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## STATE SYSTEM OVERVIEW

### Part 3: Other Responsibilities and Programs

In addition to the responsibilities of the State Regents set forth in the Constitution, the Oklahoma Legislature has assigned the following to the coordinating board of control:

**Federal Funds/Gifts/Scholarships.** Accept federal funds/grants, accept and disburse grants, gifts and other money (foundations, individuals), and disburse scholarship funds and rewards for merit.

**Allocation of Non-State Funds.** Allocate revolving and other non-state appropriated E&G funds.

**Property Transfer.** Transfer from one institution to another any property belonging to such institutions when no longer needed by it and when needed by another institution to accomplish its functions.

**Annual Report/Studies/Surveys.** Conduct and publish reports, gather information about needs of state institutions and make additional reports and recommendations as necessary to the governor and Legislature.

**Exercise All Powers** necessary or convenient to accomplish the purpose and objectives of Article XIII-A of the Constitution.

**Issue Bonds.** Issue obligations on behalf of the institutions within the State System, except for the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University, for the purpose of funding capital projects at those institutions.

In addition to the above general responsibilities, the Legislature has assigned administration or directives for the following to the State Regents:

- Accreditation of private colleges and universities (1965)
- State guarantee agency for [Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program](#) (1965)
- Examination of Revenue Bond Statement of Essential Facts (1970)
- Establishment and maintenance of state's Televised Instruction System (1970)
- [Tuition Aid Grant Program](#) (1971)
- Study of employee benefit program (1974)
- Study of salary and other remunerative benefits, workloads (1974)
- [Ardmore Higher Education Center](#) (1975)
- [Kerr Conference Center](#)
- State Plan for Civil Rights (1979)
- Uniform course number system (1979)
- McCurtain County Higher Education Center (1982)
- Procedures and reporting on Faculty English Proficiency (1982)
- Development and administration of Professional Training Institutes, EESA (1985)
- Administration of the regional education program for the Southern Regional Education Board (1985)
- Management and control of the William P. Willis Trust and Scholarship Funds (1986)
- Management of the Endowment Fund Program (1988)
- Management of the [Academic Scholars Program](#) (1988)
- Enid Higher Education Program (1989)
- [Summer Academies in Math and Science](#) (1989)
- [Minority Teacher Recruitment Center](#) (1990)
- Regents Education Program (1990)
- [OneNet](#) (1992)
- [Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program \[Oklahoma's Promise\]](#) (1992)
- Long-Range Capital Planning (1995)
- Master Lease Program (1999)
- [Quartz Mountain Arts and Conference Center](#) (2002)
- [Office of Accountability](#) (2003)
- [Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Program](#) (2003)
- Approval and coordination of student fees and tuition at State System institutions, within legislative limits (2003)

This list is not all-inclusive. Under past legislation, which has since been repealed, the State Regents have also served as the governing board for the osteopathic college and as the fiscal agent for the Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program and have administered the osteopathic and optometry education assistance contract programs.

The following are some of the major programs currently administered by the State Regents.

## STATE SYSTEM OVERVIEW

[Part One: The State System](#)

[Part Two: History of the State System](#)

[Part Three: Other Responsibilities and Programs](#)

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Photo courtesy of Southwestern Oklahoma State University.



## STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

### [Academic Scholars Program](#)

The Academic Scholars Program was created and funded by the Oklahoma Legislature and is administered by the State Regents as a scholarship incentive for students of high academic ability to attend both public and private higher education institutions in Oklahoma.

### [Brad Henry International Scholars Program](#)

The Brad Henry International Scholars Program, established by the State Regents in June 2008, provides a \$10,000 stipend for students at Oklahoma regional universities to participate in semester-long study or research programs affiliated with Swansea University in Wales. Academic credit for these programs will be awarded by the students' universities.

### [Chancellor Hans Brisch Scholarship Program](#)

The Chancellor Hans Brisch Scholarship Program serves entering freshmen in college who have high academic achievement in high school, outstanding leadership characteristics and a commitment to the enhancement of the community.

While the controlling criteria for this award shall be as stated above, the program will include students with a diversity of geographic, ethnic and economic background and who plan to pursue a variety of programs of study in institutions across the state.

### [Future Teachers Scholarship Program](#)

The 1985 Oklahoma Legislature authorized the State Regents to establish and maintain an incentive scholarship program to encourage the preparation of teachers in critical shortage areas for the public schools at one or more of the Oklahoma public or private higher education institutions.

