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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OCCA Board identifies Oregon Opportunity Grant, corequisite education as 2024 legislative priorities

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) Board of Directors has identified two priorities for statewide advocacy efforts during the 2024 Legislative Session that begins Feb. 5. On Dec. 8, the Board approved resolutions related to the Oregon Opportunity Grant and corequisite education.

“OCCA is committed to our advocacy efforts for these two critical priorities,” said Jane Reid, President of the OCCA Board of Directors. “We are dedicated to creating a more equitable and supportive educational environment for our community college students, and we look forward to working collaboratively with our legislators and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to achieve these important goals during the 2024 Legislative Session.”

Oregon Opportunity Grant

OCCA has advocated for the HECC to reverse a decision by its Office of Student Access & Completion (OSAC) to stop basing Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) awards on the full cost of attendance. Instead, OSAC now bases award amounts on tuition, books, fees, and supplies. This change disadvantages community college students, for whom living expenses like housing and food often pose greater barriers to success than tuition costs. OCCA presented before the Interim House Higher Education Committee in September and has requested the Legislature address this issue if OSAC does not. To this end, the OCCA Board approved a resolution urging HECC to return to basing OOG award amounts on the full cost of attendance.

Corequisite Education

The Board approved a resolution in support of legislation that directs the HECC to convene a workgroup to make recommendations on transitioning to corequisite developmental education. OCCA’s Student Success Center has been working with colleges to redesign developmental education by shifting to the more evidence-based corequisite support models in math and writing. Students require educational pathways that cater to their needs, offer a strengths-based approach, and eliminate obstacles in achieving their educational goals. National research has revealed that despite their intended purpose of increasing graduation rates by preparing students for college-level classes, prerequisite remediation programs have a low success rate, especially for students enrolled in extended sequences of these courses. Corequisite support models enroll degree-seeking students identified as needing additional support directly into college-level, transferable gateway courses and aligned corequisite supports concurrently. Corequisite supports may include in-class tutoring, online learning labs, or paired courses. Evidence-based corequisite support models are those that have proven successful in enabling students to complete gateway writing and math courses within a single academic term, as documented through empirical research and data.

A HECC-led workgroup would assess evidence-based corequisite student support models. Within this review, the



workgroup should offer recommendations and guidance on the steps and resources required for Oregon community colleges to transition from traditional prerequisite developmental education to evidence-based corequisite student support models. These models will involve enrolling students concurrently in gateway math and writing courses as required in their program or degree requirements, alongside aligned academic supports. The goal is to ensure that all new students successfully complete math and writing courses that align with their identified program or degree requirements within their first academic year.

To learn more about corequisites and their benefits, visit the Success Center page on OCCA's website, <https://occa17.com/success-center/sstf/>.

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The Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) represents the 17 publicly chartered community colleges and their locally elected board members in Oregon. Founded in 1962, OCCA's purpose is to support the colleges before policy-makers and partners whose actions affect the well-being of community colleges across the state.