



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TAB G

September 16, 2022

Strategic Plan

In 2020, Utah's two higher education systems merged, creating a single system of 16 higher education institutions. The newly created Utah Board of Higher Education embarked on a strategic planning process to guide the new System for the next five years. To develop the strategic plan, the Board and Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education engaged in a rigorous, collaborative, and creative process that built on past initiatives from previous boards and incorporated feedback from institutions, state leaders, students, and other stakeholders. The Board formally adopted the strategic plan at the May 2021 Board meeting.

During the October 2021 Board Committee meetings, each committee adopted specific strategies within the strategic plan that are relevant to the focus of that committee. Each Board committee ensures that their assigned strategies are progressing and on-track and structures their committee agendas around these strategies.

In the year that the strategic plan has been in place, several revisions have been proposed to make sure the plan stays nimble and current. During the August and September 2022 committee meetings, each Board committee considered changes to the strategies assigned to their committee, and forwarded their recommendations on any changes to the full board for consideration at the September 2022 board meeting. In order to address the goals for the revision process, administrators and staff within the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education then made minimal changes to language between committee meetings and the Committee of the Whole.

Attachment 1 details the proposed updated strategic plan. Attachment 2 details the proposed updated strategic plan including edits.

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends the Board adopt the revised strategic plan.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Updated Strategic Plan

Priority: System Leadership

Board's Role: Oversee and lead The Utah System of Higher Education for the benefit of all Utahns.

Goal: Develop, strengthen, and leverage an equitable, seamless, and articulated system of higher education

Strategies & Tactics:

1. Provide strategic oversight for institutional roles and missions and program offerings to fully incorporate all institutions within a single system.
 - a. Align programs within institutional roles and address unnecessary program duplication across the system.
 - b. Revise policies governing institutional roles, award types, across degree-granting institutions and technical colleges, and faculty workload at degree-granting institutions.
2. Unify system policies, data, and measures.
 - a. Review policies to ensure alignment between technical colleges and degree-granting institutions.
 - b. Align data and measurements between tech colleges and degree-granting institutions.
3. Engage boards of trustees on delegated responsibilities.
 - a. Train boards of trustees on program approval process (include verifiable workforce needs); tuition processes; equity, diversity, and inclusion; etc. Develop ongoing training for trustees.
 - b. Develop qualifications for Board members that prioritize equity and diversity. Advocate that boards of trustees have similar qualifications.
 - c. Facilitate Board of Trustees consortium group.
4. Reevaluate presidential evaluation and R&R processes.
 - a. Support presidents in meeting expectations of the Board, including incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion in evaluations and R&R.
5. Leverage Board policies and System leadership to close attainment gaps for each Utahn.
 - a. Review and revise all USHE policies aligned with closing attainment gaps through an equity lens on a 3-year basis.
 - b. Train Board, System, and institutional leadership on USHE Equity Lens Framework and concepts related to excellence in equity-mindedness and shared equity leadership.
 - c. Leverage System leadership to address equity-related practices and initiatives.
6. Implement shared services
 - a. Assess and prioritize opportunities for expanding shared services across institutions.
 - b. Support the implementation of shared services and measure gains in quality, risk mitigation, financial sustainability, and cost efficiency.
7. Strengthen and develop educational pathways to increase students' access to and completion of higher education aligned to Utah's workforce.
 - a. Lead cross-agency cooperation to create a shared goal and definition of educational pathways within Utah.
 - b. Collaborate with USBE, USHE institutions, and OCHE units to lead and coordinate all college-in-high school programs and pathways containing postsecondary coursework or credentials.
 - c. Develop a data collection and reporting framework to assess the quality of educational pathways within Utah.
 - d. Train and support Utah's Regional Pathways Coordinators to develop and implement clear educational pathways from technical colleges to regional universities.
 - e. Utilize Talent Ready Utah's connection to the workforce to align educational attainment with industry-validated occupations.
8. Ensure Utahns and key stakeholders are meaningfully informed on the value and return on investment (ROI) of higher education.
 - a. Develop and assess statewide marketing campaign.
 - b. Collaborate with institutions to develop legislative narrative to advocate the value of higher education.

Priority: Access

Board's Role: Remove structural barriers to entry

Goal: Increase the college-going rate of high school grads by 3% in 5 years

Goal: Increase the college-going rate of underrepresented groups by 4% in 5 years

Strategies & Tactics:

1. Ensure high school students are meaningfully informed on scholarships, dual enrollment programming, financial aid, and higher education pathways.
 - a. Expand the Utah College Advising Corps statewide. Determine the effectiveness of alternate program models. Evaluate program data to determine efficacy and best practices.
 - b. Facilitate greater regional collaboration among college access partners, with a focus on networking, training, and working toward shared college access goals aligned with the Board Strategic Plan.
 - c. Provide accessible training to access partners on USHE access programming to prepare them for meaningful conversations about post-secondary options.
 - d. In partnership with Success in Education, redevelop the USHE segment of the Keys to Success mobile app to provide the most actionable and essential pieces of information to high school students during their college selection process.
2. Simplify institutional admissions processes.
 - a. Identify system-level ways to simplify the admissions process for students and institutions.
 - b. Connect institutions to high school student data to improve access, particularly for underrepresented student populations. Implement the Single Student Identifier systemwide. Analyze available data to determine more inclusive future measures.
3. Support institutions in helping students secure their basic needs.
 - a. Empower institutions to adopt relevant best practices and deploy staff to case-manage with students in need of institutional and external basic needs services.
 - b. Elevate higher education's representation in state and local poverty reduction initiatives and enhance the Board's role in advocating for funding and policies that support institutional basic needs work.

