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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OCCA pleased with legislative session outcomes

SALEM, Ore. – Several issues the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) identified as priorities during the 2024 Legislative Session were approved with the passage of Senate Bill 1552 as the session came to a close earlier this month.

Corequisite Education

OCCA advocated on behalf of Oregon's 17 community colleges in favor of SB 1552, which included an amendment that creates a work group through the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) for determining how to best support community colleges in the transition to evidence-based co-requisite education. OCCA's Student Success Center has been working with colleges to redesign developmental education by shifting to evidence-based corequisite support models in math and writing.

Corequisite support models enroll degree-seeking students identified as needing additional support directly into college-level, transferable gateway courses and aligned corequisite supports concurrently. Gateway courses are those that students must take before continuing with the rest of the education.

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.

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. Offering corequisite math and writing courses in the first year of college as an alternative to traditional developmental education has been shown to dramatically increase pass rates and improve equitable outcomes. Corequisites can also help college students save time and money.

Work is already underway to create the work group and a timeline for providing recommendations to the HECC on the transition to corequisite education at the community colleges.

Oregon Opportunity Grant

SB 1552 also included an amendment to bring greater accountability and transparency to the way policy decisions are made to the Oregon Opportunity Grant – Oregon's largest need-based financial aid program. Prior to the legislation, the director of the Office of Student Access and Completion had statutory authority to make most significant decisions related to the Oregon Opportunity Grant. This approved legislation now requires the full HECC Commission to conduct a public rulemaking process when significant changes to the Oregon Opportunity Grant are proposed.



“We are pleased by the Legislature’s commitment to equitable support for community college students in Oregon with the passage of SB 1552,” said John Wykoff, OCCA’s Deputy Director. “The corequisite work group is a step in the right direction to better support students as they transition to college-level work, save them time and money through corequisite education. The changes to the oversight of the Oregon Opportunity Grant ensure that transparency and accountability to Oregon’s largest need-based financial aid program for students.”

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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.