



HOUSE BILL 4076 "OREGON PROMISE SUPPORT  
SERVICES" FINAL REPORT

A report to the Oregon Legislature  
April 2017

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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House Bill 4076 (2016) allocated \$1,659,800 to the Higher Education Coordinating Commissions for distribution to community colleges and community college services districts. The purpose of this funding is to provide support services for person who enroll in courses offered at a community college within one year of attaining a high school diploma or equivalency, including those students who received the Oregon Promise. The three required elements of the students support services identified in HB 4076 are 1) a first-year experience, 2) a student success team, and 3) professional development for faculty and staff to enable them to provide intentional, strategic intervention.

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is required to provide two reports to the interim legislative committees related to education and summarize the distributions made under this section and the information received from the community colleges regarding the use of the moneys received. This is the second of two reports.

In order to provide the opportunity for all colleges to meet the requirements of the legislation, the funding was divided into twenty allotments of \$82,990, one for each community college except for Portland Community College, which received four payments, one for each of its campuses. Each college is required to provide three reports on the use of funds: Report #1 is a project plan and budget (due with signed contract), Report #2 (due November 23, 2016) discusses project activities and provides an updated budget, and Report #3 (due March 30, 2017) provides an update on project activities and spending.

As of April 7, 2017, all seventeen community colleges have submitted Reports 2 and 3 detailing activities and spending to date. Based on the sixteen reports received, \$1,066,004, or 64.2 percent of total funding, has been spent. All community colleges have plans to expend remaining grant funds prior to the end of the biennium.

In addition to summarizing expenditures to date, this report includes information on the retention of Oregon Promise students from fall term 2016 to winter term 2017. Overall fall-to-winter retention of Oregon Promise students is 89.2 percent. This is an increase of approximately 7 percent when compared to a comparable cohort of students form 2014-15. Finally, this report includes information on grant activities and first-year experienced at Oregon's community colleges.

## HOUSE BILL 4076 OVERVIEW

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House Bill 4076 (2016) provides funding for student support services for first-year students attending community college, including those who receive the Oregon Promise, with a General Fund appropriation of \$1,659,800 to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to community colleges and community college services districts. The purpose of this funding is to provide support services for person who enroll in courses offered at a community college within one year of attaining a high school diploma or equivalency, including those students who received the Oregon Promise. The three required elements of the students support services identified in HB 4076 are 1) a first-year experience, 2) a student success team, and 3) professional development for faculty and staff to enable them to provide intentional, strategic intervention. The full text of Section 4 is provided below:

SECTION 4. (1) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall distribute moneys as a grant to every community college for the purpose of providing support services for persons who enroll in courses offered at a community college in this state within one year of attaining the highest level of education described in ORS 341.522 (3)(c) or who receive a grant under ORS 341.522.

(2) A community college must use moneys received under this section to provide support services at each campus of the community college. The support services must implement proven multiyear strategies that incorporate elements of student services and faculty and staff development to improve academic success or completion rates, and must provide at least all of the following:

(a) A first-year experience for persons described in subsection (1) of this section that is provided through a series of intentional, strategic interventions.

(b) A student success team to serve persons described in subsection (1) of this section.

(c) Professional development for community college faculty and staff to enable the faculty and staff to provide intentional, strategic interventions to persons described in sub-section (1) of this section.

(3)(a) No later than November 30, 2016, and April 7, 2017, each community college shall report to the commission regarding the use of the moneys received under this section. (b) No later than December 31, 2016, and April 30, 2017, the commission shall submit to the interim legislative committees related to education a report that summarizes the distributions made under this section and the information received under paragraph (a) of this subsection.<sup>1</sup>

In order to provide the opportunity for all colleges to meet the requirements of the legislation, the disbursement is structured as twenty payments of \$82,990, one for each community college except for Portland Community College, which received four payments, one for each of its campuses. Each college is required to provide three reports on the use of funds: Report #1 is a project plan and budget (due with signed contract), Report #2 (due November 23, 2016) discusses project activities and provides an updated budget, and Report #3 (due March 30, 2017) provides an update on project activities and spending.

