

OCCA Update for College Boards – July 2025

2025 Legislative Session Ends

The Legislative Session ended just before midnight on Friday, June 27, with several bill passages worth noting. Most agency budgets were set at state Current Service Level (CSL), and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) budget was no exception. The Community College Support Fund (CCSF) in the HECC's budget was set at \$854.4 million as part of SB 5525. While this is a nearly 7% increase over the legislatively approved budget for the 2023-25 biennium, it is far short of the \$920 million true need that OCCA and the colleges advocated for throughout the session. However, a big win within the budget was that funding was restored for Benefits Navigators at all 17 colleges.

The end of the Session also saw the passage of another of OCCA's legislative priorities of SB 5505, the capital construction bill. This bill approved funding for three new community college projects – Clackamas CC, Klamath CC, and Mt. Hood CC – and two funding renewals (Clatsop CC and Southwestern Oregon CC). In addition, while HB 3635 – which would have increased the Article XI-G bond funding cap for community college construction projects – did not move forward, SB 5505 did include language that increases the Article XI-G bond funding cap from \$8 million to \$12 million for projects requested after July 1, 2025.

Student success has been at the heart of everything we've done this session. From budget conversations to policy efforts, our advocacy has centered on one clear goal: ensuring students and community colleges have the opportunities and support they need to succeed. As we shared during our time at the Capitol, **Community Colleges Work for Oregon** – and your team at OCCA is genuinely proud to stand with you every day in support of that work.

We're especially grateful for the many ways you showed up this session—testifying, sending emails, engaging in conversations, and always championing student success.

The 2025 End of Session Report is also now available on the [OCCA website](#). It highlights the wins, challenges, and everything in between that shaped our collective advocacy on behalf of Oregon's 17 community colleges.

Board Leadership & Governance Summit – September 6

Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 6, for the Board Leadership and Governance Summit, the newly revamped OCCA Board Member event. The one-day Summit will take place at Chemeketa Community College's beautiful Eola Center in Salem. This is an opportunity for both newly elected and experienced community college board members, as well as college presidents. Participants will learn about board responsibilities, the board-president relationship, the structure and outlook of higher education in the state and hear directly from statewide leaders. The Summit will also fulfill the statewide certification requirements for board members related to Oregon's public meetings laws. In addition, OCCA has invited Senator Lew Frederick, chair of the Senate Committee on Education, and Representative Zach Hudson, chair of the House Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development, to speak with attendees at

the Summit. Registration will open in August, so stay tuned for details!

Revisit the 2024-25 Lunch & Learn webinars

Missed the June 26 OCCA Lunch & Learn webinar on “Public Meeting Law & Other Basics of Board Service”? Not to worry – the recording of this session, along with all other OCCA Lunch & Learn webinars from the past two years (2023-2025), is available on the OCCA website. Visit <https://occa17.com/lunchandlearn/> to view all the recordings.

Call for OCCA Annual Conference Presentations

OCCA is now accepting proposals for breakout sessions at the [2025 OCCA Annual Conference](#), set for November 5-7 at the Best Western Plus Hood River Inn in beautiful Hood River. This year’s theme is “Navigating the Winds of Opportunity,” and OCCA is looking for presentations that share best practices, showcase a unique college program, or inform other stakeholders about an event or issue affecting your institution and/or community colleges on a broader level. All presentations should relate to the conference theme, as well as at least one of the following topic areas:

- Innovation and the Future;
- Equitable Pathways to Good Careers;
- Board & College Commitment to Equity;
- Student Achievement & Data;
- Policy & Procedure; or
- Community Engagement & Partnerships

All proposals must be submitted by Friday, August 15, at 5:00 p.m. PST using the [online form](#). More details on the conference and proposal submissions can be found on the [OCCA Annual Conference web page](#).

Submit Howard Cherry Award Nominations by Aug. 15

OCCA is now accepting nominations for the annual Howard Cherry Awards, held November 6 during the [OCCA Annual Conference](#) at the Best Western Plus Hood River Inn in Hood River. The Howard Cherry Awards are named for Dr. Howard Cherry, who was a lifelong advocate for education and community involvement. These awards honor those who have made significant contributions to their college or to community colleges statewide in the following categories:

- Outstanding Community College Advocate
- Outstanding Community College Board Member
- Outstanding Community College Administrator

Nominations must be submitted no later than Friday, August 15, at 5:00 p.m. PST using the [online form](#). For more information about the Howard Cherry Awards, [click here](#).

OCCA Digest e-newsletter

The *OCCA Digest* is a monthly e-newsletter that highlights updates during the Legislative

Session, important events, news, and announcements. It is a great way to stay connected with information important to community colleges in Oregon and learn how you can take action to support colleges and students. The newsletter is published the first Friday of each month, *except for during a legislative session, at which time it becomes a weekly publication that comes out on Thursdays.*

To sign up to receive this free e-newsletter, visit <https://occa17.com/resources/newsletter/> and click the “Sign Up” button. The OCCA Digest will come from OCCA Communications Director Casey White-Zollman at casey@occa17.com, so be sure to add her email to your contacts to ensure the email arrives in your inbox and not your spam folder.

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The Oregon Community College Association was founded in 1962 with the purpose of providing support to the colleges before policymakers and partners whose actions affect the wellbeing of community colleges across the state. OCCA represents the 17 publicly chartered community colleges and their locally elected board members. Leading with racial equity, we advocate, communicate, and collaborate to strengthen community colleges for the benefit of Oregonians, particularly those historically underserved or systemically marginalized in higher education. Have questions about OCCA and our work to support Oregon’s community colleges? Contact occa@occa17.com.