



## **Legislative Session Update**

### **Student Success and Institutional Collaboration Subcommittee**

### **May 13, 2015**

The 2015 Legislative Session is progressing quickly. The first deadline for passing bills came and went on April 21<sup>st</sup> and the next significant deadline is next Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. On that day, committees other than Rules, Ways & Means, and Revenue have to post any bills that will receive a work session on an agenda. This will signal which bills have a chance of passing from now until *sine die*.

Tomorrow is also a significant day in the legislative cycle. Tomorrow the May revenue forecast will be issued. Legislative leaders will use this forecast to determine how much money is available to finalize budgets for all public agencies and services.

#### **Bills of Interest**

As of today, all of the HECC's agency bills are still alive. The HECC's highest priority bill, **House Bill 2407A**, would implement changes to the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) in order to effectively promote affordability as endorsed by the Commission. The bill was presented to the Joint Ways & Means Education Subcommittee yesterday. We have received positive feedback on the redesign of the program that prioritizes students with the highest financial need. The largest question surrounding this bill and the OOG is how much the Legislature will be able to invest in it. The Governor's Recommended Budget set aside \$143.3M for the program while the Co-Chairs budget has it set at \$137M with a possible \$5M added if the May revenue forecast is positive.

**House Bill 2525A** is a bill that updates the Transfer Student Bill of Rights that was put in statute in 2011. The bill this Session would have the HECC continue to work on statewide standards that align requirements for similar courses and identify majors that take more than two years to complete following transfer. The HECC would also assess what information is available to students now when they are weighing their transfer options and direct the HECC to convene a work group of students and educators from postsecondary and K-12 institutions to determine what it would take to implement a transfer credit evaluation system. Under the bill, the HECC would also develop a research plan to analyze when and why credits are lost upon transfer.

**House Bill 2681A** was introduced by Representative Komp to address the use of placement tests for recent high school graduates entering community colleges. This bill would build upon existing work between the HECC and the State Board of Education and direct them to jointly oversee a work group to recommend strategies to effectively and appropriately place incoming high school graduates in community college courses. This will include consideration of the use

of the Smarter Balanced Assessment test.

**Senate Bill 81A** is the “free community college” bill which, of course, is a topic this Commission studied closely. The bill would waive community college tuition for students who completed high school or a GED within the previous two years and have completed a FAFSA. Additionally, the bill provides that the amount of tuition waived would be the amount owed after subtracting applicable state and federal grants plus \$50 per term paid by the student. It would require the HECC to adopt rules regarding the timelines for a community college to receive reimbursement from the HECC as well as academic advising requirements that the college and student must satisfy to ensure that the student earns a certificate or degree. This bill is in Ways & Means and can still receive consideration.

**Senate Bill 215** would extend the sunset on the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB). Senator Roblan, the Chair of the Senate Education Committee, has convened a group to discuss this bill. The group has met weekly for the past two months and includes Tim Nesbitt, Dana Richardson, K-12 stakeholders, business interests, OCCA, and two public university representatives. Amendments are being discussed that would dissolve the Board while retaining a Chief Education Office with administrative and convening duties for four years.

**Senate Bill 418A** has been amended to carry forward the accelerated learning concept that was in **Senate Bill 84**. It would require that each school district provide an accelerated college credit program at each high school that must include the greater of three college-level courses or nine quarter hours of college-level courses. The courses must be transferable to a postsecondary institution and may include courses in math, writing, speech, science, arts, humanities, or social sciences. The bill instructs the HECC, the OEIB, and the Department of Education to support the programs by providing standards, identifying model programs and best practices, and administering a grant program to support accelerated college programs. This bill is in Ways & Means and can still receive consideration.