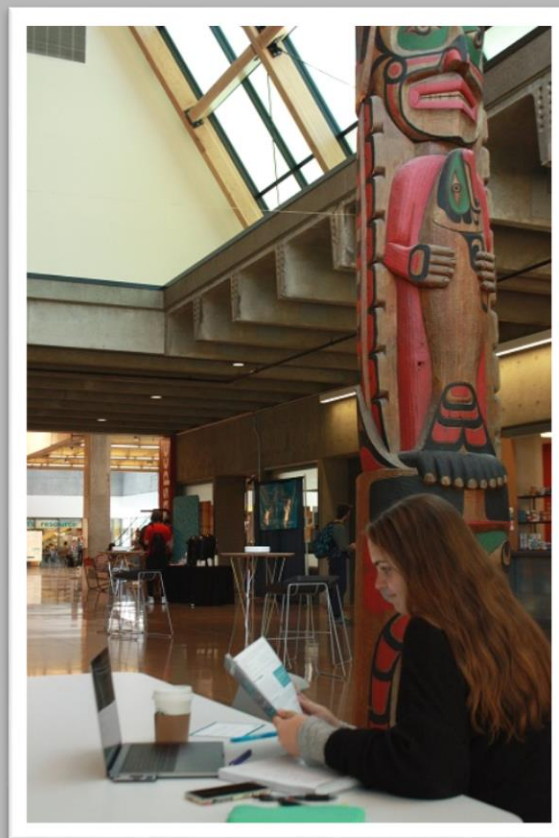


HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION
GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Cover photo: courtesy of Portland Community College.

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Office of Executive Director

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

www.oregon.gov/highered



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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Mitch Sparks, Executive Director
Legislative Commission on Indian Services
900 Court Street NE, Room 167
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Mr. Sparks,

I am pleased to present the 2019 Government to Government Annual Report of the Higher Education Coordination Commission (HECC).

We at the HECC agency honor the sovereignty of Oregon's nine federally-recognized tribes, and deeply value the opportunities we have had to work cooperatively with the educational representatives of the Tribes over the last year. This report summarizes the actions and initiatives the HECC has undertaken in 2019 to foster postsecondary education and training opportunities and pathways for tribal students and learners in Oregon.

Since HECC's first full year as an agency in 2014, our Equity Lens has underpinned and guided our approach to higher education and training statewide. We are committed to fostering an accessible, affordable, equitable, and coordinated network of college and career training programs, and we are actively partnering with Oregon's Tribes in numerous ways to best serve specific needs and promote opportunities for Oregon's tribal students. We are dedicated to building strong relationships with our tribal partners through consultation, communication, concrete actions, and the fulfillment of our commitments, and sincerely hope that these relationships will grow and expand over the coming years.

Should you have questions or comments regarding this report, please direct them to Rudyane Rivera-Lindstrom, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, at (503) 934-3477.

Respectfully,

Ben Cannon

Executive Director, Higher Education Coordinating Commission

ABOUT THE HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

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Major Areas The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) works to improve success in higher education and training for Oregonians by ensuring an accessible, affordable, equitable, and coordinated network of college and career training programs.

The mission of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, derived from our chartering statutes, is to: 1) dramatically and equitably improve postsecondary educational attainment levels; 2) improve Oregon’s economic competitiveness and quality of life; and 3) ensure that Oregon students have affordable access to colleges and universities.

Agency Statement The HECC envisions a future in which all Oregonians—and especially those whom our systems have underserved and marginalized—benefit from the transformational power of high-quality postsecondary education and training (from HECC Vision Statement, [Strategic Framework, 2017](#)).

Established in 2011 and vested with its current authorities in 2013, the HECC is a 14-member volunteer commission appointed by the Oregon Governor and confirmed by the Oregon State Senate, with funding and policy responsibilities for higher education and the workforce statewide. The HECC supports postsecondary education by administering the statewide higher education and workforce budget of about \$1.4 billion per year; authorizing programs and degrees; administering statewide financial aid, workforce, and educational programs; and providing strategic guidance to state leaders. We also directly serve Oregonians by awarding grant and scholarship aid to students, and connecting Oregonians with workforce and training resources. Our work is driven by the State of Oregon’s educational attainment goals for youth and adults, and our Commission’s goals for equity, student success, affordability, and economic and community impact. To guide that work, we use the Oregon Equity Lens to help close system and opportunity gaps to achieve equitable outcomes for all.

