

AGENCY NAME: Oregon Student Assistance Commission

II. KEY MEASURE ANALYSIS

Agency Mission: To assist Oregon students and their families in attaining a postsecondary education and to enhance the value, integrity, and diversity of Oregon’s college programs

KPM #1	GROWTH OF PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED Percentage of growth in number of privately funded scholarships awarded	Measure since: 1999
Goal	Goal 1: Increase college attendance and completion in Oregon	
Oregon Context	Oregon Benchmarks #24, #25, #26	
Data source	Create Partners in Education Fund with The Oregon Community Foundation	
Owner	Scholarship and Access Programs, Vicki Merkel, Director, (541) 687-7385	

1. OUR STRATEGY

The agency’s goal is to increase the number of scholarship awards to students. Private donors, not public sources, fund these scholarships. OSAC has relied upon its partnership with the Oregon Community Foundation for donor development activities since the agency downsizing in January 2005. Data for this measure are based on counts of the number of scholarship awards made each year. The annual number of awards that can be made by each scholarship program varies due to market influences.

2. ABOUT THE TARGETS

Actual percentage increases are shown. Targets are deliberately ambitious, reflecting ever-increasing college costs and corresponding increases in student need.

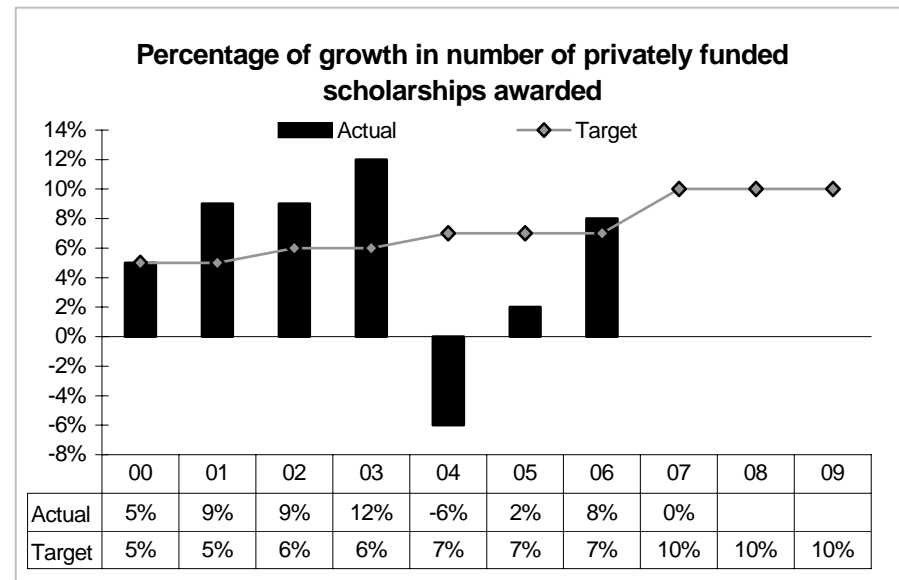
3. HOW WE ARE DOING

OSAC’s partnership with private foundations is unique in the nation. These private scholarship dollars impact both access, by helping to lower education costs, and student borrowing, by lessening students’ dependence on loans.

Nationally nearly two of every three undergraduate students are going into debt to go to college, borrowing an average of more than \$19,000. In Oregon three of every four students (76.5 percent) take out student loans with an average of \$17,772 total loans, and \$16,641 federal loans (Source: Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics). A September 2007 report from the Project on Student Loan Debt shows average debt at \$19,600 for students graduating from 4-year institutions in Oregon. More Oregon students are taking out loans than the national average, but the loan debt is a bit lower. Private scholarships can be a tool to reduce student indebtedness.

Despite its relatively small dollar value compared to other sources of financial assistance, private scholarship aid is a critical part of the overall national goal of improving access to higher education. Private scholarship aid stands apart from government and institutional aid in three important ways:

- It helps students who slip through the cracks of other aid programs.



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- It facilitates choice and affordability for students of varying income levels.
- It provides a testing ground for new approaches to student financing.

(Source: Institute for Higher Education Policy: Private Scholarships Count: Access to Higher Education and the Critical Role of the Private Sector Report)

4. HOW WE COMPARE

Oregon is unique in the country as the only state government with an agency that partners with private donors and foundations to administer scholarships to college students. These activities are financed completely by Other Funds, based on administration fees charged to donors. The unified scholarship application is also unique to Oregon. Students may apply for up to 20 separate scholarship programs using one unified application form, which helps increase the applicant pool for donors and provide access to students.

5. FACTORS AFFECTING RESULTS

The agency's growing portfolio of privately funded scholarship programs demonstrates that private citizens, organizations, and employers are interested in helping students go to college and that they have confidence in OSAC's ability to administer their programs. The agency has been able to add new scholarships to its portfolio and increased the total dollar volume of scholarships awarded every year for the past 5 years. Market trends do affect the returns on endowed funds and, therefore, the amount of interest available to use as scholarship awards. The Partners in Education (PIE) Fund, established in cooperation with the Oregon Community Foundation, gives OSAC a new vehicle for encouraging smaller donors to establish a named scholarship (\$12,500 minimum endowment compared to prior minimum requirement of \$50,000).

6. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

OSAC needs to develop marketing tools, including streamlined individual scholarship criteria, so that potential donors have clear information on how to define their intent. In the 2006 annual progress report, OSAC indicated a need for a staff person who could proactively reach out to the philanthropic community, and small community and high school foundations. The 2007 Legislative Assembly approved a Scholarship Coordinator position that will help the agency expand its outreach activities into the philanthropic community. These strategies would enhance the ability to increase scholarships beyond relying on current partnerships to cultivate donors.

7. ABOUT THE DATA

Data reported are based on scholarships awarded for a specific academic year. The 2006-07 academic year = 2007 KPM report period.