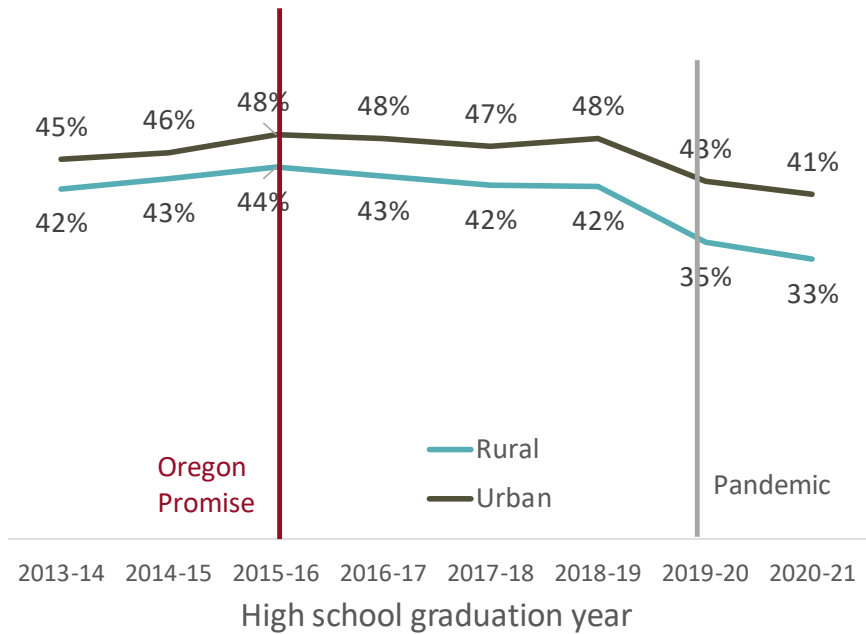


Figure 3. Percentage of high school graduates enrolling in college within 6 months of high school graduation, by urban/rural and year.

Similarly, college-going rose in the first two years of the program for both women and men, but it remained slightly higher for women while it fell for men during the next two years (see Figure 4). This widened the college-going gap by gender, and it has remained wide during the pandemic.

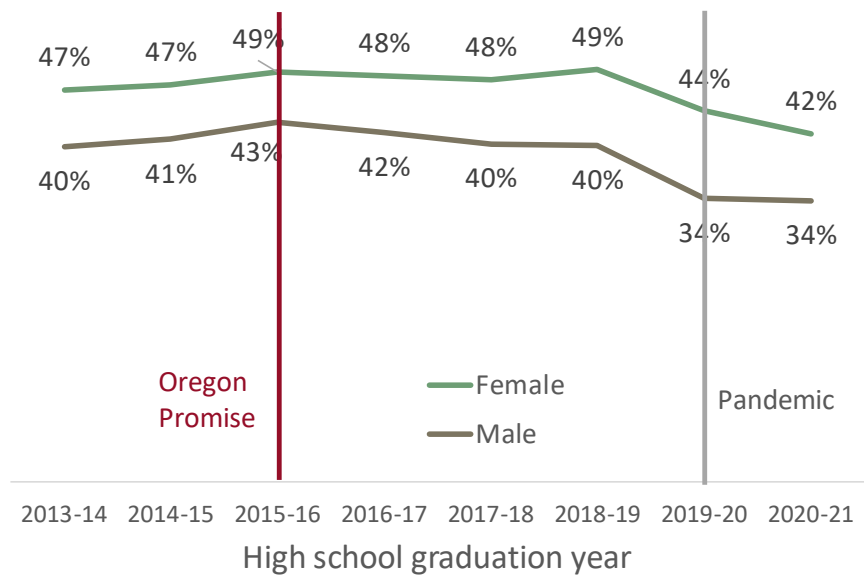


Figure 4. Percentage of high school graduates enrolling in college within 6 months of high school graduation, by binary gender and year.

Taken together, the Oregon Promise does not appear to lead a greater share of high school graduates to continue their education beyond high school, mirroring research on some other College Promise programs. While college-going rose initially, these increases did not sustain for subsequent high school cohorts, including those graduating during the pandemic. The Oregon Promise also does not appear to have narrowed equity gaps by most racial/ethnic groups, geography, and gender, either. This finding is consistent with recent national research that found last-dollar programs do not result in more equitable access to college. While the Oregon Promise grant provides at least \$1,000 additional funding when the cost to attend college is met by other grants, it may not be enough to close equity gaps in college-going rates.

WHO ARE THE STUDENTS USING THE OREGON PROMISE GRANT?

The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) processes about 15,000 Oregon Promise applications each year to disburse funds to 4,500 to 6,000 new recipients each year. Returning students account for an additional 2,000 to 4,000 additional students each year. Each year, OSAC also assesses these numbers to determine if an EFC limit is necessary to shift available awards to those most in need, and if so, they determine the EFC limit for that year’s starting cohort. For 2020-21, an EFC of 22,000 was implemented due to the economic crisis caused by the pandemic. In 2021-22, there was no EFC limit.

Figure 5 shows the size of the high school graduating class, the number of students who applied to the Oregon Promise, the number awarded a grant, and the number who accepted the award (i.e., recipients) received a grant across the six full years of the program. The number of students receiving the Oregon Promise grant has dropped in the most recent two years. During the first year of the program, almost 7,000 students received an Oregon Promise grant; in the most recent year (2021-22), almost 5,000 students received the grant. Just as the number of recipients has decreased, so too did has the number of applicants. These findings represent a decline in the number of students applying for and accepting the Oregon Promise grant, despite the relatively stable number of high school graduates in the last two years. (See Figure 5.) This decline mirrors the declines in enrollment seen during the pandemic.

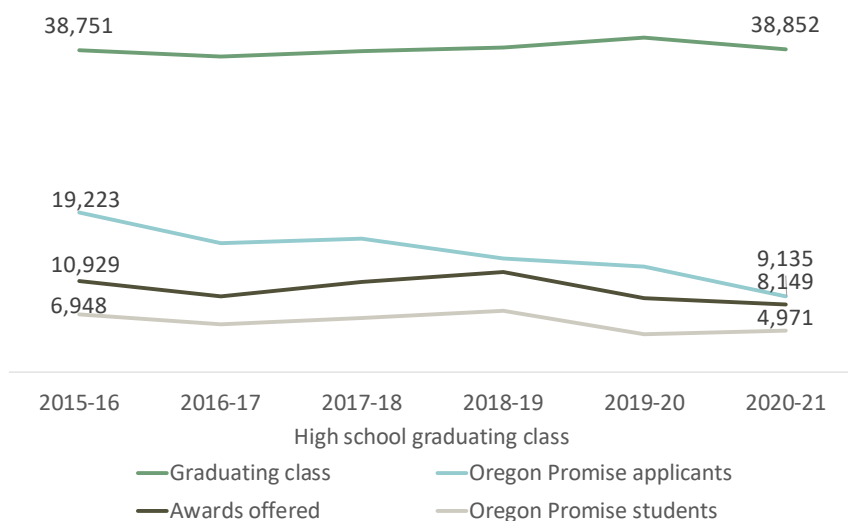


Figure 5. Number of Oregon Promise applicants, awards offered, and accepted by year.

