



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Office of the Executive Director

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Salem, Oregon 97302

www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

February 16, 2024

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 **February 12, 2024** Higher Education Coordinating Commission presentation on the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) to the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education .

Representative McIntire asked how many additional students have been served with increases to OOG appropriations. In 2021-22, the OOG's eligibility rose to include students with up to a \$6,000 expected family contribution. Under this expansion, the total number of students receiving an OOG rose from 31,219 (2020-21) to 38,907 (2021-22). In 2021-22, the larger number of OOG recipients represented 47 percent of students who filed a complete FAFSA/ORSAA. This compares to 2020-21, when OOG recipients represented 37 percent of students who filed a FAFSA/ORSAA. In general, about three-fourths of students who could be eligible for financial aid (i.e., who take six or more credits in a single term) file a complete FAFSA/ORSAA. Data for the current year is not yet finalized and available.

Sen. Frederick asked about the geographic distribution of the Grant. In 2021-22, 14 percent of students with an OOG came from rural counties in Oregon. This compares to 12 percent of students from higher-income backgrounds who were not eligible for an OOG and to 12 percent of students overall (whether or not they applied for financial aid). HECC can, upon request, produce data showing the number of grant recipients by county.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to 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