

Oregon Opportunity Grant – *included in HB 5025*

Background

The Oregon Opportunity Grant is Oregon’s primary source of state-based need-based financial aid for students in Oregon Higher Education. Because community colleges serve the most low-income students of any sector of higher education, the Oregon Opportunity Grant is an essential source of financial support for students and their success. OCCA is recommending \$400 million be the minimum investment for Opportunity Grant for the 2023-25 biennium.

Key Talking Points

- Funding for student aid has failed to keep pace with the soaring costs of food and housing across Oregon.
- Even before the pandemic and the inflation that followed Oregon Community College students reported high rates of food and housing insecurity as well as homelessness.¹
- Today, the average debt for a community college student is \$13,801²
- Oregon’s two financial aid programs, the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) and Oregon Promise, delivered \$657 per full-time student in 2020. That’s well below the U.S. average of \$830, and less than half of the \$1,489 provided in Washington State.
- An investment of \$400 million student would nearly double the number of students at the current award levels.

¹ HOPE Laboratory, Temple University, study on food insecurity & houselessness, 2019

² HECC Community College Snapshot 2020-2021