Central to the program’s aim of expanding access is ensuring that expansion reaches those students who are less likely to continue their education beyond high school. To assess progress toward this goal, we compare students who receive Oregon Promise grants with the high school graduating class as a whole and with new first-year students at community colleges and universities who are just out of high school. This allows us to assess the extent to which students receiving the Oregon Promise are similar to the entire high school class and to students in general who enroll in college and university. It also indicates other students who might be

reached if program funds could apply to enrollment at a public university or community college more broadly. For all comparisons, we look at race/ethnicity, gender, and rural status. For the postsecondary comparisons, we also look at income background for those new college and university students who completed a FAFSA/ORSA. We present data for students who first enrolled in the program in fall 2021, as 2021-22 is the most recent complete year of data. Data for 2020-21 can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1 shows the racial/ethnic distributions, geography, income, and binary gender of students who graduated from high school in 2020-21 and received the Oregon Promise in 2021-22. Students with the Oregon Promise are slightly more likely to be Latino/a/x/Hispanic and women. They are also somewhat less likely to identify as White than all high school graduates, and somewhat more likely to identify as White than all first-year students enrolled in colleges, public universities, and private, non-profit colleges.

Table 1. Percentage of high school graduates and first-year college and university students by student characteristics, 2021-2022.

	2020-21 High School Graduates	All New College/ University Students, 2021-22	Students with Oregon Promise, 2021-22
By Race/Ethnicity			
Asian/American	5%	6%	4%
Black/African American	2%	2%	2%
Latino/a/x/Hispanic	22%	21%	25%
Native American/Alaskan Native	1%	1%	1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		1%	1%
Two or More Races	6%	7%	6%
White	63%	57%	60%
Not Reported		5%	2%
By Binary Gender			
Men	50%	45%	42%
Women	50%	54%	56%
Not Reported	0%	1%	2%
By Income			
Pell Recipients	N/A	45%	44%
Did Not Receive Pell	N/A	55%	56%
By Geography			
Rural	35%	N/A	34%
Urban/Mixed	58%	N/A	55%
Not reported	7%	N/A	11%

We note that while students from low-income backgrounds (who received a federal Pell grant) comprise almost half of Oregon Promise recipients, the last-dollar structure of the program means that only 15% of the program's grant dollars is awarded to these students. As a "last dollar" program, the Oregon Promise pays the balance of the average tuition cost after other grants (Pell, OOG) have been applied to tuition. When this covers most or all tuition costs, students receive a minimal Oregon Promise grant. Students from middle- and upper-income backgrounds without these other grants receive the maximum amount of the Oregon Promise to pay the tuition. This results in most program dollars going to students from middle- and upper-income backgrounds.

These findings indicate the program reaches two groups facing equity gaps in education: students who identify as Latino/a/x/Hispanic and students from low-income backgrounds. However, Oregon Promise students are also slightly more likely to be White, women, and from urban areas than all first-year students attending colleges or universities in Oregon. These groups are not underrepresented in college and university, compared to high school graduates, but are more likely to receive the Oregon Promise.

WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL IMPACTS OF THE OREGON PROMISE?

PUBLIC FINANCIAL AID DOLLARS INTO THE STATE

The Oregon Promise is designed to leverage both federal and state financial aid dollars that are available to students. By requiring Oregon Promise applicants to complete the FAFSA/ORSAA, students establish eligibility to receive other federal and state aid and thereby potentially expand the number of students receiving federal grants and the amount of federal aid flowing into Oregon. Students who receive Oregon Promise grants do indeed receive a substantial amount of federal Pell grant dollars as well. In 2021-22, Oregon Promise recipients received \$13.5M in Pell grants, 15.6% of all Pell grants received by community college students last year.

Table 2. Amount of Pell grant dollars disbursed to Oregon Promise recipients.

Year	Total Pell grant dollars
2016-17	\$11.6M
2017-18	\$18.8M
2018-19	\$18.9M
2019-20	\$20.3M
2020-21	\$16.4M
2021-22	\$13.5M

Whether the Oregon Promise has led to more federal financial aid coming to Oregon is difficult to determine. Federal financial aid dollars awarded to community college students have been declining since 2014-15, prior to the first year of Oregon Promise awards, 2016-17.

(Figure 6). This trend parallels declining enrollment at the colleges, which is particularly sensitive to workforce demand, which was strong during this period. In comparison, public financial aid dollars have remained relatively steady at the public universities, where enrollment declines have been much shallower.

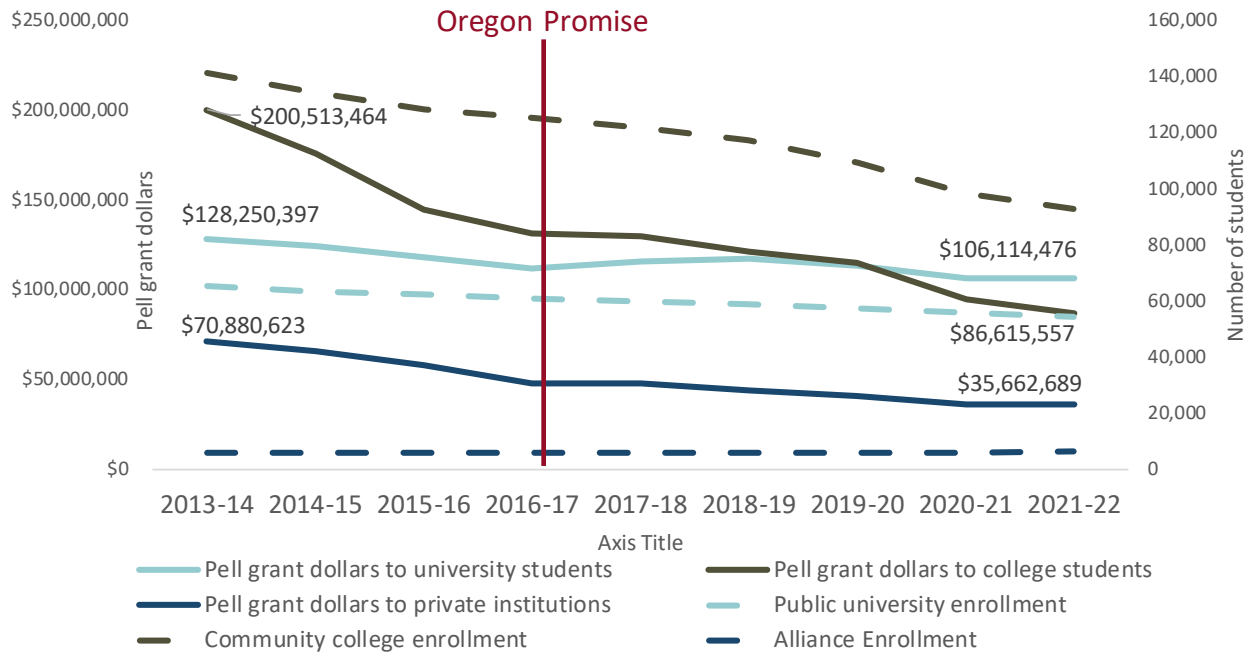


Figure 6. Dollars from federal Pell grants and student enrollment by sector, 2013-14 through 2021-22.