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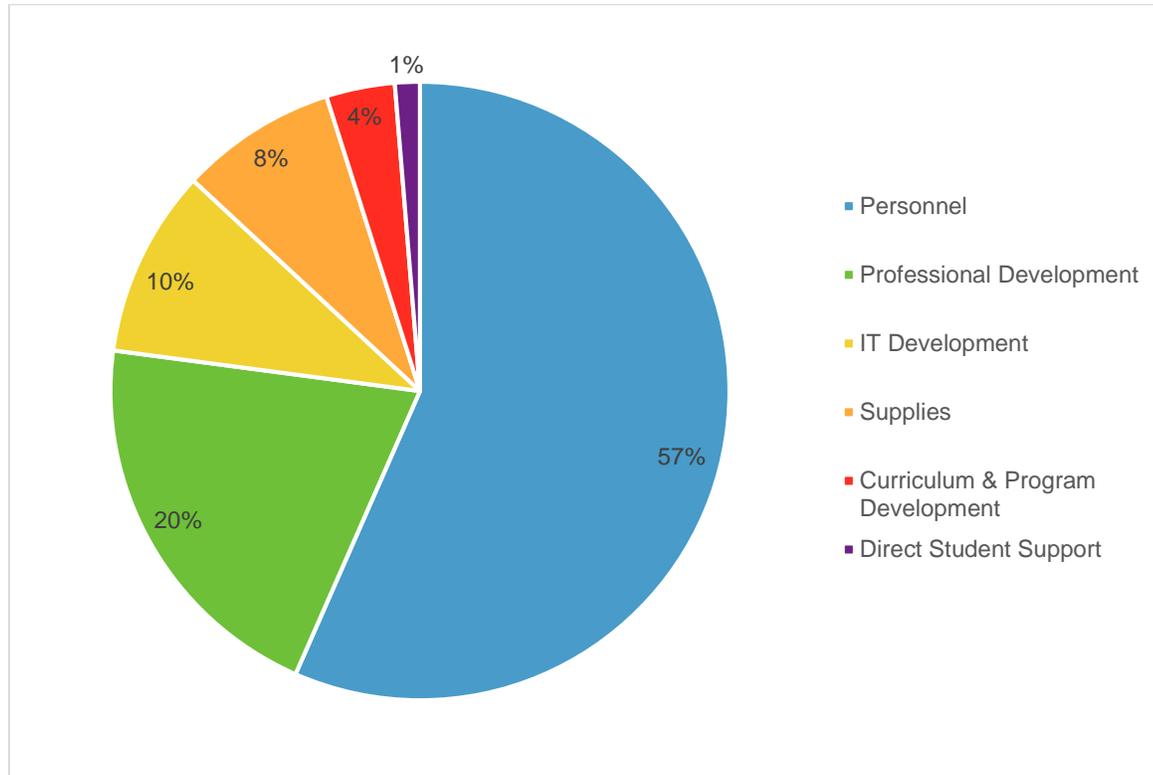
<sup>1</sup> Enrolled House Bill 4076. Accessed from:  
<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2016R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4076/Enrolled>

## SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

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Funds from HB 4076 have been used to develop first-year experiences, create student success teams, and provide professional development for faculty and staff to enable them to provide intentional, strategic intervention in a few different ways. Chart 1 identifies the distribution of funds by category across Oregon's seventeen community colleges.

Chart 1: Use of HB 4076 Funds



The largest area of investment for colleges was in personnel. Examples of investments in personnel include hiring additional academic advisors and career coaches, supporting faculty and staff teaching first-year experience courses, providing additional access to financial aid staff, or identifying staff that could increase student participation in orientation and welcome activities on campus. In some instances, colleges had intended to devote more resources to personnel, but due to staff turnover or hiring difficulties, relied upon existing staff and redirected grant funds to other areas.

The second largest area of investment was in professional development. Identified as a key activity for grant funds, colleges supported faculty and staff participation in professional development opportunities both in Oregon (Student Success Conference, Oregon Academic Advising Conference, Growth Mindset trainings) and nationally (NACADA – National Academic Advising Association, Achieving the Dream). Other colleges supported professional development on campus using local resources or contracted services. Two colleges used funding to hire AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), a nonprofit organization that provides professional development to faculty and staff as well as student coaching for several secondary and post-secondary education institutions in Oregon.