Prospective teachers, whether planning to pursue an undergraduate teacher education program or to become qualified to teach after earning a bachelor's degree in a critical shortage area, shall be considered if they have graduated from high school with a GPA ranking them in the top 15 percent of their graduating class. To the extent that funds are available, scholarships of \$1,500 per year, renewable for up to three additional years, shall be awarded to cover costs of general enrollment fees, other fees, books, materials and services provided by the institution, including room and board [70:698.1].

### [Heroes Promise](#)

The scholarship is available to Oklahoma residents who are the children of any person killed after Jan. 1, 2000, in the line of duty in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces or who died after Jan. 1, 2000, as a result of an injury sustained while in the line of duty in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. An eligible student qualifies for an award equivalent to resident public college tuition paid through the Oklahoma's Promise program (see below).

### [Oklahoma College Assistance Program](#)

OCAP, an operating division of the State Regents and formerly known as the Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program (OGSLP), was founded by the state Legislature in 1965. OCAP provides innovative college access, aid awareness, financial literacy and student loan management programs and services for students, parents, schools and community partners. As OGSLP, the agency served as Oklahoma's designated guarantor for the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) for more than 45 years, and OCAP remains a guarantor for FFELP loans issued prior to July 1, 2010.

### [Oklahoma's Promise \(Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program\)](#)

The Oklahoma's Promise scholarship program, created by the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Act in 1992, allows eighth-, ninth- and 10th-grade students who enroll in the program to receive scholarships that will pay their Oklahoma public college tuition if they meet income and other requirements. To qualify, students must take certain required courses and make good grades overall. Students must also stay out of trouble outside the classroom to remain eligible. Oklahoma's Promise is recognized by many as America's best college access program and is considered a model that combines emphases on academic preparation and financial support for college.

### [Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant Program](#)

The Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant Program was established in 1971 to assist Oklahoma college students with demonstrated financial need to meet the cost of attendance at postsecondary institutions in Oklahoma.

### [Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Program](#)

OTEG program was established by the Oklahoma Legislature in 2003 to assist Oklahoma college students in meeting the cost of attendance at non-public postsecondary institutions in Oklahoma. To qualify, a student must be an Oklahoma resident; be a full-time undergraduate; attend a qualified Oklahoma not-for-profit, private or independent institution of higher education located in Oklahoma; have a family income of \$50,000 or less; and meet their institution's policy on satisfactory academic progress for financial aid recipients. Recipients can receive awards for up to five years, not to exceed the requirements for completion of a baccalaureate program.

### [Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarships](#)

Established by the State Regents in 1995, this program enables public regional universities to provide scholarships to academically promising baccalaureate students. Each regional university may nominate up to 15 freshman awardees per year.

### [Renee Neuwald Memorial Scholarship Program](#)

This scholarship was created by private donations to honor the lifelong contributions

of Renee Neuwald to the teaching profession. The goal of the Renee Neuwald Memorial Scholarship is to provide scholarship opportunities to outstanding students with financial need who are graduates of the Tulsa McLain High School for Science and Technology.

#### **[Tulsa Reconciliation Scholarship Program](#)**

The 2002 Oklahoma Legislature established the Tulsa Reconciliation Scholarship Program in an effort to preserve awareness of the history and meaning of the civil unrest that occurred during the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot. Each year, two seniors from each of Tulsa's 10 public high schools will receive \$1,000, one-time scholarships.

#### **[William P. Willis Scholarship Program](#)**

The 1986 Oklahoma Legislature authorized the State Regents to establish and maintain a scholarship program for the purpose of providing scholarships to low-income, full-time undergraduates attending institutions in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

### **TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

#### **[Oklahoma Teacher Connection](#)**

OTC was created for the purpose of recruiting, retaining and placing teachers in the public schools of the state of Oklahoma. OTC pre-collegiate programs include the ACE, LEAP and FEA programs for middle and high schools, and collegiate partnership grants are awarded to institutions of higher education for recruitment and retention activities.

#### **[Elementary and Secondary Education Act Improving Teacher Quality Grants \(ITQ\)](#)**

ESEA ITQ competitive grants are authorized by federal legislation for professional development for Oklahoma's P-12 teachers to promote changes in educational practice or teachers' content knowledge that improve student outcomes in the classroom. Additionally, the intent is to influence the implementation of research-based curriculum in undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs and to strengthen collaboration among higher education institution faculty and other partners in the program.

