SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

[Alters eligibility requirements and formula for establishing amount of award for Oregon Opportunity Grant and renewal of grant.]

Alters eligibility requirements and formula for establishing amount of award for Oregon Promise grant and renewal of grant. Expands Oregon Promise grant availability to qualified students enrolled at [any eligible post-secondary institution] community college, public university, Oregon Health and Science University or Oregon-based, generally accredited, not-for-profit institution of higher education and to include students in bachelor's degree programs.

[Changes name of Opportunity Grant Fund to College Opportunity Fund. Adds Oregon Opportunity Grant program to approved uses and purposes of fund.]

Establishes cumulative four-year full-time enrollment lifetime eligibility limit on total amount of Oregon Opportunity Grant and Oregon Promise grant awards any individual student may receive. [Becomes operative August 1, 2022.]

Increases minimum Oregon Promise grant award from $1,000 to $2,000.

Creates process for students denied eligibility for Oregon Promise grant during 2020-2021 academic year to qualify for grant during 2021-2022 academic year or obtain waiver from Higher Education Coordinating Commission. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2021.
(B) Determined by the office, in accordance with rules adopted by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, to be required for completion of:

(i) A one-year curriculum for students who plan to transfer to another post-secondary institution of education;

(ii) An associate degree; [or]

(iii) A bachelor's degree; or

(iv) A program in career and technical education;

(b) Except as provided in subsection (5) of this section, has been a resident of this state for at least 12 months prior to enrolling in the courses described in paragraph (a) of this subsection;

(c) Attained the person's highest level of education, except as provided in subsection (5) of this section, in this state prior to:

(A) Receiving a diploma under ORS 329.451;

(B) Receiving a certificate for passing an approved high school equivalency test such as the General Educational Development (GED) test as provided by ORS 350.175;

(C) Completing grade 12 in compliance with the requirements of ORS 339.035; or

(D) Completing grade 12 at a private or parochial school, as described in ORS 339.030 (1)(a);

(d) Except as provided in subsections (4) and (5) of this section, attained the person's highest level of education as described in paragraph (c) of this subsection within six months from the date that the person first enrolls in courses described in paragraph (a) of this subsection for the purpose of receiving a grant under this section;

(e) Earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better in high school or otherwise demonstrated an equivalent academic ability, as determined by the office according to rules adopted by the commission;

(f) Completed and submitted the Free Application for Federal Student Aid for each academic year and accepted all state and federal aid grants available to the person, if eligible to file the application; and

(g) Has not completed either of the following:

(A) More than the equivalent of six academic quarters or four academic semesters of full-time study as a student enrolled at a post-secondary institution of education [a total of 90 credit hours, or the equivalent, at a post-secondary institution of education]; or

(B) A curriculum, degree or program, as described in paragraph (a)(B) of this subsection.

(4)(a) If a person otherwise meets the required criteria and has been awarded a grant under subsection (3) of this section, but the person enters into service with a career and technical student organization relating to agriculture or farming that is approved by the Department of Education under ORS 344.077 within six months after the person attained the person's highest level of education as described in subsection (3)(c) of this section, the person will continue to be eligible to receive the grant if the person first enrolls in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section within six months of finishing the person's service with the career and technical student organization.

(b) In addition to the situation described in paragraph (a) of this subsection, the commission may waive the requirement set forth in subsection (3)(d) of this section for a person who shows that the person was unable to timely enroll in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section due to a significant hardship. The commission may adopt rules to implement this paragraph.

(5)(a) A member of the Oregon National Guard who has completed initial active duty training is not required to comply with the criteria set forth in subsection (3)(d) of this section in order to receive a grant, provided that the member first enrolls in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of
this section within six months after completing initial active duty training, as evidenced by an official form issued by the United States Department of Defense.

(b)(A) A person who completes the highest level of education as described in subsection (3)(c) of this section while confined in a correctional facility, either serving a sentence of incarceration or as a young person, youth or youth offender, is not required to comply with the criteria set forth in subsection (3)(d) of this section in order to receive a grant, provided that the person first enrolls in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section within six months after the date on which the person is first released from a correctional facility following completion of the highest level of education described in subsection (3)(c) of this section.

(B) The eligibility requirements described in subsection (6)(a)(C) of this section may be waived by the office according to rules adopted by the commission for a person who receives a grant under this section in the manner described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph.

(C) As used in this paragraph:

(i) “Correctional facility” means any place used for the confinement of young persons, youth or youth offenders or persons charged with or convicted of a crime or otherwise confined under a court order, including a:

(I) Youth correction facility;

(II) Detention facility;

(III) Department of Corrections institution;

(IV) Local correctional facility; or

(V) State hospital or a secure intensive community inpatient facility, with respect to persons detained therein who are youth or youth offenders, who are charged with or convicted of a crime or who are detained therein after having been found guilty except for insanity of a crime under ORS 161.290 to 161.373 or having been found responsible except for insanity under ORS 419C.411.

