



Student Policy Proposal Package

**JOINT TASK FORCE ON STUDENT
SUCCESS FOR UNDERREPRESENTED
STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Joint Task Force On Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education

Thanks to student advocacy, HB2590 (The Student Voice Bill) was passed by the Oregon State Legislature in 2021. With the goal of centering underrepresented student voices in conversations about higher education policy, HB2590 established the **Joint Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education**.

Initially, the task force was tasked with traveling across the state to hear directly from underrepresented students at public community colleges and universities. This took place through a series of forums and focus groups that allowed underrepresented students to testify and discuss barriers and challenges they have faced in accessing their higher education.

In August 2022, the task force broke out into work groups to develop further legislation to address the concerns they heard about from students. The work groups covered three policy areas:

- Workgroup 1: **Financial Aid and Affordability**
- Workgroup 2: **Student Support and Wraparound Services**
- Workgroup 3: **Systemic Accountability and Continuous Improvement**

Within each workgroup, a multitude of student work group members have been actively participating and advocating for equitable student-centric policies that address the needs of underrepresented students. In this policy package, you will find all of the policy proposals that the students created and proposed to the task force. On November 17th, the task force will consider and hold a vote on the policy proposals across all work groups. The proposals that advance have a chance to become bills in the 2023 Legislative Session. To ensure that student voices continue to be centered, we hope that you can support these student policy proposals.

Contents

STUDENT POLICY PROPOSALS

04. LEARNERS WORKING FOR AFFORDABLE MATERIALS
SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PARENTS ACT
PROMOTING HEALTHY CAMPUSES ACT
-

05. UNIVERSITY HOUSING ACCOUNTABILITY ACT
RECOGNIZING HOUSELESS STUDENTS AND FAMILIES
DISABILITY JUSTICE ACTION PLAN FOR STUDENTS
-

06. HIGHER EDUCATION EXCUSED ABSENCE ACT
COMPREHENSIVE ORIENTATION FOR ALL STUDENTS
ETHNIC STUDIES REQUIREMENT IN HIGHER ED
-

07. CULTURAL COMPETENCY FOR SUPPORT STAFF
EDUCATIONAL DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT
COMMITTEE ON ADULT STUDENTS IN CUSTODY
-

TO READ PROPOSALS IN THEIR ENTIRETY: [CLICK HERE](#)

1

Learners Working for Affordable Materials

Addresses rising textbook costs by: (1) contracting with a college program to create registration software that communicates with online bookstore sites to automate accurate course marking, and (2) increasing funding to Open Oregon Educational Resources to their “expansion” request of 4.5 million dollars for the 2023–25 biennium.

2

Support for Student Parents Act

Requires the state to seed childcare programs on all public college and university main campuses, ensuring with funding that enrolled students pay nothing for childcare, and that childcare facilities are adequately staffed with a combination of employees and work study/internship opportunities for family sciences and early childhood education students.

3

Promoting Healthy Campuses Act

Requires that any credit-earning student will be eligible for Oregon Health Plan (OHP) Basic or Citizenship Waived Medical. The OHP Basic Plan will add immunizations, medical equipment and supplies, labor and delivery, reproductive health care, emergency care, emergency transport, vision and hearing, to the already existing benefits offered by OHP.

4

University Housing Accountability Act

Requires that universities must : (1) establish firm commitments to housing a greater percentage of student body on-campus, (2) ensures that growth in enrollment also corresponds with growth in housing, (3) sets numerical deadlines for decreasing dependence on private rental housing, and (4) identifies target rents for dorms that are competitive with private market rents.

5

Recognizing Houseless Students and Families

Requires colleges and universities to designate a zone on-campus where houseless students may reside, have access to showers, and be protected from risk of being swept by law enforcement. Basic Needs Navigators can register students to have access to these zones and help with access to other basic needs already offered on each campus.

6

Disability Justice Action Plan for Students

Mandates the creation of a statewide Committee on Disability Justice in Oregon Higher Education. The committee will develop a statewide action plan to make higher education institutions more accessible, accommodating, and safe for disabled students. The committee shall include membership of disabled students, faculty, staff, and accessibility professionals.

7

Higher Education Excused Absence Act

Requires every public university in the State of Oregon until the end of the 2023–24 academic year to publish a university-wide excused absence policy that provides students with a baseline of excused absences for sickness (COVID and non-COVID related), mental health issues, and other emergencies.

8

Comprehensive Orientation for All Students

Require colleges and universities to provide resources at orientation for: (1) SNAP benefits training and food security resources, (2) housing and tenant support resources, (3) disability accommodations, (4) mental health counseling, (5) student legal services, and (6) financial aid literacy resources. Further, requires Spanish translation of all orientation materials.

9

Ethnic Studies Requirement in Higher Education

Requires all students at Oregon's colleges and universities to take an Ethnic Studies course or complete an equivalent course as an undergraduate graduation requirement. Mandates institutions to be in compliance by 2027–28 academic year.

10

Cultural Competency for Support Staff

Requires higher education institutions to create and uphold a plan for diversifying their advising and counseling workforces. Mandates and institutionalizes cultural competency training and workshops for student support staff, with an emphasis on academic advisors and mental health counselors.

11

Educational Debt Collection Practices Act

Prohibits the practice of transcript withholding and limits the practice of student class registration holds at institutions of higher education as debt collection practices. Holds that result in the following will be prohibited: conditional release of unofficial or official transcripts; prevention of enrollment in courses; prevention of maintaining status as student.

12

Committee on Adult Students in Custody**

Mandates the creation of a permanent coordinated committee tasked with managing Higher Education Prison (HEP) programs and accessing issues for Adults in Custody (AICs).

**Proposal drafted by Aislyn Matias (Staff, PSU)



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ASSOCIATION

**Thank you
for your
support and
interest in
supporting
students!**

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