Further, total federal Pell grant dollars coming into Oregon across all sectors have declined for the last decade (Figure 6), with colleges experiencing the largest decline. The Oregon Promise does not appear to have significantly affected this trend, partly because students with the Oregon Promise comprise only 13% of all community college students. However, Pell dollars to college students were declining faster than enrollment prior to Oregon Promise, and the decline has been more similar since the Oregon Promise began. It is possible that the Pell grant dollars flowing into the state would have declined more steeply at the colleges in the last seven years if the Oregon Promise, with its middle-dollar design, had not been implemented. Because students have to file a complete FAFSA/ORSAA to apply for the Oregon Promise, Pell grant dollars into the State are maximized for this group of students.

IMPACTS ON STUDENT AFFORDABILITY

The Oregon Promise program covers tuition; however, many students continue to struggle to cover the entire cost of pursuing a college education. This entire cost includes not only tuition and fees, but also housing, books and supplies, transportation, and other personal expenses. We estimate the percentage of students facing unaffordable costs by comparing their total costs of attendance with their expected revenue, and we identify students whose costs outweigh their expected resources as facing unaffordable costs.

Colleges estimate the total costs of attendance at their institution, and we use these estimates to measure cost. We measure expected resources with any federal and state grants a student receives, the student's EFC, and an estimate of student's earnings. We calculate this measure of affordability for all students who filed a complete FAFSA/ORSAA and attend a community college or public university.

The Oregon Promise has improved college affordability for students, though its overall impact is limited by the number of students who receive the grant, its amount, and its last-dollar structure.

Among all community college students who file a complete FAFSA/ORSA, an estimated 30% could not meet the cost of attendance with expected resources in 2020-21 (the most recent year available for this measure). However, without the grant, 31.5% of community college students would not have been able to meet the cost of attendance. (See Table 3.) An estimated 700 to 900 additional students are able to meet the cost of attendance each year with the Oregon Promise. The impact of the program was similar across racial/ethnic groups.

Table 3. Percentage of community college students facing unaffordable costs of education with and without Oregon Promise grant, by program status and race/ethnicity, 2020-21.

	Percentage of all community college students facing unaffordability	Percentage of all community college students who would face unaffordability if Oregon promise program did not exist
All students	30%	31.5%
Race/ethnicity		
Asian American	31%	32%
Black/African American	34%	35%
Hispanic/Latinx	35%	37%
Native American/Alaska Native	33%	34%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	28%	30%
White	28%	30%
Multi-racial	30%	31%
Not reported	29%	31%

Affordability is still a challenge for many students with an Oregon Promise grant. Among students who received the Oregon Promise in 2020-21, 39% could not meet the published cost of attendance, even with other grants, EFC, and student earnings included. However, as Table 4 also shows, these rates of unaffordability would have been higher without the Oregon Promise. Without the grant, an estimated 47% of the same students would not have been able to meet the total costs of their college. Put another way, the Oregon Promise grant reduced the percentage of Oregon Promise students facing unaffordable costs by eight percentage points. This impact ranged from four percentage points to nine percentage points across racial/ethnic groups.

Table 4. Percentage of students who received the Oregon Promise and who face unaffordable costs of education with and without Oregon Promise grant, by program status and race/ethnicity, 2020-21.

	Percentage of those in Oregon promise facing unaffordability	Percentage of those in Oregon promise who would face unaffordability without Oregon promise
All students	39%	47%
Race/ethnicity		
Asian American	49%	56%
Black/African American	49%	53%
Hispanic/Latinx	50%	58%
Native American/Alaska Native	45%	53%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	36%	45%
White	31%	40%
Multi-racial	40%	47%
Not reported	45%	51%

Students with the Oregon Promise who are also from low-income backgrounds are even more likely to face unaffordable costs: 62% cannot meet the cost of attendance. In general, students from low-income backgrounds are most likely to face unaffordable costs and also face the highest costs. These students are also more likely to receive an Oregon Promise grant and usually receive only the minimum grant.

Thus, while the program has had a positive financial impact, this impact is limited for community college students as a whole. In addition, many students who receive the Oregon Promise still cannot meet the total cost of attendance even with the grant. This lends further evidence to the widespread need for financial support for students to be able to continue their education and training beyond high school.

Finally, there are financial impacts of the program for communities and institutions as well. School districts invest resources and programming to encourage high school students to continue their education and training, and communities benefit when those students earn postsecondary credentials. Community colleges potentially gain new students. Appendix B details the number of students receiving Oregon Promise grants and the amount of grant funds disbursed by the college they attended. Appendix C presents the number of students in the program and the total amount of funds disbursed by the school district from which students graduated.

HAS THE OREGON PROMISE LED TO MORE MOMENTUM AND COMPLETION?

Beyond expanding access to postsecondary education and training, the goal of the Oregon Promise program is to support students' successful completion of their certificate or degree programs. To facilitate this goal, the program has a set of requirements designed to encourage academic engagement and maintain student momentum. Continued eligibility for the grant requires students to enroll at least half-time (6 credits) during each term (fall, winter, and spring), maintain satisfactory academic progress, and complete a first-year college experience course.

HOW ARE STUDENTS WITH OREGON PROMISE GRANTS PROGRESSING?

Have the program's credit and term requirements meant that high school graduates are earning more credit or enrolling for more terms since the Oregon Promise began? We looked at the average number of credits earned, and terms enrolled in the first year after high school graduation for high school graduates before and after the program began. We included recent high school graduates at both community colleges and public universities to account for students who, because of the program, enrolled first at a community college rather than first at a public university.

Figure 7 shows the average number of college and university terms in which recent high school graduates enrolled within their first three years after high school graduation. The results show no meaningful change in the total number of terms before and after the Oregon Promise.

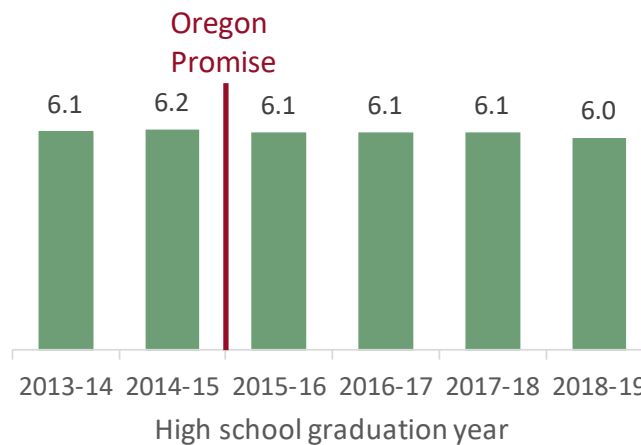


Figure 7. Average number of postsecondary terms in which high school graduates enrolled in the first three years since high school graduation, by high school graduation year.

