

2017-19 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/ DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PLAN

Higher Education Coordinating Commission
Ben Cannon, Executive Director



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

2017-19 Affirmative Action/Diversity & Inclusion Plan

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December 30, 2016

Ms. Nakeia Daniels
Governor's Office
Affirmative Action Manager
255 Capitol Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Ms. Daniels:

As Executive Director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission agency, I am pleased to submit our Affirmative Action/Diversity & Inclusion Plan for the 2017-19 biennium.

The Equity Lens, as adopted by the Oregon Education Investment Board and subsequently the HECC, is a focal point of our work, both internally and externally. Throughout our organization, we hold high expectations to contribute to the access, growth and success of *all* individuals and stakeholders we are privileged to work alongside and serve.

You have my continuing commitment to promote best practices in the support of equal opportunity employment and to solicit the engagement of underutilized and historically underrepresented individuals and communities. Our goal for equity, diversity and inclusion is as an interwoven part of our work, as a part of how we "breathe" at the HECC, not merely concepts visited on occasion; a forethought, not an afterthought.

Should questions or clarifications arise regarding our plan, please contact myself or Cheryl Myers our Chief Culture, Diversity & Inclusion Officer at (503)877-4303.

With sincere regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Cannon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ben Cannon, Executive Director

I. AGENCY DESCRIPTION

a. Mission and Objectives

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) has adopted as its mission the achievement of the state's statutory target of having 40 percent of adult Oregonians with a four- year degree or better and another 40 percent with a two-year degree or postsecondary certificate by the year 2025.

About the HECC

The Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is a fourteen (14) member, volunteer state board and associated state agency. The professional staff within the HECC agency support the Commission in providing state-level policy, program and budgetary leadership on higher education issues and coordinating the activities of Oregon public universities, community colleges, private colleges and universities, career schools, and state financial aid and student access programs to accomplish statewide goals. This highly complex system enrolls over 380,000 students in 7 public universities, 17 public community colleges, the Oregon Health & Science University, and 67 private for-profit and independent colleges and universities, and receives state general and lottery fund appropriations of \$1.8 billion per biennium.

The agency is responsible for advising the Governor, Chief Education Officer, and the State Legislature on higher education policy. It is responsible for developing and administering the state's biennial budget for higher education; it allocates state funding to all public colleges and universities; it approves new academic programs at public institutions; it administers state financial aid programs including the Oregon Opportunity Grant and the Oregon Promise; it maintains and reports on higher education data; and it oversees degree authorization, the regulation of private career schools, and the qualification of schools for veterans' educational benefits. It works closely with statewide organizations including the Oregon Community College Association, the Public Universities' Council of Presidents, the Oregon Student Association, the Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities, and the Northwest Career Colleges Federation.

Oregon's diversity is increasingly multifaceted, including racial/ ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, gender, geographic (urban and rural), gender identity and sexual orientation, disability, and age/generational diversity. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission has adopted the Equity Lens and is firmly committed to the representation, inclusion and engagement of broadly diverse populations through a variety of initiatives. Equity is firmly at the forefront of our prioritization, decision-making and daily work

On July 1, 2015, the HECC agency fully integrated and is organized into eight offices: Executive Director, Operations, Research & Data, Student Access & Completion, Community Colleges & Workforce Development, University Coordination, Workforce Investments, and Private Postsecondary Education.

- b. Contact Information: Agency Director
Ben Cannon, Executive Director
255 Capitol Street NE, Third Floor
Salem, Oregon 97301
(503)378-5690 ben.cannon@state.or.us
www.oregon.gov/HigherEd
- c. Contact Information: Agency's Governor's Policy Advisors
Lindsey Capps, Education Policy Advisor
(503)986-6541 lindsey.d.capps@oregon.gov
Elana Pirtle-Guiney, Labor & Workforce Policy Advisor
(503)986-6527 elana.pirtle-guiney@oregon.gov
- d. Contact Information: Agency's Affirmative Action Representative
Cheryl Myers, Chief Culture, Diversity & Inclusion Officer
(503)877-4303 cheryl.L.myers@state.or.us
- e. Contact Information: Agency's Designated "Equity" FTE
Cheryl Myers, Chief Culture, Diversity & Inclusion Officer
(503)877-4303 cheryl.L.myers@state.or.us
- f. Organizational Chart [next page]

142 positions (123.63 FTE)
As of July 25, 2016 - Legislatively Approved Budget

Total - 123.63 FTE
General Fund - 63.22 FTE
Other Funds - 24.75 FTE
Federal Funds - 35.66 FTE

II. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PLAN

a. Agency Affirmative Action Statement

This statement applies to all HECC staff and all matters relating to hiring, firing, promotion, benefits, compensation, and other terms and conditions of employment.

The HECC supports the spirit and letter of equal employment opportunity laws, rules and regulations, and affirmative action concepts and the right of all persons to work and advance on the basis of merit, ability, and potential.

The HECC strives to achieve equal employment opportunity and affirmative action objectives through the recruitment, employment and advancement of a diverse workforce, including women, minorities and the disabled. The Commission and agency will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment and endeavors to maintain a tolerant and respectful work environment free of hostility or unwelcome behavior.

The HECC is committed to providing, through a program of affirmative action, equal access to programs and services and fair and equal opportunities for employment. In administering its program, commission members and staff will not discriminate against any person who is a current or potential user of its services on the basis of race, color, ancestry, gender, national origin, age, family or marital status, sexual orientation, political or religious affiliation, veteran status, physical or mental disability.

An individual who has interviewed for employment, who believes they were denied employment based on any of the aforementioned discriminatory factors, may review the employment decision with the Commission, by contacting the HECC's Affirmative Action Representative (contact information listed previously). If the concern is not resolved to the individual's satisfaction, they may contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Seattle District Office – 909 First Avenue, Suite 400, Seattle, WA 98104-1061.

As part of the annual performance evaluation, the Commission's Executive Director is evaluated, in part, on efforts to promote the equal employment opportunity and affirmative action objectives of the agency.

The agency shares its current AA/D&I Plan with the Commission, all staff and places a copy on the website for public access.

b. Agency Diversity & Inclusion Statement

The HECC is committed to establishing, monitoring, and maintaining a work environment where all employees are valued, treated fairly, and given opportunities to develop and grow to their full potential. Every employee plays a part in the agency's diverse workforce and inclusive work environment by being respectful and supportive, and by acting with integrity toward one another. Each person's skills, talents, knowledge, experiences and personalities broaden the range of perspectives in and approaches to conducting the agency's work. The HECC can best promote excellence by intentionally recruiting, retaining and accommodating a diverse group of staff in an environment of respect that is supportive of their workplace success. This climate of diversity, inclusion and excellence is critical to successfully contributing leadership and resources to increase the skills, knowledge and career opportunities of Oregonians



c. D&I Council Mission Statement

To foster a climate that empowers all to embrace a culture of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion as a valued asset. HECC management and staff prioritize these values through professional development and engagement in order to achieve equity-driven results for Oregonians.

d. Training, Education and Developmental Plan (TEDP)

At the HECC, [State Policy 50.045.01, Employee Development and Implementation of Oregon Benchmarks for Workforce Development](#) is used to promote employee career growth.



The HECC actively strives to provide promotional opportunities that either use existing skills in a different setting or support employees in the acquisition of new skills, be it through formal classroom training, job rotations, various work projects or experiences, and educational or continuing education opportunities. All employees receive formal, annual performance evaluations.