#### **[Oklahoma Teacher Enhancement Program](#)**

OPEP links K-12 student learning to teacher preparation through various statewide professional development conferences.

#### **[Oklahoma Teacher Shortage Employment Incentive Program](#)**

TSEIP is a program that reimburses eligible student loan expenses or pays an equivalent cash benefit to individuals who graduate from an Oklahoma-accredited teacher education program in mathematics or science, receive teaching certification and complete a commitment to teach math or science in an Oklahoma public secondary school for at least five consecutive years.

#### **[Scholars for Excellence in Child Care Program](#)**

The only program of its kind in the country, the goal of this collaboration with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services is to increase the quality of child care by enhancing the knowledge and professionalism of its workers. Eligible childcare professionals are provided an opportunity to attend a two-year college while earning credentials, certificates and degrees.

### **STUDENT PROGRAMS**

#### **[Concurrent Enrollment](#)**

Since its inception in 2005, the Concurrent Enrollment Tuition Waiver program has allowed outstanding juniors and seniors the opportunity to earn tuition-free college credit while still in high school. More than 10,000 high school students enroll concurrently each year, generating more than 50,000 credit hours.

#### **[Cooperative Alliances](#)**

Twenty-nine technology centers across the state have partnered with 18 higher education institutions and branch campuses in cooperative alliance agreements. In the past year, Oklahoma students who took courses at technology centers earned almost 78,000 credit hours toward an Associate in Applied Science degree offered by a State System college or university.

#### **[Course Equivalency Project \(CEP\)](#)**

The CEP was implemented in 1996 and allows college students to view the transferability of more than 8,000 college courses in Oklahoma at [OKcoursetransfer.org](http://OKcoursetransfer.org). Currently, all public institutions of higher education, as well as several private colleges and universities, participate in the CEP. The course equivalency matrix reinforces student access to the three-tiered higher education system and helps shorten the time it takes students to obtain a degree. The CEP received the Governor's Commendation Award in 1999 for demonstrating innovation and efficiency.

#### **[GEAR UP](#)**

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a federally funded program designed to better prepare middle and high school students for college through academic preparation programs and scholarships for students, professional development activities for educators, leadership development for parents, and college access information for students and parents.

Since 1999 Oklahoma GEAR UP has targeted resources and services to priority students through partnerships among the State Regents; Oklahoma colleges and universities; public schools; faith, tribal and community-based organizations; and businesses.

Oklahoma GEAR UP is built on two broad college access components: scholarship funding through Oklahoma's Promise and early intervention strategies.

#### [Oklahoma Campus Compact](#)

OKCC is an organization of Oklahoma college and university presidents who have committed to articulating the importance of civic responsibility as an outcome of higher education. It was established in October 2000 and represents 33 public and independent institutions in Oklahoma. OKCC provides leadership, networking and technical assistance to campuses and communities in the areas of: service learning, civic engagement and community service.

#### [Oklahoma Educational Planning and Assessment System \(OK EPAS\)](#)

The EPAS program provides assistance to Oklahoma's middle school and high school students to be better prepared for college. School districts volunteer to participate in the program that includes three assessments, EXPLORE, PLAN and the ACT. EPAS serves nearly 500 school districts and 85,000 eighth and 10th graders. Improvements in many major areas have been documented, including ACT scores, college-going rates and remediation.

#### [Oklahoma Money Matters](#)

OKMM, the financial literacy initiative of the State Regents and the Oklahoma College Assistance Program, supports personal finance education through targeted outreach and strategic partnerships to help youth and adults successfully manage personal finances, understand consumer credit and navigate the financial aid process. OKMM works collaboratively with educators, campuses and community organizations to develop customized financial education programs and services, including training workshops, publications, and Web, text, and multimedia tools. OKMM's website, [OklahomaMoneyMatters.org](#), features self-paced curricular modules, podcasts and a Web-based resource clearinghouse, and OKMM publishes a bimonthly statewide newsletter, *Your Bottom Line*.

#### [Plan4College Centers](#)

Plan4College Centers offer students and families a local, one-stop shop for their college information needs. The sites host a computer dedicated solely to college planning. Visitors are just one click away from learning about courses to take and grades to make, exploring colleges, finding a career, filling out college applications and applying for financial aid. Also, a knowledgeable person is available at each center to sit down one-on-one with students and families to answer their questions as well as help them determine the steps they need to take in order to create personalized plans for college. There are more than 40 Plan4College Centers located throughout the state. The Plan4College Centers are funded by GEAR UP.