The Commission’s Strategic Framework (2017-2021) describes four key areas of strategic activity that are currently underway at the HECC: 1) REPORTING to Steer Progress 2) FUNDING for Success, 3) Streamlining Learner PATHWAYS, and 4) Expanding Opportunity through OUTREACH. These four Action Areas are aimed to achieve the Commission’s Strategic Goals for STUDENT SUCCESS, EQUITY, AFFORDABILITY,

and ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY IMPACT. At its public meetings, Executive Director Ben Cannon reports on the progress of actions underway in these areas.

The Commission is supported by the state agency by the same name, comprised of eight distinct offices led by Executive Director Ben Cannon.

INITIATIVES AND PARTICIPATION

The HECC coordinates activities with tribal partners, the Governor’s Office, the Oregon Department of Education, and numerous other education partners to foster postsecondary pathways and student success.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are prominent themes and guiding priorities for the HECC, and we are committed to fostering our connections and collaborations between HECC and the nine federally-recognized tribes in Oregon. Our partners and the public can find former quarterly Government to Government updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in Coordination with Oregon Tribes located in the Equity and Student Success section of the HECC website at: www.oregon.gov/HigherEd. The following are significant activities HECC staff have undertaken in 2019 to support postsecondary education pathways for, and honor our relationships with, the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon:

- ✓ **Participation in Government to Government Education Cluster and Convenings:** The Executive Director has prioritized participation in the Government to Government Education Cluster and has committed that either he or his appointee will attend each quarterly gathering. Over the past year Executive Director Ben Cannon, former Deputy Director Bob Brew, Director of Academic Policy and Authorization Veronica Dujon, or an appointee, have attended each Education Cluster meeting, to which the agency provides thorough written updates on recent activity in our quarterly reports.

Additionally, HECC leaders have participated in other significant events in coordination with our tribal partners, including: the Tribal State Government to Government Summit, Tribal Governments’ Legislative Day at the Capitol, and the Oregon Coast Caucus Economic Summit presented in partnership with the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians. Further, the HECC now has a representative serving on the Oregon Department of Education’s American Indian/Alaskan Native State Plan Advisory Committee.

- ✓ **Tribal Cultural Items Report:** Executive Order 17-12 established the Task Force on Oregon Tribal Cultural Items, charged with collecting information about potential tribal cultural items in storage or on display at state public institutions and agencies. In November, the HECC submitted its report to this task force, providing an inventory of potential tribal cultural items in the agency’s possession. The HECC is enthusiastic to continue building our relationship with Oregon’s federally recognized tribes, and stands ready to provide access to items of interest.
- ✓ **Talent, Innovation, and Equity (“TIE”) partnership grant:** The HECC is advancing work supported by a Talent, Innovation, and Equity (“TIE”) partnership grant from Lumina Foundation to help improve postsecondary success rates for historically underrepresented students of color and indigenous students in Oregon’s postsecondary educational system. The grant supports a suite of state leadership activities aimed to improve postsecondary success in Oregon for African-American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander learners, with a particular focus on adult learners of color. In conjunction with the TIE Partnership over the past few months, HECC staff have hosted 12 roundtable meetings with the identified populations, including two meetings focused specifically on the needs of Native American students. The HECC’s focus has been to engage in authentic discussions with community leaders about equity disparities and degree attainment gaps facing underrepresented students of color and indigenous students in Oregon’s postsecondary educational system. The insights from these community meetings will be shared with an experts’ workgroup that HECC will convene in the near future. This workgroup will identify and foster best practices within postsecondary institutions, advise the HECC on policy and budget strategies for the State of Oregon to

deploy, and help oversee the process of awarding small sub-grants to organizations/institutions to support promising efforts.