As the agency moves forward its commitment to foster learning environments and promote continual growth and improvement, it is crucial that all aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion be at its core foundation. As such, important conversations take place to determine the overarching perspectives, beliefs and vision amongst HECC leadership/management. The following agency priorities have been identified:

- Nurture an environment intentionally inclusive of diverse groups, people and perspectives
- Align equity, diversity and inclusion efforts with commission and agency strategic plans
- Recruit, hire, support, promote and retain diverse staff
- Increase cultural awareness and staff diversity
- Maintain a strong, clear and consistent agency wide Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) communications
- Align equity, diversity and inclusion efforts with agency programs and services

While the agency's leadership and coordination with partners on equity and student success is vital to achieving Oregon's higher education goals, it is equally important to engage the agency's internal staff at all levels.

i. *Staff*

- The Affirmative Action Plan including the agency's AA Statement is posted on the agency's website.
- Hiring managers work with Human Resources to ensure no bias, intended or unintended, is imbedded in required qualifications or in application or interview process.
- Interview panels intentionally include diverse members where possible.
- Position descriptions are reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure affirmative action and diversity and inclusion responsibilities are included in management position descriptions.
- ✓ ORS 659.025 (1) "To achieve the public policy of the State of Oregon for persons in the state to attain employment and advancement without discrimination because of race, religion, color, sex, marital status, national origin, disability or age, every state agency shall be required to include in the evaluation of all management personnel the manager's or supervisor's effectiveness in achieving affirmative action."

- Supervisor annual evaluations include assessing effectiveness in fostering a diverse workforce (recruitment, retention, promotion strategies) and building a culturally competent work environment.
- Training opportunity access is available to all staff per the Statewide Employee Development and Implementation of Oregon Benchmarks for Workforce Development Policy (50.045.01).
- The HECC New Employee Orientation is provided within the first week of employment to new employees to guide them through their first days of employment and to answer any questions.

The HECC's role in engaging external stakeholders and informing the public is vast. The Education Pathway Charts in Appendix C from Oregon Learns are included as a compelling visual of our core work and the distance Oregon must travel to address the opportunity gap in secondary and higher education.

"If the ladder of educational opportunity rises high at the doors of some youth and scarcely rises at the doors of others, while at the same time formal education is made a prerequisite to occupational and social advance, then education may become the means, not of eliminating race and class distinctions, but of deepening and solidifying them."

—President Truman, in releasing a report of the President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947

ii. *Volunteers*

OSAC maintains a statewide outreach and mentoring program, ASPIRE, which provides cultural sensitivity, disability awareness, and inclusiveness training to more than 1,500 volunteers who serve as mentors to students from all socio-economic and racial or ethnic backgrounds. The program operated in 157 middle schools, high schools, colleges and community-based organizations during 2015-16. More than 10,000 students were directly mentored and over 120,000 were students reached through workshops, drop-in assistance, or special programs. ASPIRE students served possess the following characteristics:

- **Racial breakdown:** 35% are students of color
- **Economic background:** 52% are from low-income or moderate-income families
- **Linguistic Background:** 22% are from homes where a language other than English is spoken
- **Educational background:** 54% have one parent/guardian who did not attend college
52% have two parents/guardians who did not attend college
- Over the last year, Oregon has seen the nation's highest percent increase in FAFSA completion by high school seniors. By successfully completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), over a thousand more Oregon students have gained access to federal and state financial aid. According to a [recent analysis of FAFSA completion data](#), as of April, 2016, approximately 8.8% more Oregon high school seniors had completed a FAFSA than at the same point in 2015. This increase is particularly notable given that nationally, the number of FAFSA completions dropped 3.2% over the same period. Oregon's improvements correspond with this year's launch of the highly publicized Oregon Promise program, which requires the FAFSA as a component of the grant application, as well as the success of numerous proactive outreach efforts. Oregon's recent outreach efforts include OSAC's innovative and growing [FAFSA Plus+ initiative which has received national attention for fostering improvements](#) in FAFSA completion of high school

seniors at participating sites, OSAC's longstanding College Goal Oregon events statewide, as well as initiatives and programs led by college access organizations, K-12 schools and districts, and numerous other partners.

- All staff are regularly informed of equity and diversity events occurring in local areas. Staff representation is encouraged at community-based and/or equity-focused events and convenings, demonstrating the agency's support and creating additional agency awareness.

iii. ***Contractors/Vendors***

The HECC does not currently provide vendor diversity training.

e. **Programs**

i. ***Internship/Fellows***

• ***Formal:***

- OSAC interns and college work-study students work with the Scholarship program reviewing scholarship application transcripts from January through March each year. OSAC also utilizes work-study students for the ASPIRE program to assist in maintaining the social media presence for the program.
- The agency has continued its engagement with graduate students from the Hatfield School of Business' Fellows Program, with excellent results.
 - The Office of University Coordination – Academic Planning & Policy engaged a 2015-16 fellow who returned post-fellowship for a temporary assignment. Their 2016-17 fellow who is a First Nation's member, assisting with research to inform agency staff on the best strategies to support the recently updated American Indian/Alaska Native Education State plan. The Fellow will also assist with analysis of new and proposed state plans that impact student success initiatives.
 - OSAC also hosted a 2016 Hatfield Summer Fellow who prepared a research brief exploring the ability to offer race/ethnicity-based scholarships via a literature review and summary for agency leadership, and additionally provided development assistance to the ongoing OSAC website project.

- ***Informal:*** As vacancies or opportunities arise, all interns are encouraged to apply for any position openings they may be qualified for. HECC strives to maintain contact with interns for ongoing opportunities and community outreach communication.

ii. ***Mentorship Programs***

Formalized programs are not currently in place, but under consideration.

iii. ***Community/External Outreach***

Informal community involvement activities have included:

- Numerous staff have presented at community college and university conferences as well as multi-cultural community events.
- Invitations are regularly extended to staff for diversity events, such as Say Hey, Networkin' It, etc. and as budget allows, sponsorship opportunities are strongly considered.
- OSAC partners with numerous community and professional groups throughout the state to deliver its access and financial assistance programs, including the following: middle & high schools, community-based organizations, Oregon Association of Student Financial Aid

Administrators (OSAFAA), The Oregon Community Foundation, The Ford Family Foundation, Pacific Northwest Association for College Admission Counseling, Oregon



GEAR UP, Incight (for students with disabilities), Oregon Independent Colleges Association, Oregon Indian Council for Postsecondary Education, Oregon Student Association, Oregon Community College Association, Oregon College Access Network, and Career Information Systems.

- In addition to full Commission meetings, the Commission's **Student Success and Institutional Collaboration Subcommittee** (SSIC) considers equity-focused academic directives, initiatives and public testimony, and the **Funding and Achievement Subcommittee** considers fiscal matters on a regular basis.
- In 2015, the HECC adopted a new formula for the distribution of state resources to public universities that **incentivizes support for underserved populations**. The Student Success and Completion Model (SSCM) creates state financial incentives for universities to increase the number of resident students who complete degrees, with additional funding weights for students of color, low-income, rural, and veteran students.
- HECC staff regularly convene an internal **Equity Advisory Group** comprised of campus leaders who inform staff on equity initiatives, and promote inter-campus communication, collaboration, and innovation as a learning community to improve equity.
- HECC **regularly collaborates with Oregon tribes**, meeting with Government-to-Government education leaders, attending quarterly and annual education cluster gatherings, semi-annual Legislative Commission on Indian Services trainings, providing quarterly and annual agency reports; collaborating to better serve Native students.
- A number of Commission's recent [affordability initiatives detailed here](#) are driven by equity goals, including **redesign and expansion of the Oregon Opportunity Grant to prioritize support for low-income students**, and efforts to improve textbook affordability.
- OSAC implements **mentoring and outreach programs to prepare students of all backgrounds for success** in college and career including Oregon ASPIRE, and financial aid outreach through the [FAFSA Plus+ initiative](#), College Goal Oregon and more.
- **Recent Legislative Work Groups, Reports and Resources:** The Oregon Legislature entrusts the HECC with research and analysis of numerous higher education policy questions of critical interest to the state, including bills and initiatives related to improving equity noted below. All [final HECC reports submitted to the Legislature can be found on our website](#).
 - Development of educator equity plans by 6 public university teacher preparation programs (HB 3375);
 - The collection and reporting of sexual orientation data for students and employees at all public universities in Oregon (SB 473);
 - Grants to programs supporting underrepresented students pursuing STEM degrees (HB 3072);
 - Policy research and legislative recommendations on disparities in higher education (HB 3308);
 - Approaches to better serving students who stop out before completing a degree (need bill);
 - Expanding eligibility for undocumented students who would otherwise qualify for in-state tuition at public universities the ability to apply for OOG funds (SB 932);
 - Collaboration with Oregon Department of Education on additional directives focused on high school graduation and success, including a plan for African-American student success (HB 2016); as well as
 - Expanded outreach and communication on the GED.
- HECC staff are involved in numerous collaborative campus efforts to [streamline the community college to university transfer pathway](#), working to ensure students do not lose credits; this impacts affordability and time to degree for low-income, first generation, and

other underserved student groups. HECC also leads policy efforts on [Credit for Prior Learning](#), improving pathways for returning and adult students to earn credits.