#### [Reach Higher – Oklahoma's Adult Degree Completion Program](#)

With Reach Higher, students can choose from two associate degrees and a bachelor's degree designed for working adults who have already earned college credit and want to finish a degree. With a degree through Reach Higher, students will have the leadership training, communication skills and business knowledge needed to get ahead.

#### [Summer Academies in Math and Science](#)

Summer Academies are designed to enhance eighth- through 12th-grade students' knowledge of math and science by introducing them to new and exciting fields and concepts through hands-on learning experiences. Academies last from one to six weeks on college and university campuses across the state. Depending on the academy format, students either stay on campus or commute from home.

#### [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs](#)

Designed for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients, these programs offer training in computer applications, customer service, life skills, resume preparation and more. Offered at all Oklahoma two-year colleges, the programs provide employment and training skills to TANF recipients so they may ultimately become members of the workforce and attain self-sufficiency.

#### [www.OKcollegestart.org](#)

This comprehensive, Web-based information system is a "one-stop" destination for students and parents who want to get ready for college. The site lets students create a customized profile, learn about paying for college, prepare for the ACT, explore careers and find a college that is right for them. Click, compare, choose at [OKcollegestart.org](#).

### CENTERS

#### [Ardmore Higher Education Center](#)

The Ardmore Higher Education Center was created by the 1974 Oklahoma Legislature. Instruction of students enrolled through the higher education program in Ardmore is provided by [East Central University](#), [Murray State College](#) and [Southeastern Oklahoma State University](#). Students at the Ardmore Higher Education Center receive resident credit from the institution offering the coursework.

#### [Kerr Conference Center](#)

In 1978 the Robert S. Kerr home and approximately 40 acres of surrounding land near Poteau in Le Flore County was donated to the state of Oklahoma for educational purposes. The State Regents, with the aid and cooperation of other state and federal agencies, converted the Kerr home into a conference center for use by education, government and industry. The State Regents contract with [Carl Albert State College](#) for administration, food service, maintenance and security at the center.

#### [Quartz Mountain Arts and Conference Center and Nature Park](#)

Located in southwestern Oklahoma near Altus, the center includes a newly built 120-room lodge, an arts conference center, performance complexes, an 18-hole golf

course and a nature park. The State Regents have had responsibility for the center since January 2002.

The mission of the center is to develop, sustain and protect a world-renowned educational destination as a cultural conference center, arts park and natural preserve with recreational experiences compatible with that environment.

The facilities have annually hosted the Summer Arts Institute, an institute for gifted and talented fine arts high school students, since 1978.

## PROGRAMS

### **Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count**

Achieving the Dream is a national initiative to help more community college students succeed by completing college courses and earning certificates and/or degrees. The initiative is particularly focused on student groups that have faced the most significant barriers to success, including low-income students and students of color. Achieving the Dream focuses colleges and others on understanding and making better use of data. It acts on multiple fronts, including efforts at community colleges and in research, public engagement and public policy.

### **Brain Gain Funding**

The State Regents annually allocate Brain Gain performance funds to institutions that have shown improvement in their retention or graduation rates. The program is based on the State Regents' Brain Gain 2010 initiative created in 1999 to increase the percentage of degree holders in Oklahoma. The State Regents also provide grant support for campus-based initiatives designed to enhance colleges' retention, graduation and degree-completion efforts.

Improvement Grants have been funded since 2004 to aid campuses in implementing intervention strategies that will improve student retention, graduation and degree completion, either campuswide or for targeted populations. In 2005, Programs of Excellence Grants were awarded to five institutions that are implementing innovative, relevant and high-quality academic programs that also foster creativity.

### **Campus Life and Safety and Security Task Force**

The CLASS Task Force was created by an [Executive Order from Gov. Brad Henry](#) in April 2007 to review and evaluate current safety and security plans and student counseling services already in place for higher education and career technology institutions and to make recommendations and assist in the implementation of any needed changes. A final report was submitted to the governor, the speaker of the House and the president pro tempore of the Senate on Dec. 31, 2010.

### **Complete College America**

Oklahoma and 28 other states form Complete College America's Alliance of States, a select group of leading states working to dramatically increase the number of young adults with a college degree or credential, to set degree goals and to develop and implement aggressive state- and campus-level action plans to meet those goals.

