



TO: Board of Trustees, Oregon State University  
FROM: Ben Cannon, Executive Director, HECC  
DATE: May 9, 2025  
SUBJECT: 2025 Q2 Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) Updates

---

This document highlights some of the recent actions and initiatives of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). For more information on our work, initiatives, and programs, go to: [www.oregon.gov/highered](http://www.oregon.gov/highered) or [sign up for our mailings lists for email updates](#).

### Federal Changes and HECC's Mission

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) remains committed to our mission to advance equitable access and success in postsecondary education and training, meet workforce needs, and strengthen Oregon's collective future. The HECC's commitment to equitable opportunity in postsecondary education and training has been woven into the agency's policies, programs, and processes since the founding of HECC as a state agency in 2013.

Working with Governor Kotek as well as state, institutional, and program partners, the HECC is actively assessing the potential impact of recent federal directives on Oregonians served by the postsecondary education and training system. You can view the [federal changes web page here](#) for more information.

### HECC Budget Presentations Emphasize the Return on Investment for Higher Education and Workforce Training

HECC agency leaders recently presented on the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB) to the Oregon Legislature's Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education. The presentation shared data and findings about the benefits to Oregon and Oregonians of investing in postsecondary education, and was followed by numerous hearings for partner presentations and public testimony.

The [HECC presentations](#) emphasize the critical importance of state investment in ensuring equitable opportunity for Oregonians and thriving communities for Oregon. You can view the HECC slides below:

- [HECC Budget Presentations, Days 1-3](#) (March 31, April 1, and April 2)
- [HECC Budget Presentations, Days 4-7](#) (April 3, April 7, April 8, and May 1)

The budget presentations emphasized the following ways in which postsecondary education and training returns on state investment:

- **Improving Equitable Access:** Investments support our continued work to ensure that the benefits of postsecondary education and training are realized equitably across all groups.
- **Driving Economic Mobility and Workforce Needs:** Postsecondary education fosters innovation and knowledge to prepare Oregonians for jobs of the future.

- **Prioritizing Affordability:** Oregon's investment in financial aid trails the national average and is far below our neighboring Western states despite state investments over the last decade.
- **Sustaining Public Institutions and Workforce Service Providers:** The GRB maintains a Current Service Level (CSL) investment in community colleges, public universities and workforce development boards.

You can view recordings of HECC's presentations (March 31-April 8, May 1) on the [subcommittee webpage here](#). You can also stay informed on all HECC legislative activity on our website [legislative resources page here](#).

### HECC Commission Approves Five Major Transfer Maps

The HECC, community colleges, and public universities continue to work together to expand [Major Transfer Maps \(MTMs\) across Oregon public institutions](#) that allow students to transfer credits from Oregon community colleges to Oregon public universities.

At its [April 10 public meeting](#), the HECC Commission approved five Major Transfer Maps (MTMs) in Human Development and Family Services, English, Sociology, Biology, and Business. Three reflect updates to existing maps (for English, Biology, and Business), and two represent newly created MTMs (for Human Development and Family Services and Sociology). With the two new MTMs, the number of aligned majors in Oregon grows from five to seven.

MTMs are one component of the statewide transfer work that HECC leads, catalyzed by the Oregon Legislature in [2017](#) and [2021](#) and made possible through faculty collaboration. Oregon's statewide transfer work is helping to save students time and money, reduce barriers to completion, and improve equitable pathways to graduation.

### Three Years in, Oregon's Historic Investment in the Oregon Tribal Student Grant is Changing Lives

We are pleased to report growing participation in the [Oregon Tribal Student Grant \(OTSG\)](#) since the historic launch in 2022. In the first two years alone, 215 grantees from Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes earned credentials at community colleges and public universities. The application is open for 2025-26 and tribal students are encouraged to [learn about eligibility and apply](#).

Among state financial aid programs, the OTSG is unique in its flexibility as it can cover total college costs at a time when the financial strain of housing and living expenses can be as much of a barrier as tuition. The OTSG can be applied toward undergraduate or graduate study at Oregon's 24 public colleges and universities as well as eligible Oregon private non-profit institutions, where awards can go up to the allowable maximum amount at a public university. The grant is available to students at all levels, including those who just graduated from high school or earned their GED® and adults wanting to start or return to college.

The program is funded at \$24 million for the current two-year budget cycle. With increased demand for the program, Governor Tina Kotek has recommended a \$2.5 million increase in program funding for the upcoming 2025-27 biennium.

In recognition and respect of the sovereignty of Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes, the State of Oregon works with tribal leaders through a Government-to-Government process. The Oregon Tribal Student Grant was developed in close and extensive consultation with education and tribal government leaders through this intergovernmental process.