



POSITION STATEMENT

November 2019

Utah System of Technical Colleges Board of Trustees &
Utah State Board of Regents



Utah System of Technical Colleges and Utah System of Higher Education Statement on Governance

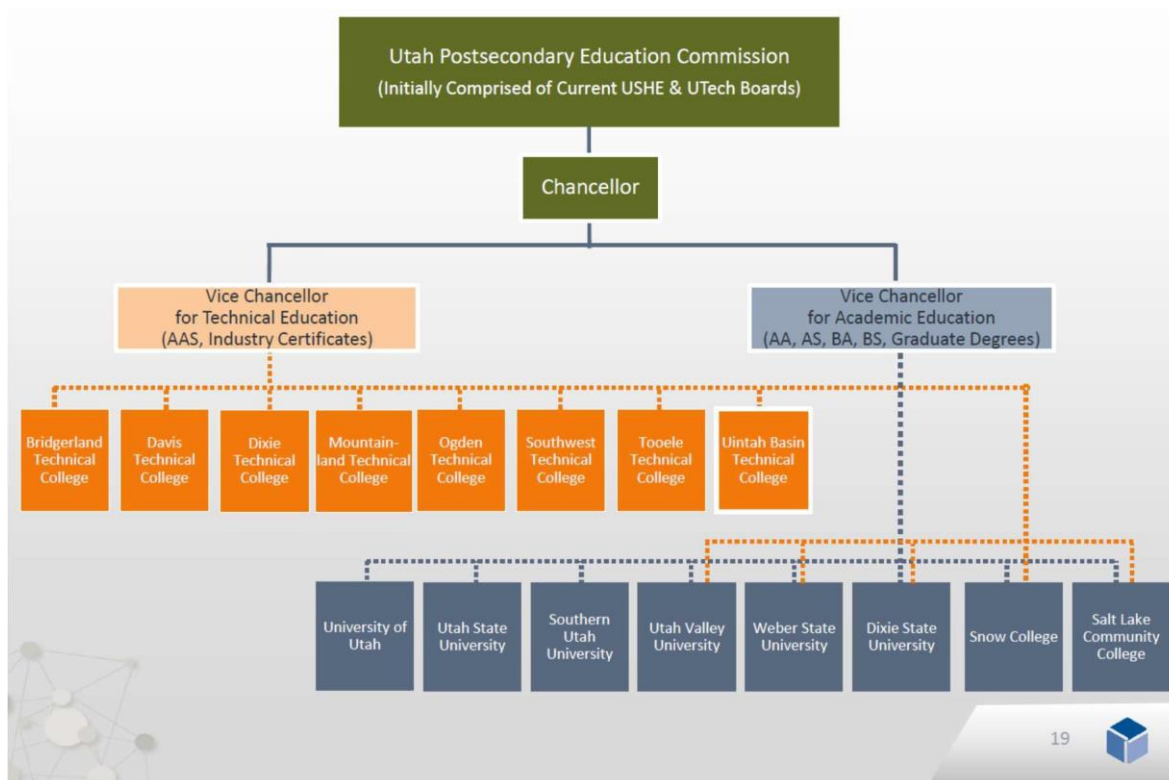
In 2018, the Legislature created the Higher Education Strategic Planning Commission to ensure higher education is positioned to meet Utah's current and future education and workforce needs. As the Commission considers several recommendations, the leadership of the Utah System of Technical Colleges Board of Trustees and the Utah Board of Regents jointly present several core principles for successful higher education structure and governance.