Figure 8 shows the average number of college and university terms in which recent high school graduates enrolled within their first five years after high school graduation. As in Figure 7 showing just the first three years, the number of terms in the first five years did not increase with the Oregon Promise.

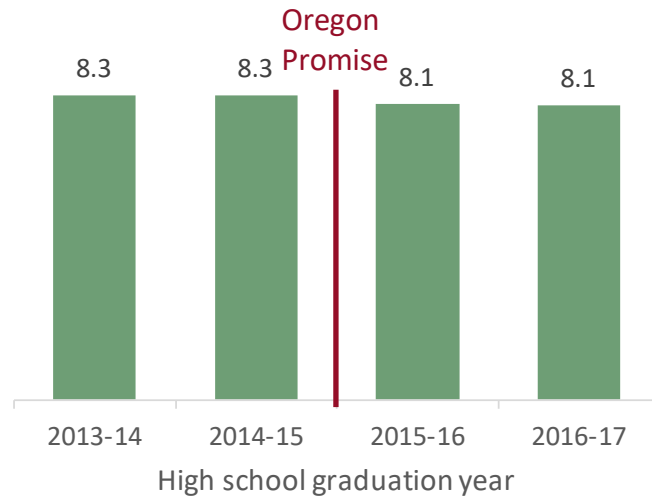


Figure 8. Average number of postsecondary terms in which high school graduates enrolled in the first five years since high school graduation, by high school graduation year.

Similar results exist for the average number of credits earned by recent high school graduates before and after the Oregon Promise. Since the implementation of the Oregon Promise, recent high school graduates have not earned more postsecondary credits, on average. Figure 9 shows the average number of credits recent high school graduates had earned within their first three years after high school graduation, and Figure 10 shows the average number of credits they earned within their first five years after high school graduation. Neither of these increased with the Oregon Promise.

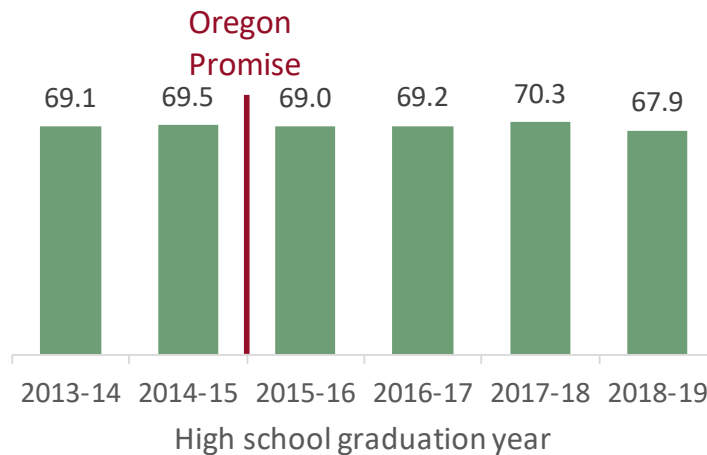


Figure 9. Average number of postsecondary credits high school graduates earned in the first three years since high school graduation, by high school graduation year.

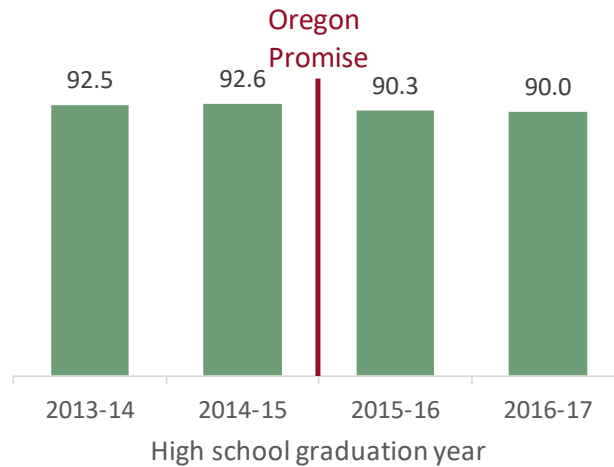


Figure 10. Average number of postsecondary credits high school graduates earned in the first five years since high school graduation, by high school graduation year.

Together, these results show no indication of an impact of the Oregon Promise credit and term requirements on postsecondary momentum for recent high school graduates. Although the requirements directly affected only students receiving the Oregon Promise—who comprise about one-quarter to one-third of new college and university students—neither the number of credits earned, nor the number of terms enrolled increased with the Oregon Promise.

WHAT ARE THE COMPLETION RATES OF STUDENTS WITH THE OREGON PROMISE?

With five years of data now available, we are better able to assess students’ completion of certificates and degrees and, importantly, whether the Oregon Promise has led to increased completion. Even this analysis will be limited to the first one or two cohorts and to early completions, as the figure below illustrates. Students in the first Oregon Promise cohort began to earn career certificates and associate degrees during the 2019-20 academic year, and they just began to earn bachelor’s degrees. Only the first cohort of students has completed six years since high school graduation, the typical amount of time we use to calculate bachelor’s degree graduation rates. Therefore, in order to see results for more than a single cohort, and because the first cohort of Oregon Promise students may have been somewhat unique, we look at completions within four and five years.

Figure 11 shows a four-year completion and transfer rate for students receiving the Oregon Promise. The rate shows the percentage of students who earned a certificate or degree or who transferred to a bachelor’s degree-granting institution within four years of starting at the community college. The results show that the first cohort of students receiving the Oregon Promise was nearly as likely to earn a credential or transfer as other

new credential-seeking community college students, whether recent high school graduates or not.²⁷ Among students with the Oregon Promise, 50% either earned a credential or transferred to a bachelor’s degree-granting institution within their first four years, compared to 52% of all new credential-seeking students at the colleges, and 53% of new credential-seeking students who were 18 when they began college. For the second cohort of students with the Oregon Promise, the completion and transfer rate fell to 46%, while the rates of credential-seeking students remained about the same. Further, the rates for earlier credential-seeking cohorts are similar to the first cohort of the Oregon Promise students and higher than the second cohort. Taken together, this suggests that completion rates for Oregon Promise students are similar to those for other credential-seeking students but not higher.