- **Collaboration:** In its equity initiatives and efforts, the HECC welcomes the involvement and collaboration of campus communities, students and families, community-based organizations, tribal partners, agencies and additional stakeholders to achieve mutual education goals and build lasting relationships to improve the futures of all Oregon students.

iv. *Diversity Awareness Programs*

- The agency's internal D&I Council strive to increase awareness and continual learning regarding diversity and equity issues and recently circulated an anonymous survey [synopsis found in Appendix C] to better assess existing staff perceptions, attitudes and beliefs regarding equity/D&I. Survey results are utilized to create a foundation for future training and will be conducted periodically to assess progress. The following staff perspectives and interests were brought to light:
 - Create an agency culture that celebrates the unique attributes of all people
 - Provide a safe learning environment for all staff during the various stages of their D&I journey
 - Offer D&I training opportunities and resources
 - Support internal promotions and succession planning
- In collaboration with Oregon public education institutions, the HECC continues its convening of a higher education Equity Workgroup, comprised of professionals charged with diversity and equity policies at their campuses. This learning community meets quarterly and provides input to the HECC on equity best practices and innovative approaches.
- The Commission formally adopted the [OEIB equity lens](#)¹ as a guiding principle. The equity lens is a valuable tool and perspective to create a culture of equity not only for HECC programs, but also for the internal agency culture. The equity lens' primary focus is race and ethnicity.
- As the Chief Education Office executes its charge to align and build a P-20 education system, the equity lens within the HECC proves useful to ensure every learner (internal and external) is adequately prepared by educators focused on equity for meaningful contributions to society. The equity lens confirms the importance of recognizing institutional and systemic barriers and discriminatory practices that have limited access for many students in the Oregon education system. The equity lens emphasizes underserved students, such as out of school youth, English Language Learners, and students in communities of color and rural geographical locations, with a particular focus on racial equity. The result of creating a culture of equity will focus on the outcomes of academic proficiency, civic awareness, workplace literacy, and personal integrity. The system outcomes focus on resource allocation, overall investments, hiring and professional learning.
- Statewide leadership programs are available to staff such as the Management Developmental Series and other trainings in the State of Oregon iLearn Training site.
- The HECC Leadership Team addresses affirmative action, diversity and equity topics on an ongoing basis at its biweekly meetings. Intentional recruiting efforts include outreach to diverse communities including publications and organizations, diverse hiring panels and ongoing measures to create a culture to support retention and development of a diverse and vibrant workforce.



v. *Leadership Development/Training Programs*

- See goals for planned programs.

¹ http://education.oregon.gov/Documents/HECC/Reports%20and%20Presentations/Presidents_letter_Equity_Lens.pdf

f. Update: Executive Order 16-09

i. *Respectful Leadership Training*

The HECC is committed to the goals of enriching the diversity of the agency and increasing the level of cultural competency, both internally and throughout our external and partner base. As the agency is developing, additional efforts are emerging, as demonstrated by the recently created position dedicated to equity effort. This position furthers design and agency equity initiative implementation, building upon the initial employee survey assessment identified in the Training & Development section.

ii. *Statewide Exit Interview Survey*

The HECC encourages all employees to complete this DAS web-based, exit-interview tool prior to their transfer or departure: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=206582533018>

Participation is optional and all responses are anonymous and cannot be traced back to an individual. The survey is conducted in a safe and non-threatening manner and covers such items as benefits; working conditions; opportunities for career advancement; quality and quantity of workload; and relationships with co-workers and supervisors. In the new plan year, DAS will analyze the information for positive and negative results, and strive to correct or minimize the negative results and report the findings to the Executive Team on a quarterly basis.

iii. *Performance Evaluation of All Management Personnel*

The HECC is in the process of establishing a Performance Management Plan, in accordance with the statewide Performance Management Process Policy (50.035.01)

g. Status of Contracts to Minority Businesses (ORS 659A.015)

While much of the agency budget contains significant pass-through funding and grants to public institutions, the agency continues to seek additional contracting opportunities with diverse businesses, including an existing HECC contract utilizing a WBE/MBE subcontractor. This data reflects 01-12/2016 information only.

Issuing Agency	Total # of Contracts	WBE/MBE Contracts	Potential WBE/MBE	Total Contract Value	WBE/MBE Contracts	Potential WBE/MBE
HECC	518	6	3	\$48,213	6	\$48,213

III. ROLES FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

a. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

i. *Executive Director*

The Executive Director directs and supervises all activities of the agency. The Executive Director reports to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission annually and biennially to the Legislative Ways & Means Committee, on the progress and outcomes of the agency's Affirmative Action Plan. Pursuant to the administrative rule [105-040-001](#), the Executive Director ensures:

A) Equal employment opportunities are afforded to all applicants and employees by making employment related decisions that are non-discriminatory; and

B) Employment practices are consistent with the state's Affirmative Action Guidelines under ORS 659A.012–659A.015 and federal laws to:

(i) Promotes good faith efforts to achieve established affirmative action objectives; and

(ii) Takes proactive steps to develop diverse applicant pools for position vacancies.

ii. *Managers/Supervisors*

The Chief Culture, Diversity & Inclusion Officer works with leadership to direct agency affirmative action functions, ensuring the agency plan, targets and goals are followed,

implemented, and achieved. The Deputy Executive Director is involved in recruiting processes to ensure there is no intended or unintended bias.

- Supervisors are expected to foster and promote the importance of a diverse workforce free of discrimination and harassment to staff and follow the statewide [Discrimination and Harassment Free Policy 50.010.01](#).
- Ensure subordinates receive an orientation on the agency's affirmative action goals and responsibilities and understand their own responsibilities for helping promote diversity and a harassment free work environment.
- The HECC ensures agency and State of Oregon procedures and rules are followed to fill employment vacancies.
- Managers are evaluated annually to assess how they have fostered a diverse workforce. Criteria may include:
 - Agency workforce education regarding diversity issues (i.e. training and communication).
 - Recruitment and selection efforts (recommendations for advertising or marketing open recruitments).
 - Retention (how managers identify and ensure employees are provided appropriate tools for success).



iii. ***Affirmative Action Representative***

The Department of Administrative Services, Enterprise Human Resource Service provides human resources to the HECC. The assigned Human Resource Manager reports to the Executive Director and works with the Chief Culture, Diversity & Inclusion Officer and participates as part of the Executive team. The HR Affirmative Action Representative reports to the Executive Team and works directly with the HR Director to:

- Ensure employees receive and engage in a thorough orientation to the HECC and state government; this includes review of AA and EEO policy with employees during the New Employee Orientation;
- Promote and oversee effective retention practices using the Affirmative Action/D&I Plan.
- Assist with and/or investigate and address EEO/AA complaints;
- Report EEO complaints or areas needing improvement to management team members; and
- Provide EEO/AA and ADA training options to the agency.