The third largest category of investment was in IT development. One college focused on developing an early alert system to assist with student retention while a second created an on-line portal for orientation and advising that can be used by all students. Most colleges also devoted a portion of their funding to supplies. These investments varied from acquiring computers for new advisors to purchasing supplies for new student orientations.

In addition to the investments already described, some colleges focused resources specifically on curriculum and program development and direct student support. Two colleges used the opportunity to invest in making improvements to their first year experience curriculum in an effort to increase student engagement and retention. Two other colleges, in looking at their student populations identified more direct student need. To serve students in their community, one community college hired a number of students to serve as ambassadors, while a second used funds they had initially planned for on-campus events to provide textbook vouchers for Oregon Promise student.

## OREGON PROMISE RECIPIENTS' FALL TO WINTER RETENTION

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A review of fall-to-winter retention of the first cohort of Oregon Promise students shows an 89.2 percent retention rate. This is an increase of approximately 7 percent when compared to a comparable cohort of

Table 1: Fall 2016 to Winter 2017 Retention of Oregon Promise Students

<b>Oregon Community College</b>	<b>Fall '16 Count</b>	<b>Winter '17 Count*</b>	<b>Fall-to-Winter Retention</b>
Blue Mountain Community College	146	133	<b>91.1%</b>
Central Oregon Community College	564	488	<b>86.5%</b>
Chemeketa Community College	1040	954	<b>91.7%</b>
Clackamas Community College	515	444	<b>86.2%</b>
Clatsop Community College	58	50	<b>86.2%</b>
Columbia Gorge Community College	92	73	<b>79.4%</b>
Klamath Community College	125	115	<b>92.0%</b>
Lane Community College	619	568	<b>91.8%</b>
Linn Benton Community College	631	543	<b>86.1%</b>
Mount Hood Community College	563	499	<b>88.6%</b>
Portland Community College	1550	1395	<b>90.0%</b>
Rogue Community College	326	279	<b>85.6%</b>
Southwestern Oregon Community College	194	175	<b>90.2%</b>
Tillamook Bay Community College	21	21	<b>100.0%</b>
Treasure Valley Community College	69	63	<b>91.3%</b>
Umpqua Community College	219	202	<b>92.2%</b>
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>6732</b>	<b>6002</b>	<b>89.2%</b>

\* Includes 11 students who first received the Oregon Promise in the Winter 2017 term

students from 2014-15.2. Table 1 identifies the Fall 2016 and Winter 2017 enrollment as well as retention rates for each community college and statewide.

## SELECTED CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

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While participation in a First-Year Experience (FYE) is a requirement for Oregon Promise recipients who wish to maintain their eligibility for the grant, the structure of the FYE was left up to each college. While not all took the same approach, several commonalities were identified. First, student success courses that were mandatory for Oregon Promise students were always made available to other interested students as well. A few colleges went beyond encouraging non-Oregon Promise students and made student success courses mandatory for other groups (recent high school graduates, all first-time full time degree-seeking students) as well. Second, the majority of community colleges required participation in a student success course only during the first-term, though advising and additional student supports are provided to students all year. Third, colleges used a mixture of on-line and in-person activities to engage the largest number of students and to provide alternatives for students whose schedule did not allow them to be on-campus for new student orientation events or other welcome activities.

The section provides some information about the approaches used by Oregon's community colleges to welcome, inform and retain Oregon Promise recipients.

### Blue Mountain Community College

Blue Mountain Community Colleges' First Year Experience is a series of activities rather than a formal course. All new students are invited to "Welcome to the Pack" – a daylong event for all new BMCC students. This is a day dedicated to student success through connection, engagement, and preparation for a first term successful start. All Oregon Promise students were required to and did participate in this day event. In addition to in-person events, new degree/certificate seeking students are required to participate in an online New Student Orientation, are assigned a Success Coach upon admission, and are required to meet with their Success Coach prior to enrolling their first term. Success Coaches have a list of objectives and topics to cover with their new students during this first meeting including developing a 1<sup>st</sup> term academic plan. Once the student has completed this step, the Success Coach clears them for registration and assigns a Faculty Advisor to the student. Faculty Advisors then meet with the new student their 2<sup>nd</sup> term, and every term after for academic advising – this is required each term. Blue Mountain Community College's investments focused on support for an early alert system to identify student issues and professional development for faculty and staff.

