

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION  
Government to Government 2016 Annual Report





Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Ben Cannon, Executive Director

255 Capitol Street NE, Third Floor

Salem, OR 97310

[www.oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://www.oregon.gov/HigherEd)

Karen Quigley  
Legislative Commission on Indian Affairs  
900 Court Street NE, Room 167  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Karen:

As Executive Director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission agency, I am pleased to submit our 2016 Government-to-Government Annual Report.

The Equity Lens, as adopted by the Chief Education Office (*formerly Oregon Education Investment Board*) and subsequently our Higher Education Coordinating Commission, is a focal point of our work, both internally and externally. We continue to work closely with a higher education Equity Advisory group, comprised of institutional equity leaders, who provide advice and feedback to the agency on matters of diversity and inclusion. To provide greater capacity, this past July the agency created a dedicated position to lead our internal and external equity work. Throughout our organization, we hold high expectations to contribute to the access, growth and success of *all* individuals and stakeholders we work alongside and serve.

I remain committed to supporting partnership and engagement with our tribal partners in our shared quest for student educational and career success; we recognize the sovereign status of the federally-recognized Oregon tribes and welcome our responsibility to engage in appropriate formal consultation.

Should questions or clarifications arise regarding our plan, please contact myself or our Director of Culture & Inclusion, Cheryl Myers at (503)877-4303.

With sincere regards,

Ben Cannon, Executive Director

## ABOUT THE HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

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*Agency* Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)  
[www.oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://www.oregon.gov/HigherEd)

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*Major Areas* The Higher Education Coordinating Commission has adopted as its mission the achievement of the state’s statutory target of having 40 percent of adult Oregonians with a four- year degree or better and another 40 percent with a two-year degree or postsecondary certificate by the year 2025.

*Agency Statement* Established in 2011 and vested with its current authorities in 2013, the HECC is a [14-member volunteer commission](#) appointed by the Oregon Governor, with nine voting members confirmed by the State Senate. The Commission develops and implements policies and programs to ensure that Oregon’s network of colleges, universities, workforce development initiatives and pre-college outreach programs are well coordinated to foster student success. It also advises [the Oregon Legislature](#), [the Governor](#), and the [Chief Education Office](#) on policy and funding to meet state postsecondary goals.

Dedicated to fostering and sustaining the best, most rewarding pathways to opportunity and success for all Oregonians through an accessible, affordable and coordinated network for educational achievement beyond a high school diploma. Oregon’s higher education and workforce system serves hundreds of thousands of learners through seven public universities, 17 public community colleges, private and independent colleges and universities, workforce programs, and private career and trade schools.

As the State of Oregon’s single, comprehensive portal to all sectors of higher education, HECC is uniquely positioned to provide strategic focus in areas such as: investing resources to maximize student success, increasing postsecondary affordability, improving pathways to and within postsecondary institutions, and connecting job-seekers with employment.

The Commission is supported by a state agency of the same name, comprised of [eight distinct offices led by Executive Director Ben Cannon](#).

**Office of the Executive Director, Policy and Communications** carries out the central executive role of the agency and serves as a resource for the Commission and HECC offices. Our work includes: legislative and policy development and leadership; coordination of efforts on the [Commission's Strategic Plan](#); communications, including website management, media relations, and newsletters; commission administration; administrative rules; human resources; convening state and national stakeholders and partners; and equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.

**Office of Student Access & Completion** (OSAC) administers a variety of state, federal and privately funded student financial aid programs for the benefit of Oregonians attending institutions of postsecondary education. OSAC is responsible for the administration of state financial aid and access programs, including budget recommendations, fiscal management, policy and awarding of financial aid to Oregon students at private and public institutions statewide.

**Office of Community Colleges & Workforce Development** provides coordination, leadership and resources to Oregon's 17 locally-governed community colleges, 18 adult basic skills providers, community-based organizations and other partnerships.

**Office of Workforce Investment** is one of several state entities that contribute oversight, resources, and programming to the workforce development system. HECC is the administrative entity for federally funded workforce and education programs authorized by the U.S. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) serving Oregonians.

**Office of University Coordination** coordinates with Oregon's seven public universities on academic and financial issues. This includes academic program review and approval, university evaluation, distribution of state funding to universities and development of related policy and guidance, as well as statewide initiatives and legislative directives to enhance postsecondary pathways and student success. It consists of two major sub-offices: Academic Planning & Policy and University Budget & Finance.

**Office of Private Postsecondary Education** oversees the quality, integrity, and diversity of private postsecondary programs in Oregon for the benefit of students and consumers. The office includes: the Office of Degree Authorization, which authorizes private degree-granting institutions and distance education providers; the Private Career Schools unit which licenses and supports private career and trade schools; and The State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education which provides oversight of programs for veterans.

**Office of Research and Data** collects, analyzes, and reports research and data on postsecondary education including data on students, courses, demographics, enrollments, academic performance, and academic pathways to comply with state and federal reporting requirements and to inform decisions on the postsecondary education enterprise.

**Office of Operations** provides support to all HECC offices in areas including budget, procurement, payroll, accounting, and information technology. Operations assists the agency with developing, allocating and leveraging resources. The office provides leadership, direction and guidance to the Executive Director, office administrators, managers and staff with the development of policies and strategic oversight to meet the agency's mission in compliance with state policy and federal requirements.

