



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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Salem, OR 97310

www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

March 14, 2019

Co-Chair, Senator Lew Frederick
Co-Chair, Representative Susan McLain
Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Education

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain,

Thank you for the opportunity to answer questions that arose during the March 13 Higher Education Coordinating Commission's presentation to the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education.

In reference to slide 18 focused on Oregon educational attainment rates and the 40-40-20 goal, Senator Frederick asked for information regarding communications strategies and outreach to adult learners.

While the HECC does provide outreach and information to adult learners on postsecondary opportunities, with a focus on the programs the agency administers, it is important to note that outreach and communication to potential students is a primary responsibility of postsecondary institutions themselves, generally through their admissions offices.

The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) has many financial aid programs that support adult learners, such as the Oregon Opportunity Grant, the Oregon Student Childcare Grant, the Oregon National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program, as well as other state programs and private scholarships. OSAC performs outreach and communications on these financial aid opportunities to adult learners through many channels including social media, publications, videos, webinars, community and school presentations, and other resources featured on the [OSAC Community and Outreach Services webpage](#). In its agency request budget, the HECC proposed an increased investment in outreach activities, and while it is not supported in the base budget, Governor Brown's investment plan supports this proposal with a \$2.6M College and Career Navigation investment. These funds would support HECC partnerships with community-based culturally specific organizations, K-12, and higher education institutions to ensure that diverse students (including adult students) receive support to navigate pathways to college and careers.

In addition to direct outreach from higher education institutions and HECC-OSAC, the HECC Office of Workforce Investments (OWI) coordinates with WorkSource Oregon to provide college and career information to dislocated workers and individuals who come into WorkSource centers.

In reference to slides 18-21 focused on Oregon educational attainment rates and the 40-40-20 goal, Representative Drazan requested information on completion rates by geography. Data on adult educational attainment by county is presented in **Appendix A**.

In response to slide 42 focused on Oregon undergraduate enrollment, Representative Meek requested background about the community college enrollment trend, including corresponding tuition information for the dates shown. **In Appendix B,** we have added tuition to this graph. Tuition was relatively flat before the

Great Recession and has risen since 2008-09. Additionally, we would like to point out that slide 42 focused on headcount enrollment, but full time equivalent (FTE) enrollment is much more stable than headcount, so we also added FTE to the graph for comparison. While FTE enrollment also rose during the Recession and fell during the recovery, the changes were much less pronounced than the changes in headcount enrollment. Current FTE levels are similar to pre-Recession levels.

In response to the slides on affordability, Representative McLain asked about the current use of Open Educational Resource (OER) materials. Decreasing textbook costs and expanding the use of OER has been a focus of the Legislature for the last two biennia. First, HB 2871 (2015) provided \$700,000 to develop OER, through which some faculty received grants to develop free and low cost textbooks for high enrollment courses. A number of introductory courses were developed, and a complete list of grantees can be found [here](#). Conservative estimates put savings for students at \$2M for this investment.

HB 2729 (2017) provided \$640,000 for OER, a portion of which was focused on developing courses that are transferrable between community college and universities. Course materials funded in the current biennium can be found [here](#). No legislative funding for OER is identified for 2019-21, though HB 2214 seeks to appropriate such funding.

In response to slide 51 focused on completion rates and affordability, Senator Roblan requested information about credit use and excess credits, in relation to accelerated learning and transfer pathways. Oregon students earn approximately 10 college credits, on average, from the community colleges and public universities by the time they graduate from high school, which is represented as HECC's Key Performance Metric #3. Students earn additional college credit through other means as well, such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs. However, not all of this credit is presented to or accepted by postsecondary institutions when students enroll after high school graduation. Students who enroll in a public university after high school graduation and have at least 10 college credits earned in high school that are accepted by the university earn their bachelor's degrees more quickly than those without accelerated learning credits, taking an average of 3.7 years to earn their degrees. On the other hand, students who entered as first-time freshmen with no accelerated learning credits accepted by the university took an average of 4.5 years to earn their bachelor's degrees. (Students who took longer than nine years to graduate or who did not graduate are excluded from this analysis.) Importantly, we do not know whether this shorter time to graduation is the direct result of the college credits earned during high school or if there are other factors that made some students both more able to take accelerated college credit in high school and more equipped to graduate from college sooner."