### Central Oregon Community College

COCC is building off of the work of their First Year Experience task force from 2013-14 and have hired a professional advisor dedicated to Oregon Promise students. The college has also expanded the number of college success courses it offers in order to provide capacity for over 400 students. Its use of grant funds has focused on expanding their college success courses, promoting student participation in orientation and college success classes, and improving the First Year Experience. Their College Success course is designed to give new students a broad overview of college and life success strategies. The course introduces students to college

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2 Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission, December 2016. "Senate Bill 8 Legislative Report: The First Term of the Oregon Promise". Pg. iv. Retrieved from: <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/research/Documents/Legislative/SB-81-Report-Oregon-Promise-1st-term-2016.pdf>.

resources, student services and personal behaviors that support successful academic transition, growth and planning. Topics include personal responsibility, self-motivation, time management, academic planning, financial planning, decision-making, health and learning styles. They are working with a curriculum designer to update the course this coming year.

#### Chemeketa Community College

Chemeketa Community College is collaborating with AVID, a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing achievement gaps for students in secondary and postsecondary education. They have used funds to support a contract with AVID, certifying faculty to teach a Creating College Success Course, training peer tutors to help students complete courses, and additional professional development for faculty and staff around student success.

#### Clackamas Community College

Clackamas Community College is developing a case management process for scholarship and Oregon Promise students that engages student at entry, orientation, and advising through completion. The college currently has three different options for First Year Experience for students and will provide additional training to faculty and staff on using the case management system and support students in their First Year Experience and beyond. They have invested funds in career coaches, a financial aid assistance, and the development of training materials for advising.

#### Clatsop Community College

Clatsop Community College is the only college to require students to enroll in two terms of student success courses to maintain Oregon Promise eligibility. Their course, Leadership: Student Government is one credit per term that focuses on leadership in action through service learning and promotes campus and community service by providing students with an understanding of the theoretical and practical nature of student leadership. Students actively serve as members of the Associated Student Government to conduct meetings, serve as a voice for students at campus meetings, provide a resource for other students with concerns, and contribute to campus communication directed to students through email, newsletter or other media. Grant funds were used for personnel, professional development, support for student engagement and service learning activities, and textbook vouchers for students.

#### Columbia Gorge Community College

CGCC has assembled a student success team and has contracted with a company to create an online orientation portal that will provide institution-wide resource information and training to all CGCC students, staff, and faculty. Once in place, the online orientation will be a required aspect of the onboarding process for new students, staff, and faculty. Advising will be mandatory for incoming students as well. It is also in the process of establishing a Faculty Mentorship Program for students. Funds have been directed to creating the on-line portal.

#### Klamath Community College

Klamath Community College has created a cohort-based First Year Experience for Oregon Promise students to support retention and completion. The college has developed plans for campus events and workshops that engage students in the campus community and develop critical thinking skills. In addition, Oregon Promise students must enroll in CGS 110, Study Skills for College Learning. This course is also open to other students.

Funds have been directed towards staffing in Student Life, student services, and First Year Experience programming.

#### Lane Community College

Students receiving the Oregon Promise Grant at Lane were invited to a 1-day success seminar in September and enrolled in a 3-term online success curriculum specially designed to foster connection and retention. This curriculum is non-credit, free, and uses cost-free "OERs" (online educational resources). The comprehensive success curriculum included both distance and in-person activities to help students clarify individual career, academic and financial paths. Students were able to access success coaching via text, email and in-person. Between terms, success coaches reached out to students who were not meeting requirements for satisfactory academic progress to provide support and referrals. The success curriculum designed for Oregon Promise grant recipients connects students with existing campus resources in an engaging and supportive manner. It does not take the place of a college success, financial planning or career planning course, but provides an accessible, economical introduction to all three using a unique compilation of curricular success activities. Funds have been invested in personnel and professional development for faculty and staff.

#### Linn-Benton Community College

Linn-Benton's student success course focuses on promoting student success. Students learn strategies for college success, become familiar with campus resources, establish a relationship with their advisor and develop an education plan for their college career. Funds have been used to increase advising services in the college's new Advising Center, support the work of the Academic Advising for Retention Group (AARG). Finally, a portion of an AVID contract, and creating a Center for Learning and Innovation.