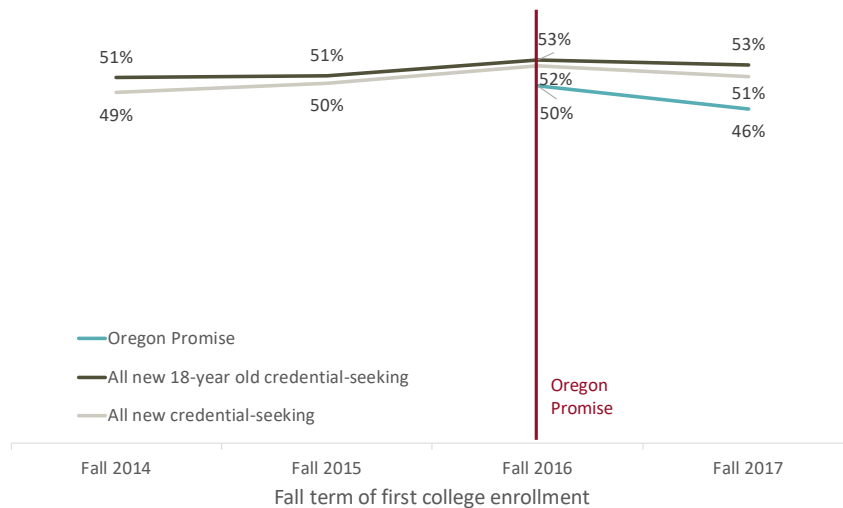


Figure 11. Four-year completion and transfer rate of students receiving Oregon Promise and of new credential-seeking community college students, by first fall term at community college.

Because students receiving the Oregon Promise may also include students who would have started at a four-year institution but chose a community college to receive the grant, examining the completion rates of the entire high school graduating class provides a more reliable analysis of whether the Oregon Promise has had an impact on completion rates. Similar to examining the impact of the Oregon Promise on college-going and on college momentum (i.e., terms enrolled and credits earned), we examine the percentage of high school graduates who earned a credential at any Oregon college or university (public or private) within their first three years and within their first five years after high school graduation.

Figure 12 shows the percentage of high school graduates who earned a postsecondary credential within the first three years after high school graduation. The percentages are generally low partly because they also include students who did not enroll in college or university right after high school. The results show a clear and notable rise in completion for the high school graduation class of 2015-16, who were the first to be able to receive an Oregon Promise grant. However, the rate declines after that. By the fourth year of the program, the

²⁷ Credential-seeking students are defined as those who are new to the community college that fall and who completed at least 18 credits or a credential in their first two years at the college. High school students enrolled in accelerated learning are excluded.

percentage of students who earned a credential in their first three years was similar to the percentage who earned one prior to the Oregon Promise program.

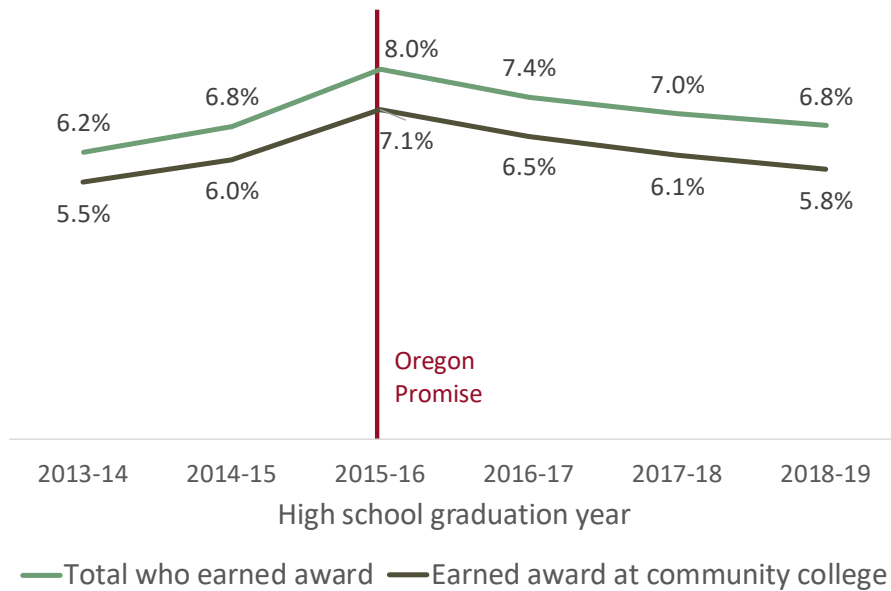


Figure 12. Percentage of high school graduates who earned a postsecondary credential from an Oregon community college, public university, or private degree-granting institution in the first three years since high school graduation, by high school graduation year.

Figure 13 shows the percentage of high school graduates who earned a credential at any Oregon college or university within five years since high school graduation. Although this only shows the first two cohorts of the Oregon Promise (because later cohorts have not had five years since high school graduation), the results do not show any sustained increase in completion with the Oregon Promise. Although the first cohort did show an increased completion rate, this did not continue into the second cohort.

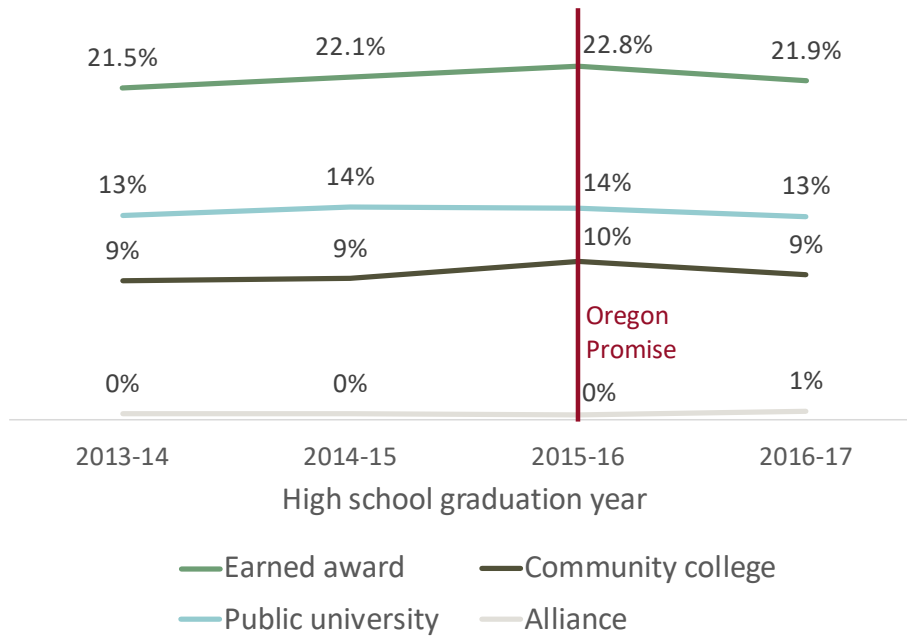


Figure 13. Percentage of high school graduates who earned a postsecondary credential from an Oregon community college, public university, or private degree-granting institution in the first five years since high school graduation, by high school graduation year.

Taken together, the percentage of recent high school graduates who have earned a postsecondary certificate or degree does not appear to have risen with the Oregon Promise in any sustained manner. At least in these early years of data, the program does not appear to have greater numbers of Oregonians to earning a postsecondary certificate or degree. Racial/ethnic and rural/urban breakouts of these rates can be found in Appendix D.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Oregon Promise is a relatively new source of state financial support for new Oregon high school graduates and GED test recipients. Understanding what we can about its potential impacts can help refine a new program. This report considered four questions:

1. Has the Oregon Promise led more high school graduates to enroll in college, indicating an increase in access to college?
2. Who are the students using the Oregon Promise grant?
3. What are the financial impacts of the Oregon Promise?
4. Has the Oregon Promise led to more progression/momentum and completion?

