



## CCSF Budget Talking Points – BUSINESS PARTNERS

### Summary:

Our objective is to persuade legislators to support HB 2907 to fully fund community colleges at \$702 million. Key themes include upskilling/reskilling Oregon's workforce that was displaced due to the impacts of COVID-19, supporting systemically marginalized students, affordability, and innovation. One emphasis will be on how federal stimulus funds are short-term dollars to support innovative programs stemming from the pandemic, while colleges will still need long-term support from the state to continue to support students and Oregon's economic recovery in the coming years.

### Tell YOUR Story:

- How has your community college helped/supported your business/industry?
- Why is your community college important to your community and the local economy?
- How does your local community college prepare students to become members of a skilled workforce in your industry?

### Key Points:

- 1. Community colleges are the affordable option for access to higher education in Oregon, particularly after the pandemic caused financial hardship for many Oregonians.**
  - In the 2019-2021 biennium, the Community College Support Fund (CCSF) received \$641 million. To fully fund current services, colleges would need a state appropriation of \$702 million for the 2021-2023 biennium. At that funding level colleges could keep tuition increases to an average of 3.5 percent per year statewide.
  - Every dollar cut from the Community College Support Fund must be made up by raising tuition or cutting programs and services, moving educational opportunities out of the reach of the Oregonians with the most need.
  - Community colleges were not able to offer most in-person courses such as Career and Technical Education (CTE), so colleges have already faced significant revenue declines and budget cuts. This has had a significant impact on local industries, which rely on community colleges to train the workforce that we hire for important positions.
- 2. Community colleges are Oregon's economic recovery first responders.**
  - Community colleges are essential to responding to the recession brought on by COVID-19 and the wildfires of 2020, offering shorter-term programs directed at getting unemployed Oregonians retrained and back to work as quickly as possible. Local industries are trying to recover as well, so having well-trained students enter the workforce quickly will aid in our efforts to recover.
  - Community colleges are nimble and can react quickly to local needs of both employers and job-seekers. *(Give an example of programs your local college offers that are responding to your local workforce needs, or partnerships your business/industry has with your local college.)*
- 3. Community colleges serve the communities that have been most affected by the pandemic.**
  - Community colleges serve more systemically marginalized students than any other sector of higher education.



- Local business and industry need a diversified workforce as we recover from the pandemic's economic impacts, and community colleges provide the necessary training to Oregonians who are ready to get back to work in jobs critical to our recovering industries.