



Portland Community College
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Portland, OR 97219

Co-Chair Roblan, Co-Chair Smith Warner, Co-Vice Chair Knopp, Co-Vice Chair Smith and Members of the Committee

Subject: Don't Leave College Students Behind in New Education Funding

Legislators have a once-in-decade opportunity to invest in Oregon students and reform Oregon's tax system, but the current plan leaves college students behind.

By 2020, 65 percent of new jobs are expected to require education and training beyond high school. To provide Oregonians the opportunity they need to thrive and for businesses to help grow the economy, we need to support students from cradle to career,

Since Measure 5, Oregon students have seen tuition increases vastly outpace inflation while programs and services have been cut because state investment fell further behind. Student debt is higher than it's even been.

The Workforce Development and Continuing Education department at PCC serves a significant number of low income students/job seekers to help them access and complete education and training at the college leading to jobs with economic mobility. The Career Pathways program provides important wrap around support to many first generation, low income students at PCC while they take CTE coursework towards a college credential and job. This program has a 94% completion rate with a demographic of students that are 50% students of color and also 50% low income students. The completion rate for students of color is 88% which dramatically reduces and practically eliminates the opportunity gaps. This educational model is only possible with sustained funding that supports these students in terms of CTE course offerings and the staffing support. Career Pathways also helps employers with the skills gap recognizing that 50% of jobs across the state are middle skill jobs requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor's degree.

Without sufficient funding, PCC will not be able to provide this opportunity for students and community members who could benefit the most in CTE skills training leading to good jobs while also falling short in meeting employers talent needs.

We urge you to support Governor Kate Brown's call for including post-secondary education in the spending proposal before this committee.