



OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Improving our future by degrees



LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

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OKLAHOMA'S PROMISE

The Oklahoma's Promise scholarship program has been named by the Southern Regional Education Board as a top promise scholarship program in the nation. Goals for the 2024 legislative session include reducing administrative barriers to increase scholarship access and participation. Strategies may include streamlining high school course requirements; implementing an adjustable, annual formula for eligibility income limits; and developing an appeal process to assist students facing unique circumstances to ensure no qualified student is excluded.



ADULT DEGREE COMPLETION

More than 400,000 Oklahomans have earned some college credit, but no degree. As part of the *Blueprint 2030* strategic plan, the State Regents will create more efficient pathways to degree completion for adult learners, including supporting development of micro-credentials across the state system. Providing financial support for these students as they complete degrees or upskill through micro-credentials is an important strategy to increase Oklahoma's overall educational attainment and fill workforce gaps.



GROW OKLAHOMA'S STEM WORKFORCE

Bachelor's degree production in critical STEM disciplines increased more than 42% over the last 10 years, and production increased 24% at all degree levels. Higher education will continue working to increase STEM degree completion to meet the bold goals outlined in the State Regents' *Blueprint 2030* strategic plan. Priorities include:

- ▶ expanding STEM exploration opportunities for middle and high school students.
- ▶ incentivizing students to pursue STEM majors (e.g., nursing, engineering, computer science) and remain in Oklahoma after graduation.
- ▶ developing and promoting well-defined career pathways in critical workforce areas, including teacher education, healthcare and STEM.
- ▶ removing administrative barriers to empower state system colleges and universities to pursue academic programs aligned with workforce needs.
- ▶ incentivizing institutions to produce graduates in fields aligned with Oklahoma's workforce needs through a new performance funding formula.
- ▶ supporting competitive faculty salaries in fields aligned with Oklahoma's workforce needs.
- ▶ promoting collaboration and coordination among public colleges and universities to ensure access for qualified students in critical programs of study.

2024 Legislative Agenda

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ENHANCE CAMPUS SAFETY AND SECURITY

State system institutions must be equipped with the necessary personnel and financial resources to effectively mitigate risks in their service communities and respond to on-campus and cybersecurity threats, challenges and incidents.



STABILIZE MANDATORY COST INCREASES

Our colleges and universities face significant operational cost increases. Rising property insurance rates have created a financial burden that impacts the current and future financial environment for every institution. Examining the property insurance process, practices and market in Oklahoma is an important step to identify solutions to help mitigate this substantial expense across the state system.



MAINTAIN CAMPUS INFRASTRUCTURE

The maintenance and preservation of public college and university facilities is a state system priority. Campus buildings across the state need repairs and/or upgrades that have been deferred due to limited resources. Creating a sustainable fiscal model that allows public institutions to access funding for infrastructure requirements will support proper maintenance of current physical spaces while lowering costs and reducing the need for new construction.



STAFF SALARY SUPPORT

Campus staff across the state system provide tremendous support services for students, including advisement, counseling, academic engagement and co-curricular activities. The State Regents propose additional financial resources available for merit salary increases for institutional staff whose efforts directly impact recruitment and retention efforts at each college and university.



CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

The concurrent enrollment program, which continues to grow across our state, strengthens student preparation, reduces family college costs and decreases the time required to complete a degree. Focusing on recommendations from the Concurrent Enrollment Task Force and legislative studies, the State Regents will evaluate concurrent participation options, financial models and course delivery modes to strengthen the program for Oklahoma students.

CONTACT

Allison D. Garrett
Chancellor
agarrett@osrhe.edu

Dr. Jarrett Jobe
Vice Chancellor for
Governmental Relations
jjobe@osrhe.edu

Oklahoma State Regents
for Higher Education
405.225.9424
www.okhighered.org