(ii) “Department of Corrections institution” has the meaning given that term in ORS 421.005.

(iii) “Detention facility,” “young person,” “youth” and “youth offender” have the meanings given those terms in ORS 419A.004.

(iv) “Local correctional facility” has the meaning given that term in ORS 169.005.

(v) “Youth correction facility” has the meaning given that term in ORS 420.005.

(c)(A) If a person was a foster child:

(i) The person shall be treated as meeting the residency criteria for eligibility under subsection (3)(b) of this section if, but for the person’s placement in out-of-state foster care, the person otherwise meets the requirements of subsection (3)(b) of this section.

(ii) The person shall be treated as attaining the person’s highest level of education in this state under subsection (3)(c) of this section if the person attained the person’s highest level of education while placed in out-of-state foster care and the person’s highest level of education substantially meets the requirements under subsection (3)(c) of this section.

(iii) The person is not required to comply with the criteria set forth in subsection (3)(d) of this section in order to receive a grant provided that the person completes the highest level of education as described in subparagraph (A)(ii) of this paragraph while in a treatment program and the person first enrolls in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section within 12 months after the date on which the person is released from the treatment program.

(B) Upon request from the commission, the Department of Human Services shall provide documentation of the placement status of a person described in paragraph (c)(A) of this subsection.

(C) As used in this paragraph:
(i) “Foster care” means substitute care for children placed by the Department of Human Services or a tribal child welfare agency away from the child’s parents and for whom the department or agency has placement and care responsibility, including placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions and preadoptive homes.

(ii) “Foster child” means a child over whom the Department of Human Services retained jurisdiction under ORS 417.200 for the duration of the child’s placement in foster care outside the State of Oregon.

(6)(a) A person continues to remain eligible to receive a grant under this section if the person, in addition to satisfying the criteria specified in subsection (3) of this section, meets the following criteria:

(A) Maintains at least the minimum cumulative grade point average prescribed by the commission based on federal aid grant requirements;

(B) Makes satisfactory academic progress toward a curriculum, degree or program, as described in subsection (3)(a)(B) of this section, as prescribed by the commission based on federal aid grant requirements; and

(C) Enrolls in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section for a sufficient number of credit hours to be considered at least a half-time student each term for at least three terms in each consecutive academic year[; and]

[ (D) Completes a first-year experience, as identified by the community college and reported by the community college to the commission].

(b) A person who fails to meet an eligibility requirement described in paragraph (a) of this subsection becomes ineligible to receive a grant under this section for the term after which the person fails to meet the eligibility requirement, unless the eligibility requirement is waived by the office according to rules adopted by the commission.

(7)(a) The total amount of a grant awarded under this section shall be based on each term that a person is enrolled in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section. Except as provided in subsections (9) and (10) of this section, after the amount of tuition for the person for the term is reduced by any amounts received by the person in state and federal aid grants, the person shall be eligible for a grant under this section in an amount that equals:

(A) Except as provided by [paragraphs] paragraph (b) [and (c)] of this subsection, not less than the greater of:

(i) $1,000, adjusted for inflation based on the increase of the average cost of tuition at a community college operated under ORS chapter 341 in a manner determined by the commission by rule; and

(ii) The person’s actual cost for tuition.

(B) Not more than the lesser of:

(i) The average cost of tuition at a community college in this state, as determined by the office;

and

(ii) The person’s actual cost for tuition.

[(b) The amount of a grant, as calculated under paragraph (a) of this subsection, shall be reduced by $50 for each term that the person receives a grant under this section.]}

[(c)(A)] (b)(A) If the office determines both that the person’s actual cost for tuition exceeds the amount set forth in paragraph (a)(A)(i) of this subsection and that the person’s actual cost for tuition exceeds the average cost of tuition at a community college in this state, the person shall be eligible
for a grant in an amount that equals the average cost of tuition at a community college in this state.

(B) If the office determines that the person’s actual cost for tuition is less than the amount set forth in paragraph (a)(A)(i) of this subsection, the person shall be eligible for a grant in an amount that equals the amount set forth in paragraph (a)(A)(i) of this subsection.

[(d)] (c) The minimum amount of a grant, as calculated under paragraphs (a) [to (c)] and (b) of this subsection, may be prorated for a person who is enrolled in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section for a sufficient number of credit hours to be considered at least a half-time student but not a full-time student.

[(e)] (d) The commission may prescribe by rule whether to include fees, and any limitations related to the inclusion of fees, when determining the actual cost of tuition or the average cost of tuition under this subsection.