In regards to transfer credit, students who begin their postsecondary career at Oregon community colleges after high school and then transfer to one of the public universities have lower graduation rates, longer time to graduation, and more credit accumulated at graduation than students who enroll directly in the universities after high school. For those who transferred with 45-55 credits accepted by the university (approximately one full-time year), 52 percent graduate within five additional years at the university. This compares to 76 percent of first-time freshmen who complete their first full year at the university (i.e., who achieve sophomore status) and graduate within five additional years. For students who transferred with at least 90 credits accepted by the university (approximately two full-time years), 74 percent graduate within four additional years at the university. This compares to 84% of first-time freshmen who complete their first two years at the university (i.e., rise to junior status) and graduate within four additional years.

Please note that credits accepted by the university can come from a variety of sources, not only the community college from which the student transferred. Shown below are the number of credits with which 2016-17 students graduated:

Student group	Number of credits at bachelor's degree graduation
First-time freshmen who continue to junior year	201.7
Students who transfer from an Oregon community college with 90+ credits accepted and an associate degree	215.4
Students who transfer from an Oregon community college with 90+ credits accepted and do not have an associate degree	217.3

We will present additional information about recent work by HECC and public institutions to improve transfer pathways as directed by HB 2998 (2017) on day 4 of our presentations.

Representative Alonso Leon inquired about the impact of accelerated learning credits on financial aid upon enrollment. Accelerated credits can affect financial aid if it impacts the federal or school's standard for "satisfactory academic progress" in relation to time or GPA. If the student has excess credits, possibly from accelerated learning, switching majors, or transferring, the school can determine that they have exceeded the 150% of the time-frame limitation to complete a degree, rendering them ineligible for aid. Students are able to appeal and review this decision with the help of the financial aid administrator at their institution.

The one state financial aid program impacted by accelerated learning credit is the Oregon Promise, which is only awarded for the first 90 credits a student earns. Accelerated learning credits count toward this cap. About half of Oregon Promise students bring college credits earned in high school with them into college (accelerated learning), and the average number of credits they bring is 18. This reduces the number of credits they can earn under the program before reaching the 90 college credits for which the program will pay.

If you have further questions, please contact Kyle Thomas, Director of Legislative and Policy Affairs, at kyle.thomas@state.or.us or at 503-480-9596.

Sincerely,



Ben Cannon
Executive Director

APPENDIX A

Adult Educational Attainment by County

Adults 25-34 years old

Degree type County

	Baker	Benton	Clackamas	Clatsop	Columbia	Coos
Bachelor's degree or more	26%	57%	34%	19%	16%	13%
Associate or certificate (est.)	17%	16%	21%	24%	22%	22%
Some college, no degree	18%	15%	21%	26%	26%	22%
HS diploma or equivalent	26%	11%	17%	23%	26%	27%
Less than high school	13%	2%	7%	8%	9%	16%

	Crook	Curry	Deschutes	Douglas	Gilliam	Grant
Bachelor's degree or more	10%	13%	30%	19%	41%	24%
Associate or certificate (est.)	23%	24%	21%	21%	23%	20%
Some college, no degree	23%	15%	22%	24%	19%	19%
HS diploma or equivalent	31%	39%	21%	27%	13%	28%
Less than high school	12%	9%	6%	10%	4%	8%

APPENDIX A continued
Adult Educational Attainment by County
Adults 25-34 years old
Degree type County

	Harney	Hood River	Jackson	Jefferson	Josephine	Klamath
Bachelor's degree or more	28%	34%	20%	9%	15%	17%
Associate or certificate (est.)	16%	16%	20%	20%	21%	25%
Some college, no degree	27%	13%	25%	26%	24%	25%
HS diploma or equivalent	17%	12%	23%	28%	31%	21%
Less than high school	12%	26%	12%	17%	9%	12%