- ✓ **Tribal Communication and Consultation Policy:** The HECC greatly values its relationship with each of the nine Tribes, and in an effort to honor tribal sovereignty and be respectful in our interactions, we have developed a draft of a tribal communication and consultation policy that is under consideration for adoption. The current draft of the policy was submitted for feedback at the G2G Education Cluster in Summer 2019. Next steps for revision will be determined at future Education Cluster meetings.
- ✓ **Legislature Funds HECC Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):** HECC now has a permanent position for a Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and has hired Rudyane Rivera-Lindstrom who in this new position will serve as a representative for HECC in future Government to Government meetings. After years of proposing funding for this position, it was finally created and funded by the Legislature in 2019 thanks to the leadership of Representative Alonso Leon and contributions from many others. Ms. Rivera-Lindstrom will lead equity and diversity efforts both internally and externally for the agency, supporting our goals for equitable outcomes in postsecondary education and helping staff uphold our Equity Lens in policymaking, budgeting, and supporting the HECC agency to become more inclusive, diverse, and equitable for all employees.
- ✓ **Implementation of Postsecondary Cultural Competency Legislation:** HECC continues to support implementation of House Bill 2864 (2017), which defined cultural competency and directed public universities and community colleges to establish a process for recommendation and oversight of cultural competency standards implementation for institutions and employees. HECC was a sponsor and participant in a summer institute convened by Campus Compact in August, 2018, focused on implementation of this bill. In 2019, HECC twice convened the Equity Advisory Council, a group comprised of institutional partners involved with leading this work at their respective campuses, to discuss progress and best practices with implementation. With HECC support, this Council is planning a 2020 summit to focus further on the implementation.
- ✓ **Oregon Educator Equity Report:** The HECC was a contributor to the 2019 Oregon Educator Equity Report, documenting Oregon's progress in diversifying the educator workforce. This [annual report](#) was published by the former Chief Education Office, with contributions from the HECC, the Oregon Department of Education, and the Teacher's Standards and Practices Commission, pursuant to Senate Bill 755 (2013) and HB 3375 (2015). We encourage sharing this report to support continued improvements at each step of the education career pathway in order to achieve an educator workforce that is more reflective of the demographics of the culturally or linguistically diverse students in Oregon's public schools.
- ✓ **Youth Employment Partnerships with Tribes:** This past summer, the Oregon Youth Corps, administered through the HECC Office of Workforce Investments, helped fund the **Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's summer youth employment program**. State funds are used for one crew, and the Tribe's funds match it to support a second crew. OYC has been granting the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde summer funds for over 20 years. In addition, in 2019, OYC created **a new partnership with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs** which helped fund a summer work program on the reservation. This youth crew completed a number of projects with one of the goals being to provide cultural knowledge about their ancestral homeland, water, and plants. Also in 2019, OYC partnered with the **Coquille Indian Tribe (Coquille) and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI)**, who provided cultural and historical components to OYC's Youth River Stewards program in Coos Bay. In addition, OYC

providers work directly with other Tribes and partners, and OYC recently publicized grant opportunities for Summer Corps Grants available to Oregon's nine federally-recognized tribes.

- ✓ **New Adult Educational Attainment Goal:** In November 2018, the HECC, in partnership with the Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB), announced the approval of a new educational attainment goal for adult working-age Oregonians, establishing clear targets for Oregon adult learners to succeed in the labor market. This new goal is approached in conjunction with the state's 40-40-20 educational attainment goal for Oregon youth. The adult educational goal is for 300,000 adult Oregonians to earn a new degree, certificate, or other credential of value between 2020 and 2030, and for Oregon to reduce the adult educational attainment gaps by half for underserved people of color, low-income learners, and rural learners during this decade. The HECC in 2019 is working to broaden awareness of and advance toward this goal, and in fall, 2019, the HECC and the Workforce & Talent Development Board convened an **Adult Learner Advisory Committee (ALAC)** to advise staff in these efforts.
- ✓ **Oregon Partners Launch Statewide FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge:** The HECC, the Oregon Department of Education, and participating partners launched in 2019 the FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge, a statewide initiative aimed to help students in Oregon's high school Class of 2020 to afford and achieve their college and career goals. The FAFSA/ORSAA Challenge goal is to increase the statewide rate of students completing the primary forms required for federal, state, and institutional financial aid—the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA)—by five percentage points during the upcoming year. All Oregon public high schools were encouraged to join this statewide challenge.
- ✓ **Tribal Organizations Invited to join FAFSA Plus+:** Tribal partners continue to be invited regularly to join the FAFSA Plus+ program. FAFSA Plus+ is a year-round program that includes FAFSA completion activities, events, and support, financial literacy information, scholarship resources, award letter help, and other college access information. OSAC shares student-level FAFSA data and best practices with sites, allowing site staff to provide targeted assistance to their students who need to complete and submit a FAFSA, make corrections, and notify students who have been selected for verification. Since the expansion, HECC has entered into data-sharing agreements with the NAYA Early College Academy, the Southern Oregon Indian Education Program (SOIEP), and The Klamath Tribes.
- ✓ **First Generation Student Success grants:** Thanks to funding approved by the Oregon Legislature in the last two biennia, HECC has awarded \$3.1M in competitive grant funds for First Generation Student Success grants to thirteen Oregon public community college to support strategies to serve underserved first-generation populations, including projects proposed to serve Native American students. These grants fund programs which support first-generation, low-income, and college-bound students from around the state to enroll in community colleges statewide and make progress toward a certificate or degree. The grantees and HECC work in conjunction with the Gateway to College National Network in coordinating grant fund efforts, including convenings for grantees.
- ✓ **“Core Transfer Maps” Launched for Community College Transfer Students:** HECC, in partnership with the state's public postsecondary institutions, announced in early 2019 that students at all 17 Oregon community colleges can now benefit from a new set of transfer tools called the “Core Transfer Maps” (CTMs). We encourage tribal partners to share this information with their education networks. The CTMs guide Oregon community college students to groups of eight classes they can choose to take if they are thinking about transferring to a university in the future. When the full set of eight courses are successfully completed at an Oregon community college, they are guaranteed to transfer to any Oregon public university, and will all count toward that university's core bachelor's degree requirements. The

