



Oregon

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Testimony for HB 2313 Amendments March 9, 2017

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Good afternoon Chair Reardon, Vice Chairs Alonso Leon and Whisnant and members of the House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development. For the record my name is Dr. Hilda Rosselli, policy director for College and Career Readiness in the Chief Education Office. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the -1 Amendments for HB 2313.

Oregon's ambitious 40-40-20 goal has focused the state's efforts on developing a college-going culture and equitable exposure for students to college level coursework and experiences while they are still enrolled in high school. In 2012, the Eastern Promise project was launched to increase access to early college credit and create a college-going culture for high school students throughout eastern Oregon. This initiative resulted in positive improvements in attendance, graduation, and college enrollment rates. Pivotal to their work were five pillars that included:

1. Fostering college going culture,
2. Closing gaps in access and funding services
3. Providing all students with a variety of accelerated college credit options
4. Commitment to cross-sector collaboration between high school and postsecondary partners
5. Creation of cross-sector professional learning communities

Since 2014-15, the Oregon State Legislature has allocated funding to increase the number of high school students completing college courses and high school teachers eligible to teach college credit courses vis-a-vis regional consortium composed of school districts, education services districts, and local postsecondary institutions. These Regional Promise projects in 2014-15 served higher percentages of students in poverty, students of color and students in rural schools than other types of accelerated courses. These types of projects are particularly relevant given the research showing that a learner's high school experience, academic achievements¹, and academic identity² shape their perceptions of college and whether they consider themselves a good prospect for college. Furthermore, students' scripts related to

¹ Farrell, P. and Seifert, K.A. (2007). Lessons learned from a Dual Enrollment Partnership. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. (139), 69-77.

² Howard, T. (2003). A Tug of War for Our Minds: African American High School Students' Perceptions of their Academic Identities and College Aspiration. *The High School Journal*. 87 (1), 4-17.

race, socio-economic status and potential can become less prevalent as students develop new common identities with other students enrolled in college going classes³.

The innovative nature of these projects has led to strengthening the rigor and relevance of coursework offered, and poised considerable policy questions regarding how best to implement equitable and sustainable funding for accelerated college credit programs and for the transitional supports needed by students. Data in Oregon still suggest that there are still inequities across schools and our underserved student populations in terms of high school students' access to college level coursework.

Last year, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) formed a 14-member Accelerated Work Group (ALWG) that met monthly to review existing standards and determine new standards that might be needed for accelerated learning opportunities that take place at the high school as part of the high school program. The group proposed two new, additional sets of standards for dual credit for high school-based accelerated learning that were subsequently approved by the HECC with the first phase of implementation underway with the Oversight Committee for High School Based College Credit Partnerships.

The group's final report to HECC called for a subsequent work group to further the vision for accelerated learning in Oregon in order to provide opportunities for students to start on their college path while still in high school; and integrate with other student transition and success efforts.

Amendments to this bill charge the Chief Education Office, the Department of Education and the Higher Education Coordination Commission to jointly convene said task force to determine how to:

- Expand students' college and career readiness for more Oregon students and remove barriers to their transitions into post-secondary education; and
- Ensure equitable access to accelerated learning opportunities for underserved students or students from rural communities.

This charge aligns with the mission of the Chief Education Office to build and coordinate a seamless system of education that meets the diverse learning needs of every Oregonian and furthers the vision of the agency to ensure that each and every Oregon student is ready to learn, on-track, and prepared for their future with the support and opportunities they need to thrive.

In our convening role, the Chief Education Office will seek to expand student access to personalized pathways of learning, especially for historically underserved and rural communities and use our convening capacity with stakeholders to co-construct powerful solutions that can be brought back to this committee.

³ Brooks, J. (2011). Exploring the college-going scripts of students enrolled in a rural early college high school. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.