Our answer to the first question examined statewide enrollment of high school graduates before and after the program was implemented. We found that in the first two years of the program, enrollment rates rose, but declined in the last four years, especially due to the impact of the pandemic on college enrollment. The initial implementation of the Oregon Promise was associated with a clear increase in enrollment at the colleges, and early enthusiasm and attention to the program seemed to realize the program's goals of opening the door to postsecondary education and training wider. After six years, these early increases have not been sustained, as community college and statewide college-going rates are lower than prior to the Oregon Promise program.

We did not find evidence to suggest the Oregon Promise is associated with reducing equity gaps in college-going rates. Racial/ethnic gaps in college-going rates were similar before and after the implementation of the program, at least until the pandemic. Although college-going rose for Black/African American and for Latino/a/x/Hispanic graduates increased, this increase started before the Oregon Promise and therefore is not attributable to the Oregon Promise program. Gaps in college-going rates by geography and gender widened since the program began.

We examined the second question by comparing the characteristics of students who receive Oregon Promise grants with the characteristics of their entire high school graduating class and of their high school graduate peers who are enrolled at community colleges or public universities. We found that Oregon Promise recipients are generally representative of their high school graduating class, though they are somewhat more likely to be women and Latino/a/x/Hispanic. Additionally, students with the Oregon Promise are more likely to be from low-income backgrounds and from urban areas. We also noted that because of the last-dollar structure of the program, the vast majority of Oregon Promise dollars go to students from middle- and upper-income backgrounds, even though nearly half of the students are from low-income backgrounds.

We examined the third question by examine the impacts on affordability for the state and for students. By design, the program maximizes federal financial aid coming into Oregon for those who receive the Oregon Promise grant. These federal dollars have declined in the last decade, corresponding with a decline in enrollment, especially at the community colleges. While the Oregon Promise does not appear to have reversed

this trend, Pell grants awarded to Oregon Promise students comprise only a fraction of Pell grants awarded to community college and public university students.

For students, the program slightly reduces the percentage of students facing unaffordable costs. Nonetheless, nearly two out every five students receiving the Oregon Promise still cannot meet the expected cost of attendance at their college even with the grant, and almost two-thirds of students from low-income backgrounds cannot meet the cost of attendance even with the grant.

The fourth question, measuring momentum and completion, examined the degree to which all high school graduates complete postsecondary credits and stay enrolled in colleges and universities as well as earn a postsecondary credential. We found no association between the Oregon Promise program and the number of terms enrolled or credits earned among recent high school graduates. In addition, we found no lasting increases in completion rates coinciding with implementation of the Oregon Promise program, though the number of cohorts and years available to assess this question are still limited.

IMPLICATIONS

Together, these findings suggest that the Oregon Promise has not led to lasting increases in enrollment, momentum, completion, or equity—at least in the context of the pandemic and with the program requirements in place through 2021-22. These findings are consistent with the findings reported in 2020 and are aligned with national research, which has found early but not sustained increases in enrollment and limited or no increases in equity and completion. The main benefit of the Oregon Promise appears to be in its support of college affordability for students. This is an important impact, given the long-term negative consequences of student loans for individuals and the state.

Both the findings reported here and some of the national research identify eligibility requirements as an important intervening factor in College Promise programs. When eligibility mirrors characteristics of college-going students, the programs can help with affordability but do not necessarily entice more students to enroll in college nor support students in sufficient ways to raise graduation rates. Eligibility requirements in the first six years of the Oregon Promise reflect some college-going characteristics, namely requiring a cumulative high school grade point average of 2.5 and a \$50 copay per term.

Significant changes to the Oregon Promise program beginning in the 2022-23 academic year change some of these eligibility requirements. These changes include lowering the minimum high school grade point average to 2.0, eliminating the \$50 per-term cop-pay, and raising the minimum award level. These changes are aimed at expanding enrollment and completion for students who might not otherwise be planning or able to go to college. In addition, Oregon's community colleges have recently implemented a number of student supports that, if paired with the Oregon Promise grant awardees, may improve momentum, completion, and equity. These changes are aligned with national research that show improved equity in access and completion when College Promise programs are accompanied by student support. Future reports will assess whether these program changes lead to higher enrollment and completion and for whom

Finally, while at this stage the findings here do not indicate many positive impacts of the Oregon Promise, they do demonstrate the impact that financial aid has on the affordability crisis that students face, especially for those from low-income backgrounds. The great experiment of the Oregon Promise and other College Promise programs may still be evolving, but the need for greater financial support of students is clear. This is an

investment not only in students but in the State, as postsecondary certificates and degrees bring greater financial stability, greater tax revenue, and greater civic engagement. These public returns come to fruition only when the road to certificates and degrees is financially accessible to Oregonians from any background—racial/ethnic, geographic, income background, and other backgrounds with educational equity gaps.

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APPENDIX A. STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Table A 1. Percentage of high school graduates and first-year college and university students by student characteristics, 2020-2021.

	2019-20 High School Graduates	All New College/ University Students, 2020-21	New Students with Oregon Promise, 2020-21
By Race/Ethnicity			
Asian/American	4%	6%	4%
Black/African American	2%	2%	2%
Latino/a/x/Hispanic	23%	22%	28%
Native American/Alaskan Native	1%	1%	1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1%	1%	1%
Two or More Races	6%	6%	5%
White	63%	57%	57%
Not Reported		5%	2%
By Binary Gender			
Men	50%	44%	39%
Women	50%	55%	59%
Not Reported	0%	1%	2%
By Income			
Pell Recipients	N/A	35%	55%
Did Not Receive Pell	N/A	65%	45%
By Geography			
Rural	35%	N/A	37%
Urban or mixed	58%	N/A	55%
Not reported	7%	N/A	8%

APPENDIX B. FINANCIAL IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Table B 1. Number of students receiving Oregon Promise and Oregon Promise grant disbursements (all cohorts combined), by college, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
Blue Mountain	171	\$329,482	158	\$307,677
Central Oregon	585	\$1,020,535	573	\$1,114,858
Chemeketa	1,538	\$2,306,317	1,344	\$2,120,158
Clackamas	616	\$1,090,989	524	\$1,030,158
Clatsop	106	\$155,248	81	\$121,490
Columbia Gorge	87	\$159,096	47	\$69,852
Klamath	152	\$190,815	118	\$148,921
Lane	889	\$1,508,219	790	\$1,369,777
Linn-Benton	749	\$1,414,293	562	\$1,102,126
Mt. Hood	540	\$920,334	457	\$861,589
Oregon Coast	50	\$58,048	37	\$42,159
Portland	2,559	\$4,093,513	2,220	\$3,881,743
Rogue	357	\$504,532	389	\$544,025
Southwestern	182	\$262,403	144	\$269,672
Tillamook Bay	50	\$66,671	44	\$56,985
Treasure Valley	97	\$163,450	88	\$123,381
Umpqua	239	\$401,846	212	\$378,256
State	11,623	\$19,932,080	7,757	\$13,542,827

