

September 9, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: StepUP to Higher Education Website Update

Issue

This document provides a summary of the new StepUpUtah.com website that launched August 2015.

Background

In August 2015, the Office of the Commissioner launched a new website called StepUpUtah.com. The website is meant to be a one-stop source of information on college preparation with checklists for each grade level and suggested courses of study; general information on paying for college and specific information on Regents' Scholarships, New Century Scholarships, the state's 529 Educational Savings Plans, and FAFSA applications; tips on applying to college, a guide to the different certificates and degrees students might consider, and links to the admissions websites of accredited public and private Utah colleges and universities. The website is also intended to help current college students with tips on successful completion of a degree. Special "Quick Links" cluster together information of interest to specific types of readers: students, parents, and schools and educators. The website combines what were previously separate information sites from the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA), the Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP), and the Office of the Commissioner's Outreach and Access Programs.

Also included with the website launch is a coordinated social media campaign, which sends tweets and Facebook posts for the general public and text reminders to students who have signed on to receive them through the Utah Scholars training. There are special tabs on the website that allow readers to ask questions directly of people administering programs, including the Regents' Scholarship and New Century Scholarship Manager.

It is anticipated that the website will make it much easier for people to find up-to-date information about college readiness and to successfully navigate their college experience by consolidating lots of helpful materials into one, easy to navigate site.

Policy Issues

There are no policy issues associated with this report.

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is an information item only; no action is needed.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/JH