

Oregon Public University Council

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To: Chair Arnie Roblan and Members of the Senate Committee on Education
From: The Provosts of Oregon's Public Universities
Subject: Senate Bill 84
Date: February 24, 2015

Dear Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee,

Oregon's Public Universities support SB84, and will work together with our high school and community college partners to ensure that all Oregon students have access to accelerated college credit before they leave high school. We are all aware of the many benefits of accelerated credit in terms of student preparation, matriculation, and affordability. In addition to offering dual credit, many of our universities are actively engaged in strategic partnerships, such as STEM Hubs and Promise Initiatives that have advanced accelerated credit for many years. We welcome the state's support for this important work.

In the spirit of collaboration, we'd like to offer some suggested clarifications or amendments to SB84.

Section 1: Include "credit by exam programs or proficiency" in the definition of "accelerated college credit programs." Project Lead the Way is an example of a credit-by-exam program where students can complete a class, demonstrate proficiency through an exam, and receive college credit.

The public universities believe that "credit by exam programs" should be explicitly included in the definition, along with AP and IB programs.

Section 2, Subsection 4 and Section 5, Subsection 1(d): Allowable cost of programs. The expenses of some universities for accelerated credit programs may exceed the range of the maximum established by the HECC.

The public universities seek clarity on whether the minimum and maximum limits have been established while taking into consideration their costs for offering the programs. Higher cost programs at some institutions may make them unattractive to students who have lower cost alternatives; however some students may prefer to select a higher cost program due to the level of support services, convenience or other market factors.

Section 2, Subsection 3 (A): Online limitations. This section provides that an accelerated credit course may not be provided exclusively online.

*The public universities support encouraging students to take on-site courses, but **rural students may be disadvantaged** if online courses are excluded from their options. Nationally, many dual credit programs utilize on-line delivery.*

Section 5, Subsection 1 (b): **Standards for faculty.** Directs the HECC, in consultation with the State Board of Education, to provide standards for how faculty will collaborate with teachers on the alignment of course content, objectives and outcomes.

The public universities are working collaboratively with hundreds of teachers who are qualified to teach accelerated credit courses. The process of meeting, alignment course outcomes, and conducting ongoing mentoring is well-developed and collaborative in nature. This relationship does not require regulatory oversight, and may result in contract issues for both post-secondary and secondary teachers. We respectfully ask for this provision to be deleted from the bill.

Section 5, Subsection 1 (c): **Process for approving teachers applies to all institutions.** Directs the HECC, in consultation with the State Board of Education, to develop a process for post-secondary institutions to follow for approving teachers who are qualified to teach dual credit, and

Section 5, Subsection 1 (c) (A): will result in the same outcomes, regardless of the approving post-secondary institution.

Each public universities has a process for approving teachers, in alignment with its program accreditation and institutional accreditation standards. In fact, the post-secondary institutions have more flexibility to approve qualified teachers than community colleges, because the standards are not in statute and are based on an analysis of teacher experience, educational background, course content, and other factors. Each institution must work with its faculty and its accrediting agencies, and establish a culture of collaboration and support for accelerated credit. We respectfully request that both of these subsections be deleted from the bill.

We fully support the intent of SB84 and are interested in discussing how our suggestions for amendments can be incorporated into the bill.

Sincerely,

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