IV. JULY 1, 2015 – JUNE 30, 2017

a. Accomplishments

As fully integrated new agency on July 1, 2015, the HECC incorporated the collective efforts of two agencies, CCWD and OSAC, as it launched an enhanced and vibrant internal culture of inclusion.

- The HECC continued to place the formally adopted [Equity Lens](#) at the center of its efforts to improve higher educational success for underserved populations in Oregon.
- The agency's voluntary internal Diversity & Inclusion workgroup, comprised of staff from across agency offices, increasingly engaged in staff equity/D&I training and ongoing communication.
- The Higher Education Equity Advisory Group is composed of institutional administrators focused on equity issues at community colleges and public universities; this group provides insight and advice to the commission and agency, with a focus on achieving state goals.
- The 2015-17 higher education budget priority framework was organized around key priorities of student success and affordability, with a focus on investment priorities in the context of promoting educational quality and equity for all Oregon students.
 - In 2015, the HECC adopted a new formula for the distribution of state resources to public universities that incentivizes support for underserved populations.
 - Recent Commission affordability initiatives were driven by equity goals, including redesign and expansion of the Oregon Opportunity Grant to prioritize support for low-income students, and efforts to improve textbook affordability.
 - House Bill 3072, established \$2 million in competitive grant funding to public postsecondary institutions for activities related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics education and activities for underrepresented and underserved students, related to career and technical education leading to high-wage and high-demand jobs.
 - Fall 2016, the first Oregon Promise cohort began, with 6,634 awards granted. \$39.7 million is currently included in the 2017-19 Governor's Recommended Budget for the next cohort, details will become clearer as the session moves forward and student retention data is available. Of particular equity note, the state's focus on 40-40-20 includes *all* students, without legal status consideration. A separate application, Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA), was created to mimic the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for those students unable to complete the federal financial aid application and thus allow application to this new program. The racial/ethnic distribution of recipients mostly parallels last year's high school seniors:

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Oregon 12th Graders, 2015-16	Percent of Oregon Promise Recipients
African American or Black	2.7	1.4
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.6	1.0
Asian American	4.1	4.1
Hispanic	21.3	18.9
Pacific Islander	0.6	0.5
Two or more racial/ethnic groups	5.0	5.0
White, non-Hispanic	64.6	65.7
Unknown	N/A	3.5

- The agency greatly benefited from a yearlong job rotation for an Education Equity Specialist, Blanca Torres de Hawkins. Her work was instrumental in moving diversity and inclusion efforts forward internally, as well as staffing education equity-focused legislative directives.
- In addition to intentional direct outreach by leadership, vigorous diversity outreach strategies have been deployed for recruitment purposes including, but not limited to: National Higher Ed Recruitment Consortium, Partners In Diversity, Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, NAACP Salem-Keizer Chapter, Oregon Native American Chamber, Hispanic Services Roundtable, the Oregon Advocacy Commissions, Asian Pacific American Chamber, Urban League, African American Chamber, Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber, OSHEN, HispanicPros, StoriJobs.
- OSAC maintains a statewide outreach and mentoring program, ASPIRE, which provides cultural sensitivity, disability awareness, and inclusiveness training to more than 1,500 volunteers who serve as mentors to students from all socio-economic and racial or ethnic backgrounds. The program operated in 157 middle schools, high schools, colleges and community-based organizations during 2015-16. 11,980 students were directly mentored and 72,212 were students reached through workshops, drop-in assistance, or special programs. ASPIRE students served possess the following characteristics:
 - Racial breakdown: 35% are students of color
 - Economic background: 52% are from low-income or moderate-income families
 - Linguistic Background: 22% are from homes where a language other than English is spoken
 - Educational background: 54% have one parent/guardian who did not attend college
- Since its inception in 1971, the Oregon Opportunity Grant has been a need-based grant program serving low-income Oregonians. Students apply for the Oregon Opportunity Grant by completing and submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is also the application for federal student aid programs. OSAC receives data from all FAFSAs submitted by Oregon residents. FAFSA data contains demographic and financial data on each applicant and his/her family, if applicable, but no data on race or ethnicity.

Oregon Opportunity Grants served 39,264 Oregon students in 2015-16. During the same period, OSAC administered public and privately-funded scholarships reached 3,523 students and awarded over \$18 million. 25.8% of award recipients self-identified as students

Recipients of Oregon Opportunity Grants had the following characteristics in 2015-16:

 - Racial breakdown: The percentage of Opportunity Grant recipients who self-identified as students of color (excludes white and 'unknown') was 31 percent.
 - Economic background: 53.5 percent of Opportunity Grant recipients are from families with incomes below \$20,000.
 - In 2015-16, OSAC administered scholarships (includes privately funded and public programs) reached 3,523 students. The percentage of award recipients who self-identified as students of color was 25.8 percent.
- Leadership equity discussions and review occur regularly. From frequent internal equity communications, dedicated time at each quarterly All Staff meetings to small group and one-on-one conversations, opportunities are seized to convey and reiterate the priority role of equity, diversity and inclusion in all agency efforts.
- The FAFSA Plus+ program began collecting race data for high school seniors at all participating FAFSA Plus+ sites. As of December 2016, 139 FAFSA Plus+ high schools and other agencies have provided race data for over 29,000 high school seniors. With further development, this data will be used to calculate FAFSA submission and completion rates among different racial groups of high school seniors at FAFSA Plus+ sites.



b. Progress made or lost since previous biennium

As demonstrated in the following EEO statistics, the aggregate agency parity has made gains over the prior biennium and it remains a focus to continue this trajectory.

