

President's Update
OCCC Board of Education Meeting
January 20, 2021

Federal Pandemic Relief Funding

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), 2021, enacted on December 27, 2020, provided \$22.7 billion for institutions of higher education. The big takeaways from the relief package include \$300 in weekly federal unemployment insurance payments through March 14, direct payments of \$600 for individuals and \$82 billion for education as a whole. Included in that education funding is nearly \$23 billion for a higher education fund, more than \$54 billion for public K-12 schools and more than \$4 billion for a governors' relief fund.

Impact on OCCC: As the pandemic drags on and we stay primarily in a remote mode, enrollments are beginning to lag significantly compared to pre-pandemic. While the implications for students and potential students is our first concern, there is also secondary impact on the College, in that we rely upon certain levels of enrollment to sustain our operations. Consequently, the support that is pending from CRRSA is sorely needed by students and the institution itself. Because the support for Higher Education is larger than that in CAREs and is also structured more flexibly, we look forward to using these new one-time funds to help more students access education, and help the College navigate some troubling fiscal challenges.

However, our prior status of being accredited through PCC continues to plague us, and we are likely looking at a repeat of CAREs, where our allocation was funneled through PCC and we might lose out on small college subsidies. (This is because the distribution formula relies upon 2017-2018 data.) We are advocating and working through a variety of channels (Senator Merkley's office, Department of Education, and AACC) to attempt to have OCCC approved for direct payment. What is the potential funding for us? Since we are not in the system, there are no Federal projections as yet for OCCC. Based on conversations with PCC, they suggest we might see funding in the low \$400,000 range as a portion of their entire award. A minimum of \$90,000 would go to direct student aid. All funds to be expended by the end of the calendar year.

Considering Federal Grants

Now that we are independently accredited and recognized by the Department of Education from 2020 onwards, we are newly eligible to apply for a number of sizable competitive federal grants programs administered by the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE). Awards are tied to large-scale improvements in student success and require new efforts (so not intended to supplant the funding of current efforts.) This is a type of funding that all of the other Oregon CCs have accessed at some point in the last 20 years, but OCCC has been ineligible due to our lack of independent standing. VPs Dan Lara and Andres Oroz are working with a Federal grant consultant and leading the effort to determine which if any are appropriate for OCCC.

Mission Review Process – as shared with College Council

Our Accreditation cycle requires that OCCC engage in a process of mission review. Our Board of Education is ultimately responsible for the Mission statement, and they rely upon input from the College community as an important part of their deliberations. Most employees participated in Mission review process at In-Service in September. A student panel served as the jumping off point for group discussion considering the mission statement in light of student needs as expressed in the panel. This was followed by a survey that asked what about the mission is still relevant, and what do you think is missing or needs updating? The results of that survey were shared with the Board of Education (BOE). Based on this feedback, the BOE has given the direction that the current mission remains timely and relevant, with one exception most consistently called out in the survey comments. That change is to infuse a more explicit commitment to equity in the mission. I have asked the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee to lead a process to develop equity phrasing to be considered by the Board for inclusion in a revised Mission Statement.

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and Native Lands Recognition:

With the support of the College Board of Education, I made a formal request to the CTSI Tribal Council for their appointment of one or more tribe members to be part of a College committee tasked with making recommendations in regard to native lands recognition statements and other ways in which to increase the visibility of CTSI in the work of the college. Presenting with me were VPs Lara and Oroz, who spoke to past and future educational collaborations between OCCC and CTSI. We also communicated our deep appreciation for the very generous giving of the CTSI Charitable Foundation to OCCC education programs. The Tribal Council appointed Bud Lane and Robert Kenta to the committee.

December 2020

Year End Update

2020 was a year of many challenges, we refer to it as a VUCA year (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous)

- OCCC was granted NWCCU Independent Accreditation
- Pandemic Responses, Pivots and Restarts
- In two weeks OCCC went 100% remote (courses and employees)
- Earned Title IV Status
- Fiscal challenges
- Restructured to align with the budget.
- SBDC to the rescue
- CAREs Act Roller coaster
- Fires
- ERP Migration
- Built new far-reaching systems – Financial Aid and Registrar Office
- Issued first OCCC Certificate

There are many people to thank for bringing OCCC through the year, including community support, OCCC Board of Education, OCCC Foundation Board, elected officials, faculty, staff, managers, and students.

Partnership with Marine Innovation Center

OCCC is in partnership with OSU, Hatfield & MSI, Workforce Investment Board, Lincoln County School District, Port of Toledo, and others under the umbrella of the Marine Innovation Center (MIC). Whether or not the MIC concept is ultimately funded and established, it will serve to advance and brand our continued focus on expanding to serve the maritime workforce sector. There is the possibility of funding teaching staff, curriculum development and lab facilities in an interim way that could later be rolled into the WERC building (College's next planned facility). The Foundation Board supports an eventual bond issue to match the promised \$8 million in Article II G bonds promised by the state for the WERC building.