Established in 2009, Complete College America provides Oklahoma with tangible and practical support to help implement a range of strategies that will bring needed changes in the culture and practices of its public postsecondary institutions. Oklahoma will receive in-depth technical support from America's leading experts on improving college success, including assistance in building consensus for reform and developing policy action plans; guidance on applying for and effectively using federal funding to produce more degrees; and annual networking opportunities.

Five national foundations are providing multi-year support to Complete College America, including the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Lumina Foundation for Education.

### **Economic Development Grant Program**

The State Regents established the Economic Development Grant Program in January 1988. It is keyed to support the efforts of the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education to develop Oklahoma's workforce, establish centers of intellectual excellence and commercialize research outcomes. The grant program encourages institutions to promote an entrepreneurial vision on their campuses that advances workforce and enterprise development and the commercialization of research.

### **Endowment Fund Program**

The Endowment Fund Program was started in 1988 to attract and retain faculty by establishing professorships, chairs and related activities to improve the quality of instruction and research at state colleges and universities.

### **EPSCoR Matching Fund Program**

The [Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research \(EPSCoR\)](#) is a federal initiative targeting states that have historically received a low amount of federal research funds. The State Regents is the fiscal agent for providing matching funds for initiatives to develop advanced research capabilities.

### **Making Place Matter**

The purpose Making Place Matter is to enhance the utilization of campus assets to meet the state's economic and community development needs. Through the implementation of the program, Oklahoma's public higher education institutions are provided guidance and support in evaluating and addressing critical economic and community development challenges. By bringing community and regional partners to the table and using reliable data, the institutions acquire and implement tools to assist with economic and community development.

### **Master Lease Purchase Program**

The State System Master Lease Purchase Program offers a method of financing the acquisition of major personal and real property that will provide cost efficiencies in finance and administration. Authorized institutions must enter into lease agreements for values of \$50,000 to \$10 million. The lease terms will vary by the useful life of the equipment purchased, but the useful life must not exceed 20 years.

#### [Office of Accountability](#)

Assigned to the State Regents as fiscal agent by the Legislature in 2003, the office provides reports regarding the performance of public schools to the people of Oklahoma. The office implements the Oklahoma Educational Indicators Program, monitors compliance progress made by districts, and makes reports and recommendations where appropriate to the president pro tempore of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the governor.

#### [Oklahoma College Savings Plan](#)

This plan allows anyone – parents, grandparents, friends, etc. – to open a tax-advantaged account for a child through payroll deduction or direct contribution. Funds can be used for college expenses at nearly all colleges and universities in the United States. The earnings on the investments are free from federal and Oklahoma taxes if used for eligible college expenses. Annual contributions of up to \$10,000 per taxpayer are deductible from Oklahoma taxable income.

#### [OneNet](#)

The Oklahoma Legislature established OneNet in 1992, building upon and succeeding the televised instruction system operated by the State Regents, with the approval of a statewide capital bond issue that provided \$14 million for the implementation of a statewide telecommunications network. OneNet operates hub sites throughout Oklahoma to provide the infrastructure to support a high-speed telecommunications network with an equitable rate structure.

OneNet's state-of-the-art technology and dedicated staff currently provide high-speed communications to a variety of Oklahoma entities, such as public and career technology schools; colleges and universities; public libraries; local, tribal, state and federal governments; court systems; rural health care delivery systems; and programs engaged in research.

The extension of the National Lambda Rail (NLR) through Oklahoma in 2005 is making a profound impact on Oklahoma's economy. The NLR is a major national initiative that provides a national technical support structure for research and experimentation. Using OneNet's existing network for in-state distribution, Oklahoma is substantially more competitive for research projects.

#### [Online College of Oklahoma](#)

In response to increased demand for anytime, anywhere learning, OCO was established as a pilot project in spring 2000. OCO builds on existing distance education resources (the Oklahoma Electronic Campus) to provide Oklahomans with convenient access to high-quality educational courses, programs and resources offered by state colleges and universities.

#### [Regents Education Program](#)

The purpose of the REP is to educate Oklahoma regents and trustees about the nature of their responsibilities and the seriousness with which they should be undertaken. More specifically, the program is to provide information and understandings that will allow regents and trustees to perform their public responsibilities and to govern successfully in the face of greater calls for wider programs and services, mandates for greater accountability, changing clientele and demands, and resource scarcity.

#### [SMART: Single Mothers Academic Resource Team](#)

SMART identifies and advocates for pathways so that nearly 30,000 single-parent students can complete their higher education goals. SMART is collaboratively funded by the Women's Foundation of Oklahoma, the State Regents and GEAR UP.