EEO Statistics as of 06/30/2016

6/30/16 Statistics - HECC	Total EEs	WMN	WMN PRTY	WMN GOAL	WMN Under Goal	People of Color	POC Parity	POC Goal	POC Under Goal	People With Disability	PWD Parity	PWD Goal	PWD Under Goal
Principal Executive/Manager H	1	0	36.60%	0.3	0.3	0	12.20%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.0	
Principal Executive/Manager G	5	2	36.60%	0.3		2	12.20%	0.1		0	6.00%	0.3	
Principal Executive/Manager F	4	2	36.60%	0.3		1	12.20%	0.5		0	6.00%	0.2	
Principal Executive/Manager E	4	2	36.60%	0.3		0	12.20%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.2	
Principal Executive/Manager D	2	1	36.60%	0.3		0	12.20%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.0	
A02 Upper Management	16	7	36.30%	5.8		5	12.20%	2.0		0	6.00%	1.0	1
A Official/Administrator	16	7			0.6	5			0.4	0			1
Public Affairs Specialist 3	1	1	41.70%	0.4		0	9.00%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
B02 Communication/Editor	1	1	41.70%	0.4		0	9.00%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Education Program Specialist 2	10	6	59.40%	5.9		3	9.60%	0.9		0	6.00%	0.6	0.6
Education Program Specialist 1	4	3	59.40%	2.4		0	9.60%	0.4	0.4	0	6.00%	0.2	0.2
B03 Teacher/Education	14	9	59.40%	8.3		3	9.60%	1.3		0	6.00%	0.8	0.8
Procurement & Contract Spec 2	1	1	43.20%	0.4		0	5.30%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
B07 Purchasing Agent/Analyst	1	1	43.20%	0.4		0	5.30%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Research Analyst 4	2	1	43.70%	0.8		1	10.00%	0.2		0	6.00%	0.1	0.1
Research Analyst 3	1	1	43.70%	0.4		0	10.00%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.0	
B09 Social Science/Planner/Researcher	3	2	43.70%	1.3		1	10.00%	0.3		0	6.00%	0.1	0.1
Training & Development Spec 1	1	1	57.60%	0.5		1	11.60%	0.1		0	6.00%	0.0	
B10 Personnel/Employment	1	1	57.60%	0.5		1	11.60%	0.1		0	6.00%	0.0	
Compliance Specialist 3	0	0	48.10%	0.0		0	10.70%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
B11 Inspector/Compliance	0	0	48.10%	0.0		0	10.70%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Info Systems Specialist 7	9	3	32.40%	2.9		0	13.00%	1.2	1.2	0	6.00%	0.5	0.5
Info Systems Specialist 6	1	0	32.40%	0.3	0.3	0	13.00%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.0	
Info Systems Specialist 3	1	1	32.40%	0.3		0	13.00%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.0	
B12 Computer Analyst	11	4	32.40%	3.6		0	13.00%	1.4	1.4	0	6.00%	0.7	0.7
Fiscal Analyst 3	2	1	53.00%	1.1	0.1	0	13.00%	0.1	0.1	1	6.00%	0.1	
Fiscal Analyst 2	1	1	53.00%	0.5		0	13.00%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.0	
Fiscal Analyst 1	0	0	53.00%	0.0		0	13.00%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Accountant 4	1	1	53.00%	0.5		0	13.00%	0.1	0.1	0	6.00%	0.0	
Accountant 3	3	0	53.00%	1.5	1.5	1	13.00%	0.3		0	6.00%	0.1	0.1
Accountant 2	2	2	53.00%	1.0		0	13.00%	0.2	0.2	0	6.00%	0.1	0.1
B15 Accounting/Finance/Revenue	9	5	53.00%	4.5		1	13.00%	0.9		0	6.00%	0.2	0.2
Operations & Policy Analyst 4	6	5	41.10%	2.5		0	9.50%	0.6	0.6	0	6.00%	0.4	0.4
Operations & Policy Analyst 3	4	2	41.10%	1.6		0	9.50%	0.4	0.4	0	6.00%	0.2	0.2
Operations & Policy Analyst 2	1	1	41.10%	0.4		0	9.50%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Program Analyst 4	1	0	41.10%	0.4	0.4	0	9.50%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Program Analyst 3	7	5	41.10%	2.9		1	9.50%	0.7		0	6.00%	0.4	0.4
Program Analyst 2	1	1	41.10%	0.4		0	9.50%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Program Analyst 1	7	6	41.10%	2.9		1	9.50%	0.7		0	6.00%	0.4	0.4
B16 Program Coord/Analyst	27	20	41.10%	11.1		2	9.50%	2.6	0.6	0	6.00%	1.6	1.6
B Professionals	67	43				8			2	0			3.4
Executive Support Specialist 2	6	5	70.30%	4.2		3	9.70%	0.6		0	6.00%	0.4	0.4
Accounting Technician 3	1	1	70.30%	0.7		0	9.70%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Accounting Technician 2	1	1	70.30%	0.7		0	9.70%	0.0		0	6.00%	0.0	
Administrative Specialist 2	5	5	70.30%	3.5		1	9.70%	0.5		0	6.00%	0.3	0.3
Administrative Specialist 1	3	3	70.30%	2.1		0	9.70%	0.3	0.3	0	6.00%	0.2	0.2
Office Specialist 2	2	2	70.30%	1.4		0	9.70%	0.2	0.2	0	6.00%	0.1	0.1
Office Specialist 1	4	4	70.30%	2.8		1	9.70%	0.4		0	6.00%	0.2	0.2
F00 Administrative Support	22	21	70.30%	15.5		5	9.70%	2.1		0	6.00%	1.3	1.3
F Administrative Support	22	21				5				0			1.3
TOTALS	105	71				15			2	1			5.3
Women	67.61%												
% Overall	14.28%												
POC %	0.95%												

V. JULY 1, 2017 – JUNE 30, 2019

a. Goals for Affirmative Action and Diversity & Inclusion Plan

Continue building an agency culture that above all values merit, ability and potential and promotes recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce, respecting all and reflecting Oregon's dynamic and changing population.

b. Strategies and Timelines for Goal Achievement

The HECC will ensure diversity and inclusion strategies are in alignment with ORS 243.305 policy of affirmative action and fair and equal employment opportunities and advancement, any applicable collective bargaining agreement and statewide recruitment policies and guidelines. The agency works to increase workplace diversity awareness and inclusion efforts, strategies and actions considered may include:

- Continue support for the volunteer internal D&I Council; recommend improvements in meeting affirmative action goals and increased agency diversity.
- The Chief Culture, Diversity & Inclusion Officer leads the training plan to educate and foster diversity and inclusion among staff. As recent members of the Oregon Leadership Network, new tools and resources have become available; the Chief Culture Diversity & Inclusion Officer will collaborate with the D&I Council to assess these resources for internal leadership development and staff training.
- Between All Staff meetings, deployment of lunchtime 'safe space' learning opportunities utilizing equity/D&I content resources such as TED Talks, YouTube, articles, etc. with facilitated conversation led by the D&I Council.
- Chief Culture, D&I Officer to provide one-on-one mentoring and resources to all office directors and supervisors as desired.
- An agency mentorship program is being considered.
- Best hiring practices to further increase agency diversity are continually explored. Ongoing discussions occur with each office director to implement strategies to prevent harassment and discrimination complaints in the workplace and promote retention and succession planning approaches.
- Management leadership will review diversity efforts and share quarterly at Leadership Team meetings.
- Provide a mid-biennium progress report for the HECC Commissioners; the prior report can be found [here](#), shared with all staff and placed on the agency website.
- Pursue equity training for HECC Commissioners.
- Hiring managers will continue working with Human Resources to ensure there is no intended or unintended bias imbedded in required qualifications or in application or interview questions.
- Position descriptions will be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that affirmative action and diversity and inclusion responsibilities are included in management position descriptions.
 - ORS 659.025 (1) *"To achieve the public policy of the State of Oregon for persons in the state to attain employment and advancement without discrimination because of race, religion, color, sex, marital status, national origin, disability or age, every state agency shall be required to include in the evaluation of all management personnel the manager's or supervisor's effectiveness in achieving affirmative action."*
- Review the HECC's agency orientation of affirmative action and D&I policy, goals and develop criteria regarding employee's roles to contribute to a diverse workforce, free of harassment.



- Require staff attendance at specified mandatory training through the Oregon iLearn system.
- Develop an integrated Labor Management Committee, which would perform annual reviews and make enhancement suggestions to the AA/D&I Plan.
- Diversity and inclusion agenda items are included at all staff meetings.
- Encourage all employees to complete the DAS web-based exit interview survey tool prior to their transfer or departure.
- Post the finalized AA/D&I Plan and Mid-Biennium Progress Update on the HECC website.
- Publically announce the AA/D&I Plan and its availability on the web, to partners, stakeholders and state agency personnel.
- Provide the Executive Director the biennial affirmative action information as part of the regular Ways & Means presentation to the Legislature.
- Succession plan development that emphasizes diversity outreach and retention considerations.



- VI. APPENDIX A – State [found here](#)
- VII. APPENDIX B – Federal [found here](#)
- VIII. APPENDIX C

- a. Agency's Policy Documentation

The HECC places an EEO statement on all recruitment announcements The HECC administers the following statewide policies: ADA and Reasonable Accommodation Policy; Discrimination and Harassment Free Workplace; Employee and Training Policy; Veteran's Preference in Employment; Maintaining a Professional Workplace.