Utah Must Establish a Unified System of Higher Education

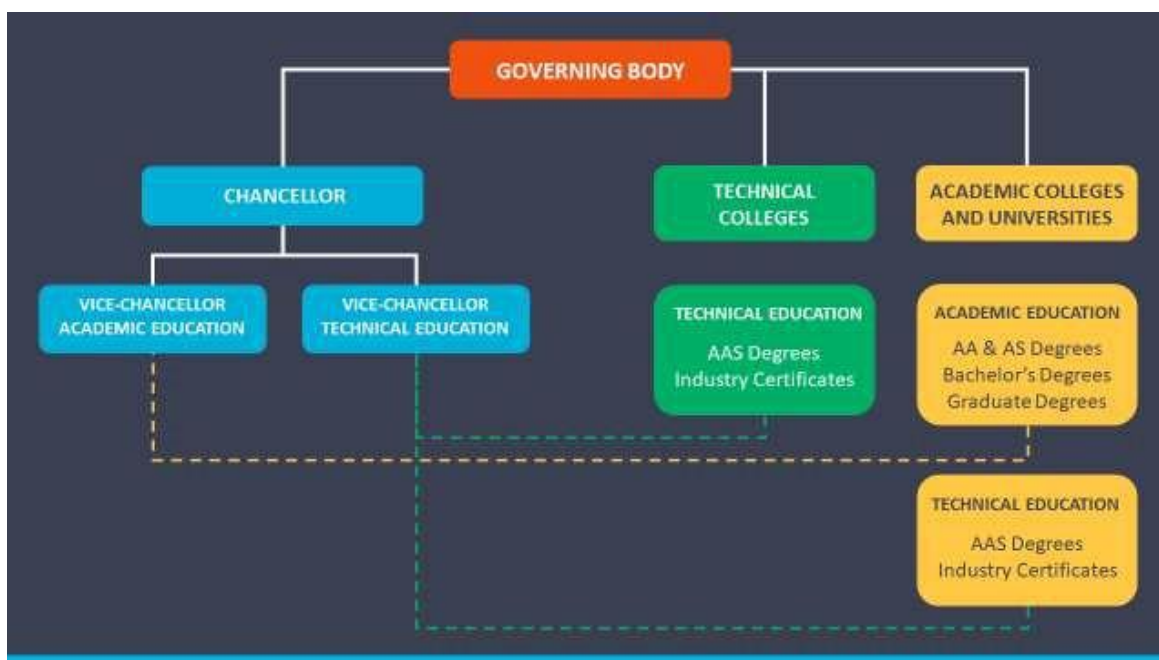
We support a single, unified higher education system. Utah has likely missed opportunities to provide better access and outcomes for students by treating technical education and academic education as two separate endeavors housed in two separate systems. The Commission's consultants—NCHEMS—presented three potential governance structures, all of which attempt to unify higher education, but with different approaches. We support *Option Three* because it creates a unified, single system but also recognizes the importance of giving technical education and academic education equal roles. Our position is built on and expands *Option Three's* organizational principles.

For *Option Three* to succeed, the governing body must lead with the view that technical and academic education are not mutually exclusive options for students, but are in fact educational opportunities that can complement and build on each other, can provide pathways to better access and outcomes for all students from all backgrounds, and can lead to partnerships within the system that will make higher education more efficient and effective moving forward.

It is critically important to consistently understand how *Option Three* would operate. In the NCHEMS diagram below, institutions have dotted lines to the respective vice-chancellors based on education type, but those dotted lines do not mean the institutions report to the vice-chancellors or even to the chancellor. Instead, institutions would report to the governing body, as they do now in their separate systems. The chancellor would serve as the chief executive officer for the system, just as the commissioners do today.



The chancellor's office will have a vice-chancellor devoted solely to coordinating system-wide technical education, as well as one assigned to coordinating academic education. Rather than introduce additional reporting lines or create two commissioners managing two systems, technical education will have an equal level of importance within the new system rather than being subsumed within the current academic education structure. The following diagram better illustrates this structure.



The vice-chancellors will—among other duties—coordinate system-wide academic and technical programming, articulation, transfer and concurrent enrollment programs. The vice-chancellors will collaborate with chief academic officers and vice-presidents of instruction to identify and address system issues. Additional staff within the chancellor’s office will coordinate other system-wide areas such as finance, institutional research, policy, law, student services and access, which resembles current responsibilities in the respective commissioners’ offices.

The Governing Body Must Have Representatives From Across Industries and Regions with the Statutory Mandate to Provide Statewide Strategic Leadership and Oversight

The Governor should appoint the governing body members with the consent of the Senate. When appointing the members of the governing body, the Governor should select representatives from major industries across Utah, such as:

- information technology
- manufacturing
- life sciences
- education
- healthcare
- finance

Likewise, the Governor should select members from various regions of the state to ensure geographic diversity. The collective expertise and experience the membership brings will help ensure system-wide policies, programs and directives are well-informed. The governing body may also appoint ad hoc advisory groups for specialized issues. The institutions and chancellor will also provide expertise in technical and academic education administration.

