

# Talking Points

## Community College Budget Request

- Community colleges are Oregon's most affordable entry point to post-secondary education and career training.
- Community colleges are workforce and economic development drivers for the communities they serve.
- Community colleges help directly address some of the state's top priority issues like housing and behavioral health and addiction counseling. **[Provide examples from your colleges]**
- Community college enrollment is increasing across the state. FTE enrollment at Oregon's colleges is up 7.5 percent statewide over the last academic year.
- Enrollment is increasing fastest in Career and Technical Education (CTE) degrees and short-term career certificates, which are also CTE-related.
- CTE programs offer students pathways to family wage careers and help their communities address critical workforce needs. **[Provide examples of programs at your college addressing local workforce needs]**
- CTE programs are also the most expensive programs community colleges offer, which increases costs for community colleges statewide. For example, nursing is typically the most expensive program community colleges offer due to the equipment necessary for effective hands-on training.
- To maintain these and other vital education and training programs, community colleges need an additional \$120 million for the 2025-27 biennium – a 15.7 percent increase over the 2023-2025 biennium.
- Demand for services like childcare, food and housing assistance and other wraparound services have increased drastically over the last 5 years. Rates of student food and housing insecurity remain high. **[Provide examples from your college]**
- Oregon community colleges are open access to all regardless of socio-economic status or background. The average age of a community college student is 26, with 52 percent of community college students over the age of 25.
- Community colleges are the most affordable option for students whether transferring to a 4-year university or seeking career and technical education and training.
- Without sufficient state support, community colleges cannot keep tuition increases to a minimum without cutting programs or critical student support services.

## Community colleges WORK for Oregon!

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### Benefits Navigators

The Governor's Recommended Budget cut \$5.6 million in funding that goes to pay for one benefits navigator at each community college and university. The navigators help connect students to critical benefits and services like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that help students meet their basic needs. A recent national survey of over 74,000 students by the Hope Center at Temple University found that:

- 41% of students are experiencing food insecurity
- 48% of students are experiencing housing insecurity, and
- 14% of students are experiencing homelessness

Colleges are urging the legislature to restore this important funding.



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## HB 3635 – Article XI-G Capital Construction Funding Cap

### Bill Summary

HB 3635 is OCCA's bill to increase the cap on Article XI-G capital construction funds for community college projects from \$8 million to \$14.25 million.

- The cap on community college capital construction requests has been \$8M since 2007.
- Adjusting for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the cap today would be just over \$14.25M. Even this is a conservative estimate as construction costs have risen faster than the CPI over time.

Colleges are urging Legislators to restore this important funding.

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## SB 478 - Changes to Community College Governance

### Bill Summary

SB 478 revises the duties and responsibilities of community college boards of education. OCCA has agreed to the following aspects of this bill:

- Requires members of the board to have an official email address posted on the college website.
- Requires the board to include an ex-officio student member of the board. Votes will be recorded in the meeting minutes, but not in the vote total.
- Requires the board to fill any vacant board seats within 90 days of vacancy, unless the vacancy takes place within 90 days of a board election.

OCCA remains opposed to the following aspect of this bill:

- Requires the board to annually approve or deny the college's membership in a state or national association.

### Talking Points

- Community college boards already have the authority to review and change memberships as needed.
- Mandating an annual vote is unnecessary when boards can already act if membership in an organization no longer serves the college's interests.
- There is no demonstrated problem that this legislation solves.
- This mandate would be unique to community colleges. No other local or educational governing body has this requirement.