- Other Agency Documentation: The Education Pathway
 - Other Agency Documentation: D&I Internal Survey Results - Highlights

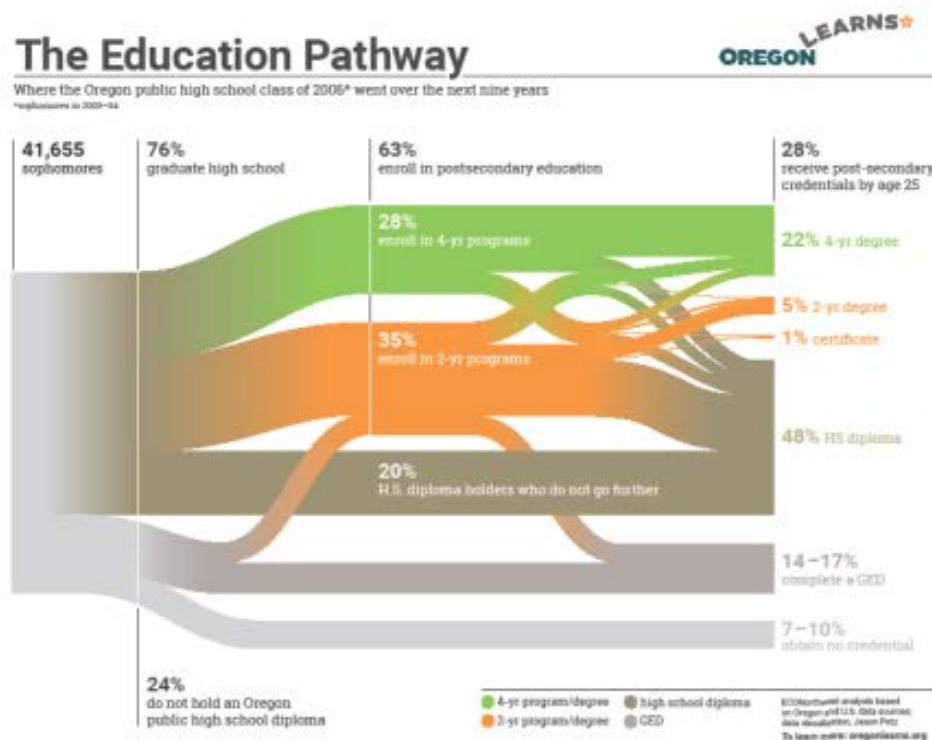
The Education Pathway

Based on longitudinal data more than a decade in the making, there is now clear visual evidence that Oregon is dramatically falling short in its aspirations for student completion of studies and credentials – both in high school and beyond. Attainment lags most heavily among students from low-income families and communities of color.

The diagram below illustrates this finding for the entire Class of 2006. The links at left offer larger views of this student cohort as well as cohort segments broken down by income (free and reduced lunch, or not) and race.

Among the full cohort of 41,655 Oregon students who were sophomores in public high schools in 2003-04, 63 percent started postsecondary studies, but only 28 percent attained any kind of postsecondary degree by the age of 25 (nine years later).

[click here for more information](#)

