

SB 478 -1, -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Prepared By: Ellen O'Brien, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/12, 3/5

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires community college governing boards to vote on the college's membership in any state or national association. It also permits each community college governing board to offer stipends of up to \$500 per month to its members, requires board members to have an official email address 90 days after passage of the measure, and beginning July 1, 2026, requires each board to have an additional voting member who is a full-time student. The measure requires each community college to report to the Legislative Assembly on their compliance with the provisions of the bill by September 1, 2027. It declares an emergency and is effective on passage.

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued.

REVENUE: Revenue impact issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Student role and voices in governing process
- Elected versus appointed governing board seats
- Existing ability for governing boards to vote on college association membership
- Even number of board members creating gridlock or need for consensus

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 The amendment modifies the requirement for community college boards to vote on the college's membership in associations. It prevents board members from receiving stipends until the next election after the board votes to offer the stipends. It also requires the boards to fill board vacancies within certain deadlines, and requires county commissioners to fill the vacancy if the board fails to do so.

Detailed Summary

- Specifies that community college governing boards are required to vote on any changes to the college's membership in any association, including renewal and cancellation of a membership and not limited to membership in national or state associations.
- Specifies that the requirement for voting on the college's association membership does not apply to student, faculty, and staff organizations' membership in their own associations.
- Prevents board members from receiving stipends until the next regular district election after the board votes to offer the stipends.
- Requires community college board members to fill any board vacancy that occurs at least 90 days before the next district election within 60 days.
- Requires the governing body of the county where the community college is primarily located to fill a vacancy within 10 days if the community college governing board fails to do so.

-3 The amendment removes provisions of the measure permitting community college governing boards to offer stipends to board members. It modifies the requirement for community college boards to vote on the college's membership in associations. The amendment requires that each community college governing board include an additional nonvoting student member, rather than a voting student member, and specifies eligibility and privileges of the nonvoting student member. It also requires the boards to fill board vacancies within certain deadlines, and requires county commissioners to fill the vacancy if the board fails to do so.

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Detailed Summary

- Removes provisions of the measure permitting community college governing boards to offer stipends to board members.
- Specifies that community college governing boards are required to vote on any changes to the college's membership in any association, including renewal and cancellation of a membership and not limited to membership in national or state associations.
- Specifies that the requirement for voting on the college's association membership does not apply to student, faculty, and staff organizations' membership in their own associations.
- Requires that each community college governing board include an additional nonvoting student member, rather than a voting student member.
- Requires that the nonvoting student member be elected or selected by the community college's student government, be at least 18 years of age at the start of their term, and be a resident of Oregon.
- Specifies that the nonvoting member must be permitted to:
 - Participate ceremonially in all votes held by the board;
 - Have their vote recorded in the journal of the board;
 - Participate in all meetings, discussions, and functions, including executive sessions of the board; and
 - Receive any information distributed to voting members of the board.
- Requires community college board members to fill any board vacancy that occurs at least 90 days before the next district election within 90 days.
- Requires the governing body of the county where the community college is primarily located to fill a vacancy within 10 days if the community college governing board fails to do so.

BACKGROUND:

[House Bill 2753 \(2023\)](#) permitted the boards of kindergarten through grade 12 school districts to offer stipends of up to \$500 per month to members, with provisions for reimbursing necessary expenses and for members to refuse the stipend, similar to language in Section 1 of Senate Bill 478.

[Senate Bill 273 \(2023\)](#) made a number of changes to public university governing boards, including requiring public university governing boards to have additional undergraduate student and graduate student members; modifying the nominating process for faculty, staff, and student members; and requiring public university governing boards to adopt specified policies for transparency and community feedback. The changes in that bill were the result of the [January 28, 2022 Governance Review of Oregon's Public Universities](#) commissioned by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) and a workgroup process in the 2021-2022 interim.

Community college district boards' duties and powers are enumerated in [ORS Chapter 341](#). Boards are composed of seven elected members who serve four year terms. There are currently 17 community college districts in Oregon, covering most but not all of the state ("[Mapping the Landscape of CTE, STEM, and Workforce Education](#)," Legislative Policy and Research Office, December 20, 2022).