#### Mt. Hood Community College

Mt. Hood Community College has brought together a student success team, developed new student orientation materials specifically for Oregon Promise students, hosted several open house events, and developed a non-cognitive student assessment to better identify the level of intervention that individual students will need. Its work builds off of an existing contract with AVID and funds are directed towards staffing for first year experience courses, professional development and an email and phone call campaign to engage potential Oregon Promise students.

#### Portland Community College

PCC has developed the Oregon Promise Path, a district-wide effort that expands successful efforts to help students progress through the community college experience. The strategies used include a comprehensive a mandatory Welcome Day (and online alternative for students who are unable to attend in person) mandatory academic advising, a 3-credit mandatory college success and career exploration course, and structured intentional use of an Early Alert System. Funds have been used to hire a full-time program manager and 2.5 additional academic advisers, as well as training on the early alert systems for 26 advisers.

#### Rogue Community College

RCC has created a new Freshman Experience team made up of faculty, staff, and leadership for the express purpose of increasing fall-to-fall retention for targeted students. This includes creating a more clearly defined first year for students and providing them the information and skills to access campus resources, choose a major, and secure the finances necessary to succeed. All students are required to take a first year experience course. An assigned academic advisor will create individualized academic plans for the students, and financial

aid counseling will be provided. Grant funds have been used for a full-time academic advisor and additional course sections.

#### Southwestern Oregon Community College

SWOCC's has developed a New Student Orientation for all incoming full-time degree-seeking students, which includes all Oregon Promise students. This is mandatory for all full-time degree-seeking students. In addition to the orientation, the college created a 1-credit college success course, available in-person and on-line to help students develop study skills and learn to navigate college. Funds have been used to acquire financial literacy software for students, professional development for faculty and staff, and supplies to support advising and student engagement.

#### Tillamook Bay Community College

TBCC's activities focus on better communication with students, consistent messaging through student contact systems, implementing a new summer orientation for students, and professional development of faculty and staff. The college has an all-day student orientation, career planning, advising, and mentoring for students. Its student success team includes the college President, as well as the Director for Development and Title II Grant Project Director to ensure that activities funded through HB 4076 are sustainable. Funds have focused on professional development for faculty and staff.

#### Treasure Valley Community College

TVCC provides support services to students through a comprehensive first year experience that includes a new student and parent orientation, student academic engagement using an online degree planner and connection with a faculty advisor in the students' areas of study, two freshman seminars, expanded student leadership opportunities, and connection to career resources through a career adviser. In order to maintain eligibility in FYE at minimum they are required to participate in Academic Advising with the Oregon Promise advisor and enrollment in either a Freshman Seminar, College Success, or program specific success courses for student in agriculture or natural resource programs. TVCC strongly encourages participation in other components of FYE such as New Student Orientation, Student Leadership, Clubs, Activities, Tutoring, etc.) Funds focused on professional development and supplies.

#### Umpqua Community College

UCC planned to use grant funds to hire a first-year experience specialist to help support and expand the New Student Orientation and College Success classes. Due to turnover in that position, existing staff absorbed much of the work planned for that position. Nonetheless, the college provided a series of two-hour on-campus orientations, developed and offered three First-Year Experience (FYE) Seminars, and created a FYE Newsletter. Funds were used primarily for personnel and professional development.

## CONCLUSION

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This report provides information on HB 4076 (2016) grant activities providing support to Oregon Promise recipients during their first year of enrollment in an Oregon community college. Colleges invested primarily in personnel and professional development to support student success in college, specifically in advising, coaching, financial aid, financial literacy, career planning and community/campus engagement. While there is insufficient information to identify a cause and effect relationship between specific campus interventions and

improvements to student retention, an overall improvement in student retention can be seen among Oregon Promise recipients when compared to a similar cohort of students from 2014-15. Because the first-year experiences for Oregon Promise students are available to other incoming student as well, and the faculty and staff that who received professional development also work with students that have not received the Oregon Promise, it is likely that these investments will have a positive impact on retention that extends beyond Oregon Promise recipients.