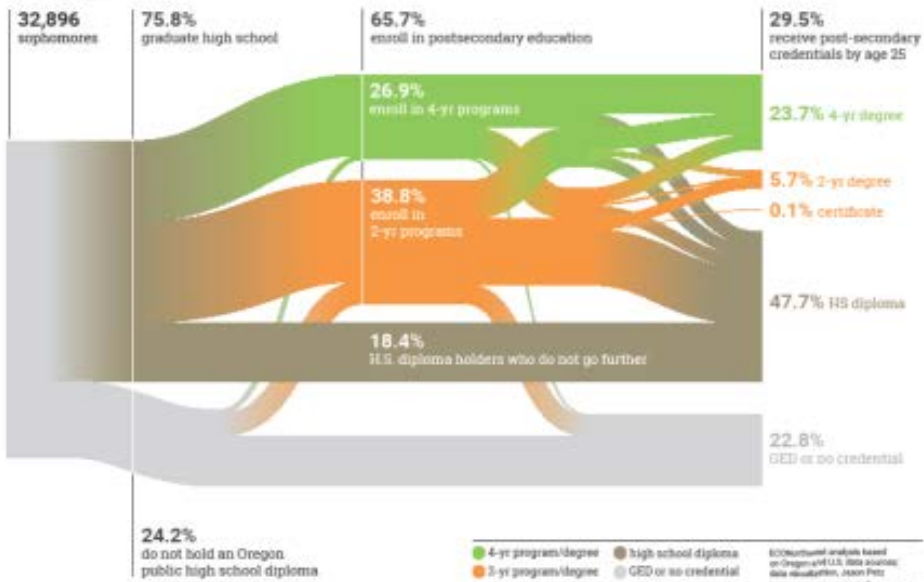


The Education Pathway

OREGON LEARNS

WHITE STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2005-06

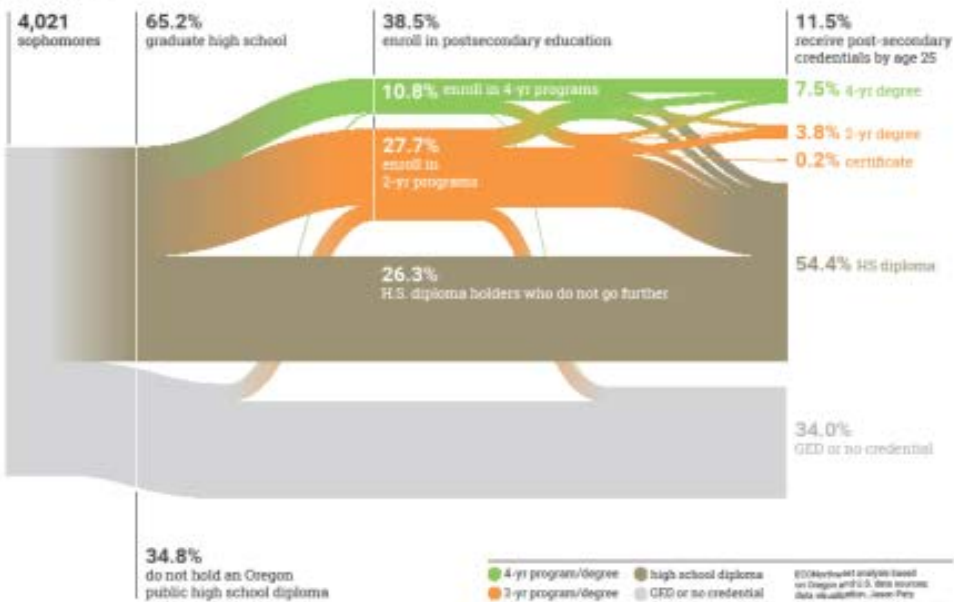


The Education Pathway

OREGON LEARNS

LATINO STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2005-06

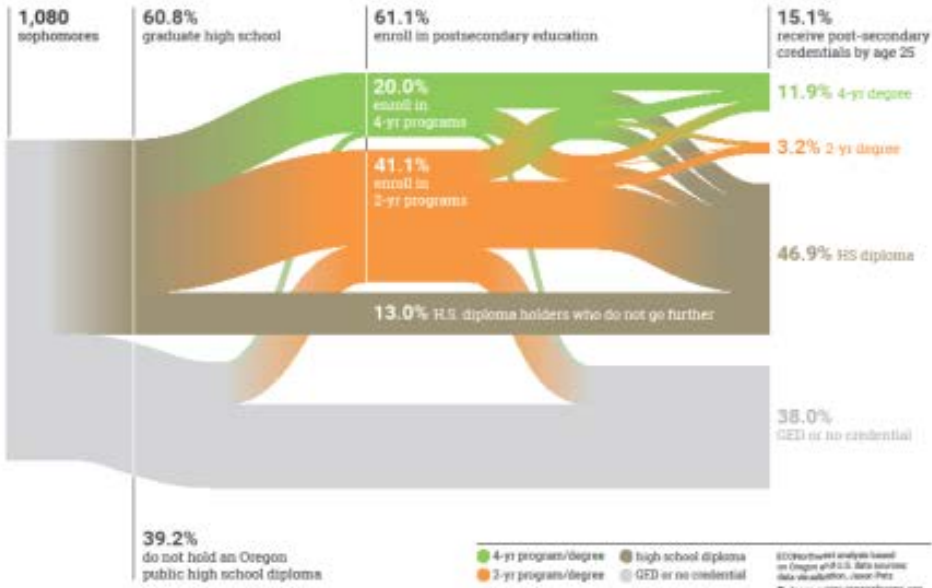


The Education Pathway

OREGON LEARNS

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2009-10

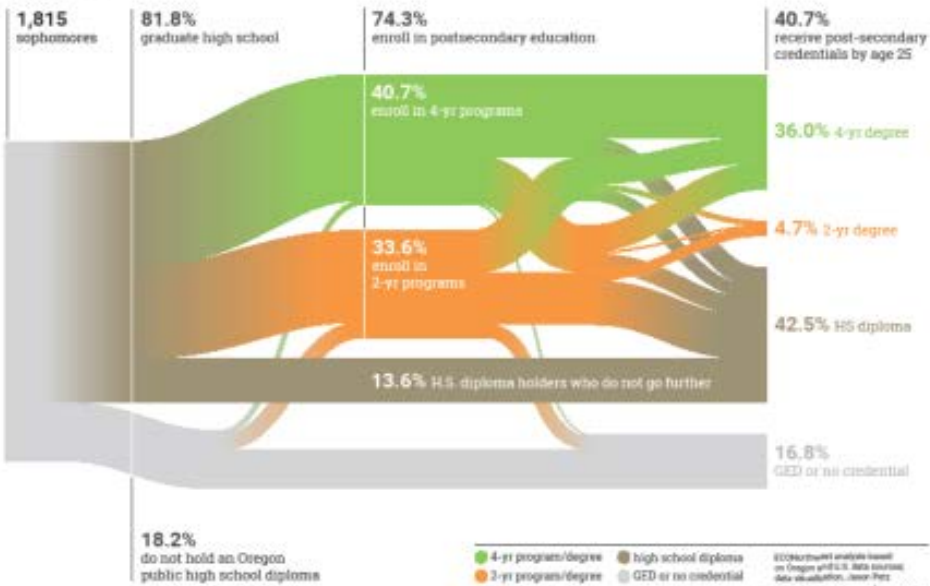


The Education Pathway

OREGON LEARNS

ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2009-10

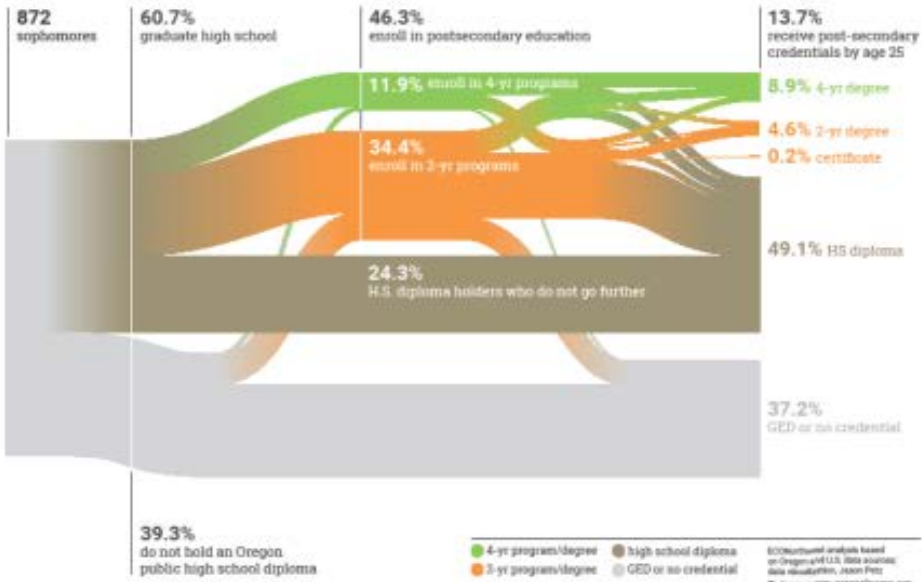


The Education Pathway

OREGON LEARNS

NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2009-10

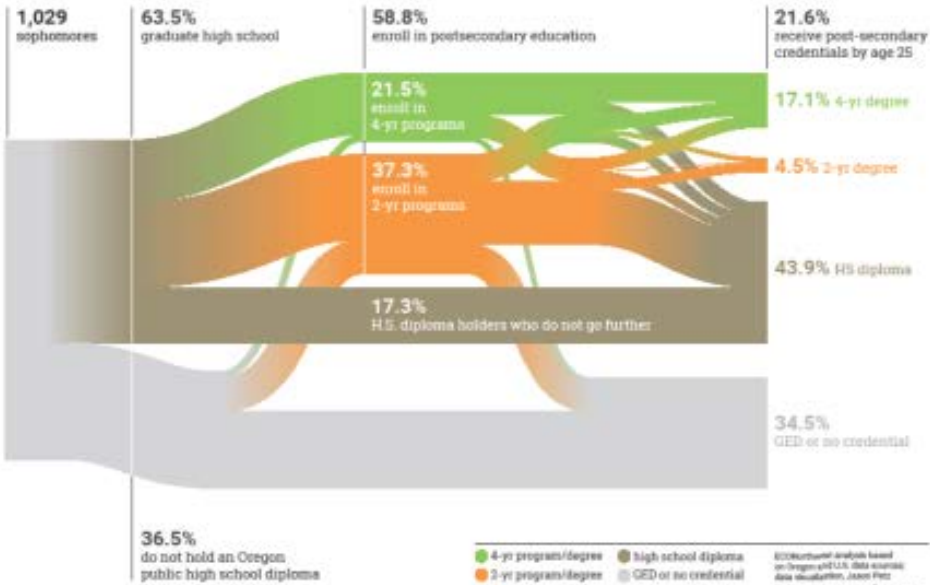


The Education Pathway

OREGON LEARNS

MULTIETHNIC STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2009-10

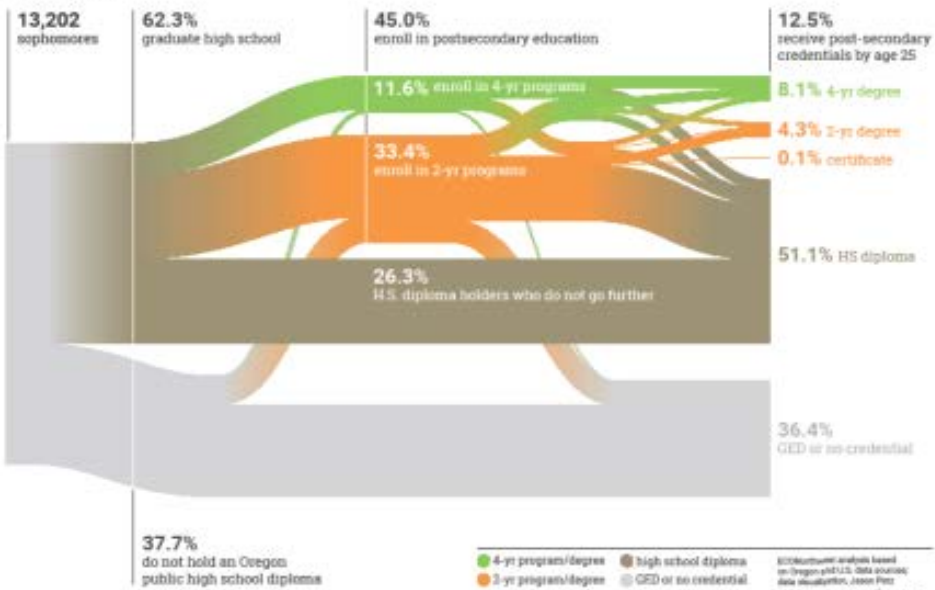


The Education Pathway

LEARNS
OREGON

FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH (FRL) STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2009-10