APPENDIX C. FINANCIAL IMPACTS ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Table C 1. Number of students receiving Oregon Promise and Oregon Promise grant disbursements (all cohorts combined), by school district, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

School District	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
Adrian SD 61	*	\$850	*	\$4,831
Alsea SD 7j	*	\$8,543	*	\$1,134
Amity SD 4j	13	\$25,168	18	\$30,110
Arlington SD 3	*	\$10,129	*	\$7,930
Ashland SD 5	39	\$50,085	47	\$68,895
Astoria SD 1	42	\$67,748	33	\$57,361
Athena-Weston SD 29rj	*	\$4,038	*	\$567
Baker SD 5j	53	\$85,457	38	\$72,774
Bandon SD 54	16	\$19,744	*	\$12,811
Banks SD 13	12	\$32,579	14	\$37,487
Beaverton SD 48j	549	\$922,117	389	\$715,536
Bend-Lapine Administrative SD 1	254	\$459,564	218	\$415,508
Bethel SD 52	94	\$158,702	77	\$102,302
Blachly SD 90	*	\$2,336	*	\$6,075
Brookings-Harbor SD 17c	12	\$19,447	13	\$26,346
Burnt River SD 30j	*	\$3,826	*	\$284
Butte Falls SD 91	*	\$2,748	*	\$1,327
Camas Valley SD 21j	*	\$1,283	*	\$1,200
Canby SD 86	69	\$127,238	69	\$147,052
Cascade SD 5	67	\$142,465	42	\$79,464
Centennial SD 28j	83	\$136,734	74	\$113,377
Central Curry SD 1	*	\$6,304	10	\$11,253
Central Linn SD 552	14	\$23,049	12	\$24,119

School District	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
Central Point SD 6	48	\$86,443	45	\$92,858
Central SD 13j	46	\$70,800	35	\$68,988
Clatskanie SD 6j	*	\$18,040	*	\$11,630
Colton SD 53	*	\$16,745	*	\$6,787
Condon SD 25j			*	\$850
Coos Bay SD 9	42	\$42,433	27	\$38,630
Coquille SD 8	15	\$22,531	*	\$18,141
Corbett SD 39	26	\$50,503	13	\$28,364
Corvallis SD 509j	99	\$172,100	76	\$162,854
Cove SD 15	*	\$5,883	*	\$567
Creswell SD 40	21	\$42,368	20	\$35,375
Crook County SD	37	\$55,304	37	\$61,055
Crow-Applegate-Lorane SD 66	*	\$18,407	*	\$4,831
Culver SD 4	14	\$14,865	18	\$30,798
Dallas SD 2	59	\$112,505	49	\$99,858
David Douglas SD 40	152	\$172,560	121	\$176,419
Dayton SD 8	27	\$45,678	18	\$40,015
Dayville SD 16j	*	\$2,081	*	\$850
Douglas County SD 15	*	\$5,938	*	\$7,245
Douglas County SD 4	82	\$154,743	75	\$141,659
Dufur SD 29	*	\$18,660	*	\$5,029
Eagle Point SD 9	44	\$60,808	41	\$64,248
Echo SD 5	*	\$4,807	*	\$7,930
Elgin SD 23	*	\$2,581	*	\$4,612
Elkton SD 34	*	\$11,605	*	\$7,519
Enterprise SD 21	*	\$6,529	*	\$5,308
Estacada SD 108	48	\$73,228	46	\$87,500
Eugene SD 4j	245	\$389,961	242	\$451,891

School District	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
Falls City SD 57	*	\$3,187	*	\$7,183
Fern Ridge SD 28j	29	\$58,238	26	\$37,781
Forest Grove SD 15	117	\$174,741	84	\$151,867
Fossil SD 21j	*	\$5,111	*	\$3,928
Gaston SD 511j	11	\$16,333	*	\$10,857
Gervais SD 1	16	\$22,652	18	\$34,158
Gladstone SD 115	36	\$64,264	28	\$55,271
Glendale SD 77	*	\$3,756	*	\$5,725
Glide SD 12	22	\$30,646	14	\$29,418
Grants Pass SD 7	68	\$108,378	70	\$110,990
Greater Albany Public SD 8j	158	\$273,504	123	\$227,080
Gresham-Barlow SD 10j	171	\$316,934	194	\$360,222
Harney County SD 3	15	\$25,816	15	\$20,464
Harney County Union High SD 1j	*	\$800		
Harper SD 66	*	\$850	*	\$683
Harrisburg SD 7j	12	\$20,815	*	\$11,706
Helix SD 1	*	\$5,415		
Hermiston SD 8	31	\$58,178	30	\$48,990
Hillsboro SD 1j	342	\$660,427	295	\$576,289
Hood River County SD	89	\$163,571	67	\$123,074
Imbler SD 11	*	\$9,914	*	\$932
Ione SD R2	*	\$9,410	*	\$5,099
Jefferson County SD 509j	30	\$41,767	24	\$38,015
Jefferson SD 14j	19	\$27,198	13	\$23,173
Jewell SD 8	*	\$9,845	*	\$6,585
John Day SD 3	13	\$26,214	10	\$15,137
Jordan Valley SD 3	*	\$3,960		
Joseph SD 6	*	\$8,048	*	\$4,831

School District	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
Junction City SD 69	22	\$42,540	15	\$33,395
Klamath County SD	94	\$131,153	58	\$89,216
Klamath Falls City Schools	36	\$40,563	30	\$32,193
Knappa SD 4	15	\$27,460	13	\$19,426
La Grande SD 1	10	\$24,856	*	\$13,030
Lake County SD 7	*	\$14,607	*	\$19,531
Lake Oswego SD 7j	60	\$122,874	63	\$154,529
Lebanon Community SD 9	67	\$111,207	49	\$88,360
Lincoln County SD	83	\$134,952	63	\$94,361
Long Creek SD 17		\$7,394		
Lowell SD 71	*	\$401	*	\$13,761
Mapleton SD 32	*	\$25,103		
Marcola SD 79j	10	\$2,985	*	\$11,924
Mckenzie SD 68	*	\$133,476	*	\$1,895
Mcminnville SD 40	85	\$196,944	86	\$129,803
Medford SD 549c	122	\$10,066	145	\$225,463
Milton-Freewater Unified SD 7	*		*	\$2,790
Mitchell SD 55				
Molalla River SD 35	46	\$68,130	35	\$58,693
Monroe SD 1j	*	\$19,505	*	\$10,503
Monument SD 8	*	\$7,636	*	\$3,778
Morrow SD 1	30	\$47,697	28	\$46,435
Mt Angel SD 91	*	\$14,575	11	\$13,350
Multnomah Esd	*	\$684	*	\$951
Myrtle Point SD 41	*	\$12,903	*	\$16,483
Neah-Kah-Nie SD 56	11	\$17,702	*	\$8,913
Nestucca Valley SD 101j	19	\$29,270	14	\$11,526
Newberg SD 29j	74	\$131,203	72	\$132,458

