

SB 604: STRONG START

What is Strong Start?

The transition to college is one of the most critical—and challenging—times for students. **Strong Start funding supports programs at Oregon’s seven public universities that help first-year students transition successfully into college and stay on track to graduate.**

Created by the Legislature in 2021 to address pandemic-related learning disruptions, Strong Start helps reduce the college preparation gap by equipping students with the tools they need to succeed. Strong Start programs at Oregon’s public universities provide residential summer bridge programs, supplemental instruction for first-year students, or both. Students who participate receive intensive academic and wraparound support, including math and writing instruction, academic advising, peer mentoring, tutoring, and financial literacy education.

Since 2021, thousands of students have benefited from Strong Start programs, showing higher retention, stronger GPAs, and increased credit completion.

Without action, state funding will expire on June 30, 2025—making it difficult for universities to sustain or grow these proven programs.

What SB 604 Will Do

SB 604 establishes Strong Start as a state program under the Higher Education Coordinating Commission with \$8.55 million in ongoing funding, ensuring these important programs can continue to support future students. Funding will be distributed to Oregon’s seven public universities based on:

- A base allocation (\$100,000 per university) to ensure every institution has the staff and resources to administer Strong Start.
- Additional funding based on the number of first-time students at each university who are federal Pell Grant eligible, rural, underrepresented or veterans.

A strong start for students means a stronger future for Oregon.

Please Support SB 604!