	Lake	Lane	Lincoln	Linn	Malheur	Marion
Bachelor's degree or more	17%	29%	17%	20%	9%	21%
Associate or certificate (est.)	20%	20%	21%	23%	22%	19%
Some college, no degree	21%	25%	24%	24%	25%	20%
HS diploma or equivalent	29%	19%	23%	25%	27%	24%
Less than high school	13%	7%	15%	9%	17%	16%

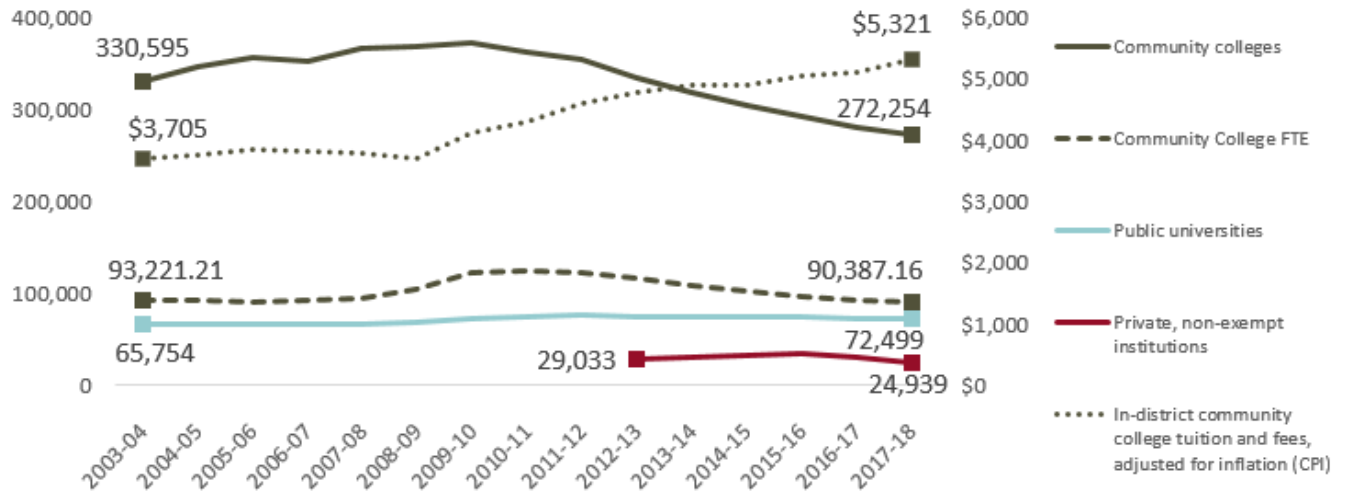
APPENDIX A continued
Adult Educational Attainment by County
Adults 25-34 years old
Degree type County

	Morrow	Multnomah	Polk	Sherman	Tillamook	Umatilla
Bachelor's degree or more	13%	48%	25%	16%	12%	13%
Associate or certificate (est.)	18%	15%	22%	19%	22%	21%
Some college, no degree	13%	17%	24%	19%	26%	23%
HS diploma or equivalent	30%	13%	18%	43%	32%	24%
Less than high school	25%	7%	10%	3%	9%	18%

	Union	Wallowa	Wasco	Washington	Wheeler	Yamhill
Bachelor's degree or more	21%	27%	19%	44%	17%	26%
Associate or certificate (est.)	20%	19%	25%	16%	25%	19%
Some college, no degree	28%	20%	23%	17%	19%	20%
HS diploma or equivalent	21%	27%	20%	15%	28%	22%
Less than high school	10%	7%	13%	8%	11%	13%

APPENDIX B

Oregon Undergraduate Enrollment Trends and Community College Tuition



1

Source: For public universities and community colleges: HECC analysis of student data from all institutions. Includes annual headcount for resident, undergraduate and non-admitted undergraduate students. For independent schools: HECC analysis of student data from private institutions that are authorized by the HECC and reported data. Includes annual headcount for resident and nonresident undergraduate students.