School District	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
North Bend SD 13	51	\$84,553	41	\$78,504
North Clackamas SD 12	261	\$505,004	224	\$423,228
North Douglas SD 22	*	\$17,950	*	\$8,369
North Lake SD 14	*	\$5,555	*	\$1,050
North Marion SD 15	32	\$50,974	26	\$45,367
North Powder SD 8j	*	\$5,289		
North Santiam SD 29j	44	\$63,926	35	\$70,442
North Wasco County SD 21	35	\$58,783	26	\$41,548
Nyssa SD 26	*	\$15,536	*	\$9,228
Oakland SD 1	16	\$30,033	15	\$24,690
Oakridge SD 76	10	\$16,067	*	\$8,314
Ode Ycep District	*	\$634	*	\$1,482
Ontario SD 8c	38	\$36,667	32	\$38,681
Oregon City SD 62	135	\$226,024	108	\$216,252
Oregon Department of Education	*	\$4,676	*	\$1,884
Oregon Trail SD 46	62	\$122,435	47	\$105,536
Paisley SD 11	*	\$2,570	*	\$3,451
Parkrose SD 3	30	\$49,913	21	\$43,398
Pendleton SD 16	37	\$72,188	33	\$74,416
Perrydale SD 21	*	\$7,341	*	\$8,213
Philomath SD 17j	35	\$77,165	25	\$40,083
Phoenix-Talent SD 4	21	\$31,330	27	\$35,001
Pilot Rock SD 2	10	\$16,034	*	\$14,962
Pine Eagle SD 61	*	\$3,357	*	\$8,079
Pleasant Hill SD 1	18	\$28,126	12	\$24,617
Port Orford-Langlois SD 2cj	*	\$1,701		
Portland SD 1j	500	\$745,853	456	\$803,158
Powers SD 31	*	\$401		

School District	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
Prairie City SD 4	*	\$5,599	1	\$567
Prospect SD 59				
Rainier SD 13	*	\$8,928	*	\$4,176
Redmond SD 2j	60	\$96,478	59	\$105,674
Reedsport SD 105	11	\$19,926	13	\$19,736
Reynolds SD 7	118	\$147,675	95	\$122,286
Riddle SD 70	*	\$1,285	*	\$8,775
Riverdale SD 51j	*	\$3,855	*	\$567
Rogue River SD 35	*	\$10,847	*	\$9,228
Salem-Keizer SD 24j	725	\$1,083,029	639	\$1,020,843
Santiam Canyon SD 129j	103	\$176,921	70	\$121,007
Scappoose SD 1j	60	\$116,864	38	\$81,958
Scio SD 95	14	\$32,155	8	\$16,573
Seaside SD 10	36	\$52,899	33	\$48,956
Sheridan SD 48j	20	\$26,372	15	\$14,988
Sherman County SD	*	\$11,349	*	\$6,303
Sherwood SD 88j	68	\$149,222	65	\$163,759
Silver Falls SD 4j	87	\$163,438	95	\$172,275
Sisters SD 6	23	\$39,821	17	\$38,826
Siuslaw SD 97j	12	\$23,370	*	\$8,682
South Lane SD 45j3	49	\$83,098	34	\$50,851
South Umpqua SD 19	12	\$22,756	18	\$25,777
South Wasco County SD 1	*	\$8,844	*	\$9,646
Spray SD 1	*	\$401	*	\$283
Springfield SD 19	124	\$210,465	126	\$227,583
St Helens SD 502	42	\$77,201	38	\$78,453
St Paul SD 45	15	\$36,948	17	\$42,352
Stanfield SD 61	*	\$2,706	*	\$850

School District	2020-21		2021-22	
	Number of students	Total dollars	Number of students	Total dollars
Sutherlin SD 130	41	\$55,229	36	\$57,244
Sweet Home SD 55	33	\$62,515	30	\$70,987
Three Rivers/Josephine County SD	61	\$78,706	50	\$53,802
Tigard-Tualatin SD 23j	177	\$311,613	169	\$343,597
Tillamook SD 9	39	\$51,019	28	\$34,370
Ukiah SD 80r				
Umatilla SD 6r	*	\$11,380	*	\$12,980
Union SD 5	*	\$4,253	*	\$6,048
Unknown	743	\$985,608	739	\$1,105,737
Vale SD 84	12	\$23,491	12	\$14,224
Vernonia SD 47j	*	\$13,755	*	\$17,635
Wallowa SD 12				\$2,667
Warrenton-Hammond SD 30	16	\$26,503	12	\$15,838
West Linn-Wilsonville SD 3j	112	\$201,413	91	\$190,152
Willamina SD 30j	*	\$7,659	*	\$3,346
Winston-Dillard SD 116	12	\$29,314	15	\$27,111
Woodburn SD 103	114	\$126,585	89	\$104,384
Yamhill Carlton SD 1	19	\$30,190	12	\$28,017
Yoncalla SD 32	*	\$6,270	*	\$851
Blank	116	\$213,633	100	\$181,131
State	8,947	\$14,645,791	7,757	\$13,542,827

* Denotes fewer than 10 students, with exact number suppressed to protect student confidentiality.

APPENDIX D. STUDENT COMPLETIONS

Table D 1. Percentage of high school graduates who completed a postsecondary certificate or degree from an Oregon community college, public university, or private, nonprofit institution within three years after high school graduation, by student characteristics and year.

High school graduation year	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Student characteristic						
By Race/Ethnicity						
Asian/American	7%	6%	9%	7%	8%	9%
Black/African American	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Latino/a/x/Hispanic	5%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%
Native American/Alaskan Native	6%	7%	6%	6%	4%	7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	4%	2%	4%	5%	3%	3%
Two or More Races	5%	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%
White	7%	7%	8%	8%	8%	7%
By Geography						
Rural	8%	8%	9%	9%	9%	8%
Urban or mixed	5%	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%
Not reported	10%	9%	11%	7%	7%	8%

Table D 2. Percentage of high school graduates who completed a postsecondary certificate or degree from an Oregon community college, public university, or private, nonprofit institution within five years after high school graduation, by student characteristics and year.

High school graduation year \ Student characteristic	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	By Race/Ethnicity			
Asian/American	39%	37%	40%	38%
Black/African American	11%	11%	15%	13%
Latino/a/x/Hispanic	16%	17%	19%	17%
Native American/Alaskan Native	16%	17%	16%	13%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	13%	16%	17%	11%
Two or More Races	23%	24%	22%	24%
White	24%	25%	26%	25%
By Geography				
Rural	21%	21%	22%	21%
Urban or mixed	24%	25%	26%	25%
Not reported	17%	17%	19%	14%