Bolstered by its experience, the new governing body would be empowered to meet the following duties:

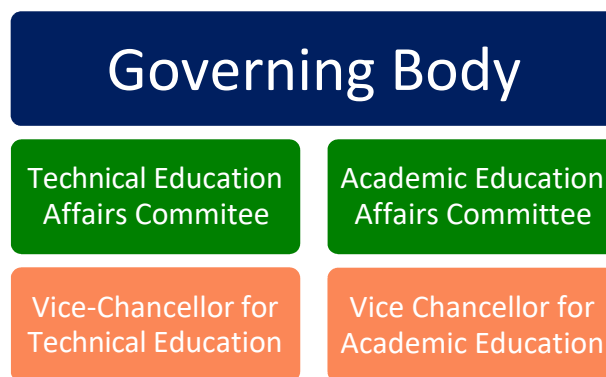
Duties and Authority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a unified vision that provides all Utah students affordable, quality higher education that will lead to high-wage, high-demand, or high-skill job opportunities, and advances Utah’s economic growth. • Lead strategically on college readiness, access, affordability, completion, career preparedness, industry-driven partnerships, workforce alignment and other system priorities, and establish metrics and goals that demonstrate progress toward those priorities. • Establish specific missions and roles for higher education institutions that advance system priorities, preserve institutions’ unique qualities, and promote effectiveness and efficiency, and then regulate academic and technical programming to ensure institutions operate within their missions and roles. • Appoint, prepare and support presidents, and evaluate them based on institutional performance and progress toward system priorities. • Collect, research and report statewide educational, demographic and economic data that supports institutional and system strategic planning and leadership. • Achieve system efficiency, affordability and accountability by establishing unified budget, finance and capital funding priorities and practices, including performance-based funding tied to system priorities. • Develop system-wide standards that align general education requirements across applicable institutions—including K-12 institutions—and allow earned credit to articulate and transfer across the system in all practicable circumstances. • Delegate clear lines of authority and responsibility for institutional boards of trustees that will address institution-specific performance, presidential support and guidance, student success and effective administration. • Establish and oversee shared services that cost-effectively support the educational missions of each institution.

The governing body’s vision and strategic goals will direct the work, priorities and resources of the system, its institutions and the chancellor’s office.

A Single, Unified System Must Establish and Preserve Unique Institutional Roles and Missions

To be successful, the new system must have statutory clarity, structure, and accountability around the roles and missions of each institution. We specifically support preserving the role and mission for technical colleges. A technical college’s primary role is to provide affordable access to industry-driven training programs that lead to high-wage, high-demand, or high-skill jobs in Utah. The Legislature, therefore, funds technical education differently than traditional academic education. To protect that role, the Legislature should maintain separate funding models

and budget line items for technical colleges and technical education. Accordingly, the governing body would then decide issues such as tuition, capital funding or budget requests as dictated by those unique missions, roles and funding models. We also support additional provisions in statute and practice—such as executive appointments, structure, accreditation, or policy—that will assure Utah’s technical education remains prominent within the larger system.



The Governing Body’s Standing Committees Provide Equal Attention to Technical Education and Academic Education

The governing body will establish standing committees, as needed. Two of these committees will be responsible for technical education and academic education, respectively. The two vice-chancellors will staff their corresponding committees, providing expertise and counsel. Members of these committees will meet regularly to focus on the most pressing system-wide educational issues and—after exploring, analyzing and scrutinizing each issue—will make recommendations to the entire governing body for action. Each education committee will consult with a formal advisory subcommittee to regularly review and recommend program criteria with current industry needs to ensure our technical education and academic offerings meet the needs of students and employers in Utah.

Splitting technical education and academic education between two committees accomplishes two critical elements: first, it ensures that technical education receives equal consideration for governance and resources within the system; second, it allows the technical education committee to coordinate all technical education within the system, whether it is provided by academic colleges and universities or the technical colleges. This should help the system avoid the pitfall of having technical education coordinated in two silos, without consistency and common vision.

Finally, as we work to integrate our higher education system for maximum effectiveness and efficiency, our new governing body will also work carefully to strengthen the partnership and articulation path with our K-12 partners on the Utah State Board of Education. To ensure long-term success for our students and employers in Utah, we must establish strong articulation agreements and clear technical education and academic pathways that support our students through their entire education and workforce readiness journey.

We look forward to implementing these principles with the Higher Education Strategic Planning Commission and the Legislature, and remain committed to working together to provide what is best for the students and best for Utah.

Steven R. Moore

Chair

Utah System of Technical Colleges Board of Trustees

Harris H. Simmons

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