

OCCA Update for College Boards – April 2026

2026 Legislative Session Ends

The 2026 Legislative Session concluded on March 6 without any cuts to the Community College Support Fund (CCSF) for the remainder of the 2025-27 biennium.

At the end of the Session, an [amendment](#) to [HB 5204](#) was introduced that represented the cuts and other budget reconciliation adjustments for the remainder of the biennium. The amendment indicated there would be no cuts to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) agency budget, which includes the CCSF and other state-funded post-secondary education programs, including the Oregon Opportunity Grant. Thank you to all who advocated for the CCSF during this Session and helped avoid damaging cuts to programs and services.

The community college governance bill, [SB 1537](#), died at the end of the Session. OCCA anticipates some form of this bill, which was already updated from SB 478 in the 2025 Session, to return in the 2027 Legislative Session.

[HB 4079](#), which requires school districts and college boards to adopt policies outlining how institutions will respond when a federal immigration official enters campus, passed in both the Senate and House and went to the Governor for signature. The final bill includes amendments addressing issues with practicality, implementation, and liability.

At the conclusion of each legislative session, OCCA publishes an End of Session Report that highlights the priority bills the association tracked, summarizes the work conducted on each measure, and explains how those bills progressed through the legislative process. The report also provides an overview of the session and outlines what the outcomes mean for community colleges in relation to OCCA's legislative priorities.

In addition, OCCA produces an Implementation Report to help colleges and governing boards understand new laws and prepare for required changes. When impacts are identified, the guidance outlines steps institutions should take to prepare for implementation.

During short legislative sessions, OCCA combines these resources into a single, streamlined End of Session & Implementation Report. The 2026 End of Legislative Session & Policy Bill Implementation Report is available on [OCCA's website](#).

BOARD MEMBER ACTION:

- **Review the 2025 End of Legislative Session & Policy Bill Implementation Report** on [OCCA's website](#) and check in with your college administration with any questions.

Public Meeting Minute – Legal Requirements for Public Meetings

Each month, OCCA Senior Policy Advisor & General Counsel Karen Smith will provide guidance

for boards related to Oregon Public Meetings Law.

This month, Karen focuses on key legal requirements within Oregon's Public Meetings Law (PML). In training sessions, I typically begin with the law's purpose: to ensure that governing bodies make decisions in public, in accessible meetings that all members of the public may attend. The law's primary legal requirements address how meetings are publicly noticed and how meeting discussions are documented through minutes.

Under Oregon PML, public bodies must provide notice of all meetings to the public, interested parties, and the news media. For regular community college board meetings, notice must be issued with enough time to provide actual notice, interpreted as at least 48 hours in advance. Special meetings require 24-hour notice, while emergency meetings require as much notice as reasonably possible. If less than 24-hours' notice is given, the minutes must include the reason for the emergency. Notice may be provided through conspicuous posting on the college's website, email lists, mailing lists, social media platforms regularly used by the college, or any other method reasonably calculated to provide actual notice. Notice must also be provided to the news media using the method each media representative requests or other means that ensure actual notice.

Meeting notices must include the meeting's time, date, and location, as well as instructions for online viewing when applicable. Notices must also list the principal subjects expected to be considered. This list must provide enough detail for the public to identify topics of interest. Boards may add topics during the meeting even if they were not included in the notice, though OCCA advises doing so only when necessary to maintain public trust in the board's transparency. The notice must also include the name, phone number, and email address of the person responsible for accessibility accommodations.

Minutes of all public meetings, including executive sessions, must be recorded in audio, video, digital, or written form and must provide a true reflection of the matters discussed and the views expressed. Written minutes do not need to be verbatim. With the exception of executive session minutes, all minutes or recordings must be made available to the public within a reasonable time after the meeting, even if they have not yet been approved. Executive session minutes remain confidential and should be kept separate from regular meeting minutes.

Education boards have an additional requirement: since January 2025, community colleges, K-12 school districts, and public universities must publicly post video recordings of full board meetings within seven days. This requirement does not apply to executive sessions, subcommittees, or advisory committees.

Please reach out to Karen Smith at OCCA with specific questions (ksmith@occa17.com). Next month, she'll review changes made to public meetings and ethics laws during the 2026 Legislative Session.

Register for the All-Oregon Academic Team Luncheon

The 2026 All-Oregon Academic Team (AOAT) Luncheon will take place on **Friday, April 17, 2026**, at Chemeketa Community College's Eola Center in Salem. [Registration](#) for this exciting and inspiring event is now open! The luncheon honors students from all 17 colleges who have made remarkable achievements in and out of the classroom, often overcoming challenging obstacles. The event's keynote speaker is Senator Janeen Sollman (D-Forest Grove), who has been a community college champion in the Oregon State Legislature. Our featured student speakers are: Jay Freilinger (Chemeketa CC), Savannah West (Linn-Benton CC), and Stephen Zeller (Portland CC). You won't want to miss them share their inspiring stories.

BOARD MEMBER ACTION:

- **Register & plan to attend the AOAT Luncheon** by [clicking here](#). Early bird registration ends Friday, April 3.

OCCA Lunch & Learn Webinar: Registration for April Opens Soon

On March 19, OCCA hosted a Lunch & Learn titled *Data, Belonging, and Student Voice: Improving Outcomes for Rural Young Men*, presented by Bonnie Williams of the Ford Family Foundation, Sam Riggs with Education NW, and Karly Aparicio of Columbia Gorge Community College.

Thank you to all who were able to join us. Board members who were unable to attend – or who would like to revisit the discussion – can view the recording by [clicking here](#).

Registration opens soon for the April OCCA Lunch & Learn webinar.

BOARD MEMBER ACTION:

- **Watch** the March Lunch & Learn, then register for the April webinar once the link is [posted](#).

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 Thursday of each month, *except 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.