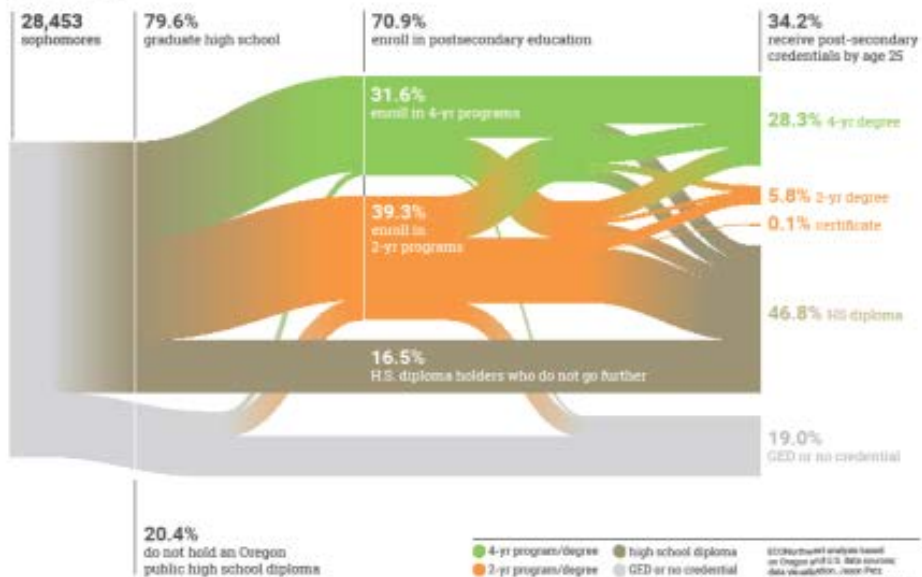


The Education Pathway

LEARNS
OREGON

NON FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH (NON-FRL) STUDENTS

Where the Oregon public high school class of 2006* went over the next nine years
*sophomores in 2009-10



Education Pathway Data Analysis

Collection and analysis of data portrayed in The Education Pathway grew out of ECONorthwest work in support of the Oregon Education Investment Board, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, and the Governor's Office in 2014 in preparation for 2015 policy and budget packages. ECONorthwest received postsecondary outcome data from the Community College and Workforce Development Department and from the Oregon University System for Oregon K12 students who were sophomores in the 2003-04 school year (that is, expected graduates of the Class of 2006). The Oregon Department of Education supplemented the OUS/CCWD matches with data from the National Student Clearinghouse to capture students who attended private and out-of-state institutions.

The Sankey diagram visualizes the analysis of credentials by age 25 for the cohort. Census estimates suggest each of those numbers will continue to rise as members of the cohort age into their late 20s. Bachelor's degrees for the full cohort should trend to 30 percent; associate's degrees to 8 percent.

GED attainment rates for the full cohort were estimated from available data. ECONorthwest's longitudinal database does not include GEDs. No GED attainment rates are possible to estimate for smaller segments of the cohort.

It should be noted that about 8 to 10 percent of high school students attend private schools, and these are not reflected in the data or the diagram. Private school students typically participate in postsecondary education and complete at higher rates than public high school students.

2016 HECC D&I INTERNAL SURVEY QUESTIONS - HIGHLIGHTS

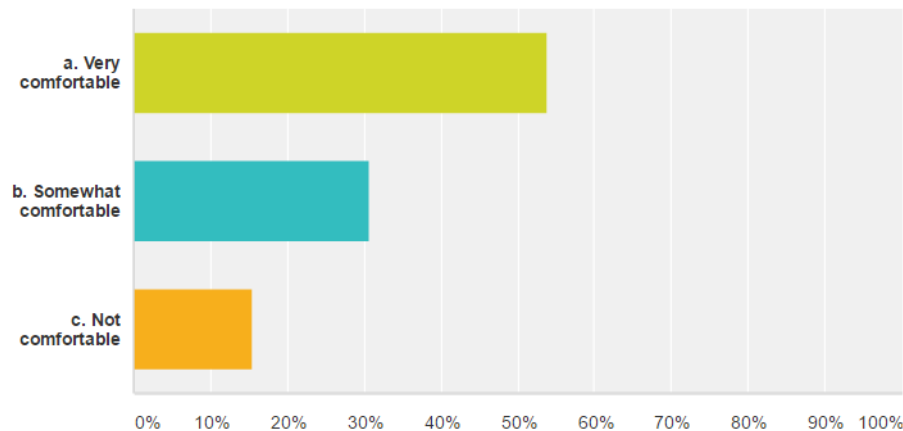
Q1. What does diversity mean to you? Inclusion?

- ✓ Overwhelming positive and thoughtful responses
- ✓ Diversity: representation of people from a variety of backgrounds, genders, ethnicity. Inclusion: not excluding people, accepting/embracing differences.
- ✓ Understanding and celebrating individual uniqueness; appreciating and really listening to understand all perspectives
- ✓ Acceptance and respect for those of other race, color and creed. Admiring the differences instead of fearing them.
- ✓ Diversity - difference, variation. That each individual is unique. Inclusion - acceptance, involvement.

Q2. I feel comfortable When co-workers or stakeholders speak a language other than English.

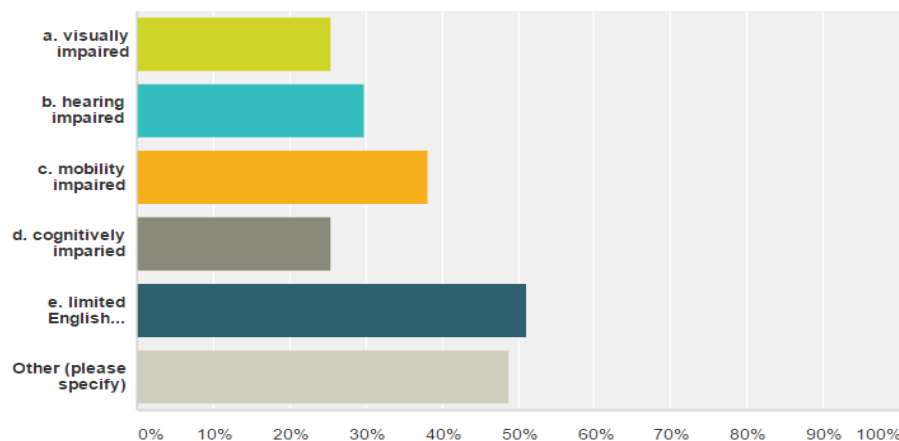
- ✓ Responses varied, confusion around the context of speaking a different language (formal meetings, casual office conversation, and break rooms).
- ✓ Overwhelming appreciation of other languages in staff responses
- ✓ Strong feelings of disconnected communication (feeling left out or that its rude behavior).
- ✓ 54% comfortable with others speaking a different language other than English.

- ✓ 31% somewhat comfortable; 15% not comfortable



Q3. I have access to tools, strategies and resources to engage with people who are:

- ✓ 51% Limited English Proficiency; 25% Visually Impaired
- ✓ 30% Hearing Impaired; 38% Mobility Impaired
- ✓ 25% Cognitively Impaired



Q4. What is understanding cultural communication?

- ✓ Mastering the ability effectively engage in conversations with all groups of people.
- ✓ Understanding what is similar and different between co-workers, i.e. how they understand an issue, whether the language and words they use is the same or different than your own.
- ✓ Treating members of other cultures with mutual respect, kindness and consideration.

Q5. Do you find the internal newsletter D&I section valuable, D&I All Staff training valuable? What could we do to improve the effectiveness of the D&I newsletter section and/or training?

- ✓ Many indicated they were not aware of the D&I section
Opportunity to Reintroduce the D&I section [when it is sent, where it is found, who sends it, why we send it and what is sent, e.g. videos, articles, resources]
- ✓ Those that are familiar with the D&I section responded favorably to the resources provided
Invite All Staff to share resources, links, videos around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- ✓ 31% somewhat comfortable; 15% not comfortable

your
of cross-