## INITIATIVES AND PARTICIPATION

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The HECC coordinates activities with tribal partners, the Governor's Office, the Chief Education Office and other education partners to foster student postsecondary pathways and success. The agency receives notification of training and informational sessions from the Legislative Commission on Indian Services and promotes opportunities for staff participation.

- ✓ The HECC is pleased to have completed its (2016-20) Strategic Plan, a truly exciting opportunity to forge a deliberate path toward our collective postsecondary education goals. HECC solicited and received comments on the strategic plan in writing and in person from campus leadership, faculty, students, community based organizations, business leaders, tribal leaders, and other partners, and extends thanks for the extremely valuable input and engagement in setting these strategic priorities.

The HECC is required by law to adopt a strategic plan for achieving state postsecondary education goals (ORS 351.735), and the plan provides a framework for the Commission and agency's actions in coming months and years. The plan focuses on the state's higher education goals, our progress towards them, background on the higher education landscape, the responsibility of the HECC, and outlines the following key strategies, which are detailed in the document:

- **Goal-setting.** Sharpening our state higher education goals and better describe our progress in meeting them
  - **Funding.** Using effective advocacy to increase public funding for higher education
  - **Pathways.** Simplifying and aligning systems and structures for student entry, navigation, completion, and exit/re-entry to career
  - **Student Support.** Strengthening the ability of campuses and communities to support student success and completion.
  - **Affordability.** Limit student and family cost for all, with a particular focus on ensuring that students rising through Oregon's K-12 school system may be reasonably certain that they will have access to affordable options for higher education
  - **Research, Innovation, and Workforce Development.** Using state policies and investments to enhance the impact of Oregon colleges and universities on their community's civic and economic well-being
- ✓ During the 2015 and 2016 Legislative Sessions, the state passed numerous bills and targeted funding with strong potential to increase student success, and the HECC in 2016 implemented numerous such directives, and conveyed this information through the quarterly Government-to-Government (G2G) updates throughout the year. Examples include: deployment of \$2 million in competitive grants in Spring 2016 to nine public postsecondary institutions to recruit, retain and support underserved students in STEM programs leading to high wage and high demand jobs, and deployment of grants to institutions to support textbook affordability through Open Educational Resources. Numerous HECC legislative reports supporting inclusive and

innovative postsecondary practices and success were captured in the G2G updates and are detailed under [Legislative Reports and Resources](#) on our website.

- ✓ The HECC launched a new expanded website in November 2016 at [www.oregon.gov/highered](http://www.oregon.gov/highered), and among the new resources, partners can now find all former quarterly G2G updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in [Coordination with Oregon Tribes](#) located in the [Equity and Student Success](#) section.
- ✓ Agency leadership regularly participated in the quarterly G2G education cluster meetings and activities, as well as special informational and educational activities related to postsecondary education, workforce development and financial aid. HECC regularly informed and engaged tribal partners on efforts to improve college affordability including the roll-out of the Oregon Promise, the awarding of the Oregon Opportunity Grant, private scholarships, and HECC innovative partnership to increase FAFSA completion through FAFSA Plus+. Quarterly agency reports were submitted electronically, reviewed in person at the cluster meeting, and are posted on our [website](#).
- ✓ HECC leadership members:
  - Joined the Chief Education Office and Oregon Department of Education in community conversations surrounding the updated Oregon American Indian/Alaskan Native State Education Plan:
    - March 10<sup>th</sup>, hosted by Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
    - April 27<sup>th</sup>, hosted by Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
    - July 18<sup>th</sup>, hosted by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
    - August 24<sup>th</sup>, hosted by Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians
    - October 24<sup>th</sup>, hosted by Burns Paiute Tribe
  - Participated in Oregon state agency training:
    - May 19<sup>th</sup> LCIS Spring Gathering & Training for State Agencies, hosted Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians
    - December 7<sup>th</sup> Annual State-Tribal Governments Summit, hosted by Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians
- ✓ OSAC staff members involved with scholarship selection attended a February 22<sup>nd</sup> training sponsored by the Ford Family Foundation entitled American Indian/Alaskan Native Cultural Competency. Both organizations are committed to increasing participation and selection of native students for their scholarships. April Campbell and Tabatha Whitefoot from the Oregon Department of Education led the presentation. The meeting and discussion focused on raising awareness of cultural norms, which could inadvertently prevent Native Americans selection for scholarship consideration, and possible culture differences that could prevent an advantageous response by Native Americans. Following the training, staff presented a mini version of the training at an OSAC all-staff meeting.
- ✓ The HECC Office of University Coordination, Academic Planning & Policy was pleased to engage a Hatfield Fellow, Mahalia Newmark, whose fellowship focused on researching strategies in which the agency can support the updated American Indian/Alaskan Native Education State Plan. Ms. Newmark is an enrolled member of the Tulita Dene First Nations in Canada and will submit her findings to the Commission in Spring 2017.
- ✓ The agency is observing the Oregon Department of Education's formal Tribal Consultation draft process with strong interest and will consider a similar policy in 2017.

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