(8) The commission may adopt by rule the priority by which grants are awarded, which may allow for preference to be given to persons enrolled in school districts or high schools that meet specified criteria.

(9) Prior to the start of the fall term of each academic year, the commission shall determine whether there are sufficient moneys to award a grant under this section to each person who meets the criteria described in subsections (3) to (6) of this section. When making a determination under this subsection, the commission may consider both projected resources and statutory modifications that will take effect during the current biennium. On the basis of this determination the commission may:

(a) Limit eligibility to receive a grant under this section to a person whose [family contribution] financial resources, as determined by the commission by rule, [is] are at or below the level the commission determines [is] are necessary to allow the commission to operate the Oregon Promise program with available moneys; or

(b) Reduce or eliminate any limitation on eligibility previously imposed by the commission under paragraph (a) of this subsection.

(10)(a) If at any time the commission determines that there are insufficient moneys to provide a grant to each person who has been awarded a grant under this section, the commission may:

[(A)] decrease the total amount of the grant awarded; or

[(B) Increase the amount that a person must pay under subsection (7)(b) of this section for each term that the person receives a grant under this section].

(b) If at any time the commission determines that the amount of moneys available to operate the Oregon Promise program exceeds the amount determined under subsection (9) of this section, the commission may reduce or eliminate any limitation on eligibility to receive a grant under this section that was previously imposed by the commission under subsection (9)(a) of this section.

(c) The commission shall promptly notify the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly responsible for higher education each time the commission takes any action under paragraph (a) or (b) of this subsection.

(11) The commission shall adopt any rules necessary for the administration of this section, including any requirements related to:

(a) Specifying the form and timelines for submitting an application for a grant under this section;

(b) Determining whether a person is eligible for a grant under this section, including whether the person shall be given priority as allowed under subsection (8) of this section;

(c) Implementing programs or policies that improve the academic success or completion rates for persons who receive a grant under this section;
(d) Prescribing eligibility requirements and grant calculations for persons dually enrolled in a
community college and a public university; and
(e) Evaluating the impact of the program established under this section, including any require-
ments for reporting data needed for evaluations.
(12) No later than December 31 of each even-numbered year, the commission shall submit to an
interim legislative committee related to education a report that summarizes the commission’s
findings on the impact of the program established under this section. The report shall include:
(a) Student completion rates of curricula, degrees and programs described in subsection (3)(a)(B)
of this section;
(b) The amount of federal aid grants received by persons who received a grant under this sec-
tion;
(c) The financial impact of the program on school districts that had students receive a grant
under this section;
(d) The financial impact and the enrollment impact of the program on community colleges and
public universities in this state; and
(e) The overall success rate of the program and financial impact of the program.

SECTION 2. The amendments to ORS 341.522 by section 1 of this 2021 Act first apply to
the 2022-2023 academic year.

SECTION 3. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission may take any action before
the operative date specified in section 2 of this 2021 Act that is necessary to enable the
commission to exercise, on and after the operative date specified in section 2 of this 2021
Act, all the duties, functions and powers conferred on the commission by the amendments
to ORS 341.522 by section 1 of this 2021 Act.

SECTION 4. (1) As used in this section, “special eligibility student” means a person:
(a) Who applied to the Office of Student Access and Completion for an Oregon Promise
program grant under ORS 341.522 for any academic term during the 2020-2021 academic year;
and
(b) Who the office determined was ineligible to receive a grant solely due to the office’s
determination to limit eligibility based on family contribution.
(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a special eligibility student may receive
a grant under the Oregon Promise program operated under ORS 341.522 if the special eligi-
bility student:
(a)(A) Applies for enrollment beginning in the fall 2021 academic term at a community
college operated under ORS chapter 341; or
(B) Requests that the office grant the student a waiver from enrolling beginning in the
fall 2021 academic term at a community college due to significant hardship; and
(b) Meets the criteria set forth in the version of ORS 341.522 (3)(a) to (c) and (e) to (g)
that is operative and applies on the effective date of this 2021 Act.
(3) The office shall make a determination on whether to grant a request for a waiver
made under subsection (2)(a)(B) of this section according to a process established by the
Higher Education Coordinating Commission by rule.
(4) The office shall make reasonable efforts and use the residential addresses and elec-
tronic mail addresses in its possession to attempt to notify any former applicant who qualifi-
ies as a special eligibility student of the eligibility, enrollment and waiver deadlines
established in this section.
SECTION 5. Section 4 of this 2021 Act is repealed on July 2, 2028.

SECTION 6. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, out of the General Fund, the amount of $28,932,328 for the purpose of operating the Oregon Promise program in the manner set forth in section 4 of this 2021 Act and in ORS 341.522 as amended by section 1 of this 2021 Act.

SECTION 7. This 2021 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2021 Act takes effect July 1, 2021.