



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Office of the Executive Director

3225 25th Street SE

Salem, Oregon 97302

[www.oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://www.oregon.gov/HigherEd)

TO: Board of Trustees, Oregon State University  
FROM: Ben Cannon, Executive Director, HECC  
DATE: May 8, 2026  
SUBJECT: 2026 Q2 Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) Updates

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This document highlights some of the recent actions, initiatives, and updates from 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](#).

## New Webpage on Implementation of House Bill 4124 - Oregon Postsecondary Education System Study

In 2026-27, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) will develop an analysis and recommendations on the public postsecondary system in Oregon, as assigned by the Oregon Legislature in House Bill 4124 (2026). This legislation requires the HECC to study the condition of the public higher education system and develop recommendations to the Legislature on the design, implementation, and operation of a sustainable system for Oregon by April 1, 2027. The HECC has published a [House Bill 4124 implementation web page](#) where members of the public can find key information on the process and timeline for this study.

## Report Finds Oregon's Unique Approach to College Credit in High School Expands Rural Students' Access

A [new evaluation report](#) finds that Oregon's unique approach to teacher qualifications for dual credit courses has greatly expanded access to college credit in high school opportunities for Oregon students, especially in rural areas. Typically, dual credit courses require high school teachers to possess the same credentials as community college instructors, disqualifying many teachers. Oregon has implemented a unique approach called "sponsored dual credit" to expand the pool of qualified dual credit teachers, wherein teachers can qualify through partnering with a postsecondary faculty member who teaches the course for professional development. Education Northwest will [host a webinar on May 15](#) to discuss the positive impacts of Oregon's model.

## Oregonians Are Invited to Share Input on What Creates a Sense of Belonging in Postsecondary Programs - Please Share This Opportunity

In a [recent press release](#), the HECC is pleased to announce an opportunity for Oregonians to share input about what could help create a sense of belonging for students at Oregon college, university, and training programs and settings. The HECC is partnering with Oregon's Kitchen Table (OKT)—a statewide community engagement program—to hear directly from current, recent, and future students and learners, as well as community members who support learners,

about what could help create a sense of belonging in learning settings after high school. The HECC and Oregon's Kitchen Table are gathering input through an online survey and conversations through May 27, 2026.

- **Complete or share the online survey:** [What Helps Create a Sense of Belonging in Oregon College and Training Programs?](#) The survey is available in English, French, Simplified Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian and Vietnamese, and is open through May 27, 2026.
- **Consider organizing a conversation:** Oregonians are welcome to share their input by hosting a conversation with their community about belonging. OKT has created the [Kitchen Table Conversation Guide](#), and anyone interested may contact OKT at [info@oregonskitchentable.org](mailto:info@oregonskitchentable.org) or (503) 725-5248 for support in hosting a discussion.

## State Awards Grants to Build Workforce Pathways in the Semiconductor Industry

[In a recent press release](#), the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is pleased to announce that it has offered \$8.5 million in grants from Oregon's Semiconductor Talent Sustaining Fund (STSF) to eight grantees to build workforce pathways in the semiconductor industry and support the growth of this sector in Oregon. The funds were allocated to the STSF by Governor Tina Kotek and awarded to seven higher education institutions and one nonprofit organization that are active members of [Frontiers of Advanced Semiconductor Technology \(FAST\)](#), a partnership led by Oregon State University and consisting of 95 cross-sector partners.

## Registration is Open for the Oregon Talent Summit on May 19, 2026

Oregon's Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB) and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) will be hosting the [2026 Oregon Talent Summit](#) on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. in person at the Salem Convention Center.

- [Register now for the Talent Summit](#)
- Join the [Talent Summit mailing list](#)

The 2026 Summit theme is *Bridging Vision and Action: Forging Oregon's Path Forward*. A core focus of the Summit is presenting the findings of the *2026 Oregon Talent Assessment*—the biannual analysis of Oregon's workforce that identifies in-demand industries and occupations, evaluates supply-demand alignment, assesses job quality, and provides regional and equity insights. [Learn more about the event and register.](#)

## Proposed Federal Rules Would Alter the Accreditation Process

The U.S. Department of Education's draft proposal for accreditation-related regulations [represents a major departure from current practice](#) by proposing to increase federal oversight of the accreditation process, implementing new accreditation requirements, lowering standards for new accreditor recognition, and altering the required composition of accrediting bodies. The negotiated rulemaking committee recently concluded its first session and the Department's proposed regulations remain largely intact; a second, final round of negotiations will take place in mid-May.