HECC continues to work with Oregon public institutions to expand tools to support streamlined transfer pathways pursuant to House Bill 2998 (2017).

- ✓ **Access to Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver:** In light of the fact that in previous years it was discovered that some tribal foster youth were not being recognized for the Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver, OSAC in 2019 developed a solution to ensure that information on eligible tribal foster youth is provided to college financial aid offices. Tribes who administer their own Foster Youth programs can now upload lists of Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver-eligible students into the OSAC Partner Portal. These lists are matched to the FAFSA records for each student. If the students have one or more waiver-eligible colleges listed on their FAFSA, the student will appear on a list of the eligible students provided to these colleges. OSAC representatives would be pleased to help any tribal staff who utilize this option (contact Kristin.Vreeland@state.or.us). As a reminder, the Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver program waives tuition and fees for the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate studies after other public grants and any school aid is applied. Learn more about eligibility at www.oregonstudentaid.gov.
- ✓ **Future Ready Grants:** Launched by Governor Kate Brown in February 2018, Future Ready Oregon helps close the gaps between the skills that Oregon's workers have and the skills Oregon's growing businesses need. Future Ready grant funds administered by the HECC Office of Workforce Investments (OWI) and funded by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) support numerous workforce and skills development efforts. For example, the Warm Springs/East Cascades Works is currently the recipient of a Future Ready grant that supports GED® preparation services, healthcare career exploration, construction pre-apprenticeship training, food safety training, and Indianpreneurship® services.
- ✓ **Other Ongoing HECC Activities in Support of Equity Goals:** In addition to the 2019 initiatives and action described above, the HECC supports the nine federally-recognized tribes through its ongoing responsibilities as an agency, including but not limited to the following activities:
 - ✓ **Reporting data and analysis on postsecondary trends, disaggregated by race/ethnicity.** For example, HECC publishes the Statewide Higher Education Snapshots, an annual set of reports first launched in 2018 which provide a high-level overview of data on enrollment, affordability and outcomes for resident students in Oregon's public institutions, disaggregated by ethnicity/race, and more. In addition, HECC's Key Performance Metrics were redesigned in 2017 with an increased focus on equity and student success through increased use of data disaggregated by race/ethnicity.
 - ✓ **Implementing the formula for the distribution of state resources to public universities.** Since 2015, HECC has implemented the Student Success and Completion Model (SSCM), which shifted the formula for distribution of the majority of state funding for Oregon's seven public universities to promote progress toward Oregon's educational attainment goals, adding incentives for improved graduation for underrepresented student groups. In 2019, the HECC began a formal review of this funding model.
 - ✓ **Administering financial aid and college affordability programs** including: the Oregon Opportunity Grant, a need-based financial aid program that serves 30,000-40,000 students per year, the Oregon Promise, Oregon Chafee Education and Training Grant, Oregon National Guard State Tuition Assistance, and over 600 privately funded scholarships.

- ✓ Partnering with high schools and partners statewide on **pre-college mentoring and outreach** programs to prepare students of all backgrounds for success in college and career, through Oregon ASPIRE, community outreach presentations and more.
- ✓ Collaborative campus efforts **to streamline the community college to university transfer pathway**, working to improve affordability and time to degree for students, including low-income, first-generation, and underserved student groups.
- ✓ Policy efforts to improve and expand pathways to earn college credit, including **college credit while in high school** and Credit for Prior Learning.
- ✓ Statewide administration of Oregon's **High School Equivalency Program**, including GED® test preparation, instruction, and testing processing in Oregon.
- ✓ **Workforce programs as well as administration of adult basic skills** statewide to train returning students, adults, dislocated workers, and all Oregonians with the skills they need for gainful employment. The HECC is the administrative entity for several federally-funded workforce and education programs, including those authorized by title I and title II of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

