



Oregon Community College Association  
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**Date:** April 2, 2019

**To:** Joint Ways & Means Education Subcommittee

**From:** Oregon Community College Association

**RE:** Support for the Public Universities Budget Request

Public postsecondary education partners have supported students across Oregon with a singular focus – ensuring their education success. The 17 community colleges and the 7 public universities served more than 344,750 students last year, providing high quality educational programs that will enable them to transition into the workplace or on to graduate or professional fields of study. Due to the interconnected nature of postsecondary education Oregon's community colleges and public universities are aligned and united in advocating for improved funding across the education continuum.

Over the past decade there has been a state funding disinvestment in postsecondary education. This disinvestment has led to higher tuition costs and higher student debt. As community colleges experienced a drop in state investment our students have seen a nearly proportional increase in the cost of tuition. Over the last decade there has been an increase of over 10% in tuition as state support has dropped by nearly the same percentage. The hydraulic of lower state funding plays out similarly for our universities partners, pushing their tuition rates higher. Oregon community colleges are asking for \$787 million to keep programs, services robust and student tuition at 3.5% or lower, and, we are also supporting the \$856 million biennial budget request of the public universities.

The education continuum is really a set of bridges – from pre-K to kindergarten to elementary to secondary to postsecondary and beyond. We need all partners in the continuum working together for the best overall impact on the quality of life for Oregon citizens. The missions and student populations are different across community colleges and universities however the bottom line is the same – no matter where students are, or what educational programs they seek, Oregon benefits if our public postsecondary colleges and universities have the capacity to ensure our students success.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration for funding postsecondary education in Oregon.