

March 20, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents
FROM: David L. Buhler
SUBJECT: UtahFutures Partnership Update

Issue

According to a recent statewide survey from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, many Utah students and parents do not know where to go for the best information about postsecondary access and success. In an effort to streamline and simplify the state-level resources that guide Utah middle and high school students and adults as they make their decisions about college and career, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education is partnering with the Utah Education Telehealth Network, the Department of Workforce Services, and Talent Ready Utah to transition its outreach brand, publications, and digital efforts to UtahFutures. The brand StepUp to Higher Education will be transitioned to UtahFutures over the coming year, and web content will be migrated from StepUpUtah.com to UtahFutures.org.

Giving Utahns a single authority to go to for this information will simplify the Utah postsecondary guidance landscape, better focus the resources of the Commissioner's Office, and avoid duplication of efforts with other state-level entities.

Background

StepUp to Higher Education was a higher education awareness brand started with the College Access Challenge Grant, granted to the Commissioner's Office in 2011. In 2015, the Commissioner's Office and the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA) co-branded their outreach efforts under StepUp to Higher Education. These include the following:

- Website: StepUpUtah.com
- Printed publications: Utah College Guide, Paying for College Guide, etc.
- Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube accounts: @StepUpUtah
- E-Newsletter
- StepUp-branded outreach events, tabling, and presentations from the Commissioner's Office and UHEAA

After closely analyzing the scope and impact of these efforts, the Commissioner's Office decided that transitioning to the UtahFutures would better reach its intended audiences, who visit UtahFutures' online resources at four times the rate that they visit those of StepUp to Higher Education. For example, see the following comparison in usage between StepUpUtah.com and UtahFutures.org and their associated counselor/educator-facing resources:

FY2018	General website		Counselor/educator-facing resource	
		StepUpUtah.com	UtahFutures.org	StepUpUtah.com/for-educators
Pageviews	795,842	4,788,984	6,086	23,239

This partnership also provides opportunities to better utilize personnel and resources across several state agencies by taking a collaborative approach to outreach events, printed materials and swag, digital media, marketing and communications, and other efficiencies.

Policy Issues

There are no policy issues associated with this item.

Commissioner's Recommendation

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

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/MH/JH