Priority: Affordability

Board's Role: Remove structural barriers to affordability

Goal: Increase student ability to pay cost of attendance

Goal: Ensure institutional costs of attendance remains within the standard of affordability year over year

Strategies & Tactics:

1. Improve fiscal transparency and understanding.
 - a. Develop and implement full cost of attendance reporting standards and tools.
 - b. Refine the Board's standard of affordability.
2. Coordinate and optimize financial aid.
 - a. Evaluate, prioritize, and implement state student financial aid and scholarships.
 - b. Streamline statewide H.B.144 affidavit process. Benchmark student participation in affidavits. Clarify how citizenship data is collected and used in relation to scholarships and admissions forms.
 - c. Review and analyze the use of tuition waivers and identify opportunities for enhancing their efficacy.
 - d. Evaluate the quality, effectiveness, and return on investment of existing scholarship and financial aid programs, identify opportunities for better coordination and improvement.
3. Increase completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
 - a. Partner with USBE to consider ways to increase FAFSA completion in high school. Develop and implement a statewide FAFSA strategy.
4. Ensure institutions maintain strong fiscal health and operational efficiency.
 - a. Create a standardized cost structure model to compare the cost of delivering credentials across USHE and other relevant institutions.
 - b. Develop and implement a fiscal health assessment tool.
 - c. Update capital facilities funding policies and procedures to encourage efficient planning and requests.

Priority: Completion

Board's Role: Remove structural barriers to graduation

Goal: Increase timely completion of degrees and awards by 3% in 5 years

Goal: Increase the timely completion of underrepresented students by 4% in 5 years

Strategies & Tactics:

1. Facilitate completion and transfer among institutions within the system.
 - a. Conduct transfer study to determine barriers to transfer.
 - b. Facilitate coordination between institutions and among both technical and academic disciplines to align program structure and to support transfer and completion.
 - c. Review and update policies related to transfer and award structure.
 - d. Transition technical education from clock hours to credit hours.
2. Standardize awarding of credit for prior learning and ensure PLA aids in completion.
 - a. Implement consistent practices for the award of articulated credit, including training of faculty and staff, and annual institutional reporting of articulated credit awarded. Assess the impact of the award of articulated credit on student enrollment and completion.
3. Ensure systemwide institutional supports for student mental health and campus safety.
 - a. Identify and implement system-based mental health strategies and policies in accordance with institution mental health strategic plans being developed in partnership with JED Foundation and Huntsman Mental Health Institute.
 - b. Connect institutions with Title IX training opportunities, and support and empower institutions in developing strategies to address campus safety.
4. Expand supportive entry-level education practices.
 - a. Develop standards for placement, supportive instruction, co-requisite remediation, and other models to support student entry into and success in introductory academic college-level coursework and technical education.

Priority: Workforce Alignment

Board's Role: Prioritize and incentivize the approval of high-demand, high-wage programs aligned with workforce

Goal: Increase completion rate of graduates in high-demand, high-wage programs by 7% in 5 years

Goal: Increase the completion rate of underrepresented groups in programs aligned with high-wage, high-demand jobs by 8% in 5 years

Strategies:

1. Engage industry to align education with workforce demands that result in career placements.
2. Initiate industry feedback loops with the Utah Board of Higher Education.
3. Develop legislative priorities, policies, and funding requests for workforce development programs.
4. Increase stakeholder collaboration to develop and promote workforce programs.
5. Increase student participation in high-quality Work-Based Learning.

Note: The tactics for Workforce Alignment will be proposed at the November 2022 board meeting.

Priority: Research

Board's Role: Advocate for the role of research and support funding for research

Goal: TBD

Strategies and Tactics:

1. Advocate for the role of research at degree-granting institutions in innovation, technology transfer, economic development/workforce, and community engagement and impact.
 - a. Build research into legislative narrative and integrate role of research into strategic marketing campaign. Consider mechanism for research to be more ingrained in Board discussions and decisions.
 - b. Utilize Point of the Mountain Innovation Hub.
2. Ensure institutions have needed support to conduct research.
 - a. Consider one-time funds in 2022 budget request to support research facilities.
 - b. Include high-impact research initiatives in Board budget process.
 - c. Identify state-level issues, rely on degree-granting institutions to lead out on innovations and solutions and serve as leaders for other institutions through demonstrated partnerships and strategic funding.

Note: This priority was not reviewed. It will be rewritten, and the revision will be proposed to the board for approval at a later date.

Attachment 2: Updated Strategic Plan with Edit Details

Priority: System ~~Unification~~ Leadership

Board's Role: ~~Develop, strengthen, and leverage an articulated system of higher education.~~ Oversee and lead The Utah System of Higher Education for the benefit of all Utahns.

Goal: Develop, strengthen, and leverage an equitable, seamless, and articulated system of higher education.

Strategies & Tactics:

1. ~~Align programs with institutional roles and minimize duplication among institutions~~ Provide strategic oversight for institutional roles and missions and program offerings to fully incorporate all institutions within a single system.
 - a. ~~Study current program offerings across technical colleges and regional universities degree-granting institutions to ensure fit with institutional roles.~~ Align programs within institutional roles and address unnecessary program duplication across the system.
 - b. Review policies governing institutional roles, award types, across degree-granting institutions and technical colleges, and faculty workload at degree-granting institutions.
2. ~~Increase stackability of credentials from technical colleges to degree-granting institutions~~ [STRATEGY ELIMINATED AND ENCOMPASSED ELSEWHERE]
 - a. ~~Review policy governing award types across degree-granting institutions to ensure policies are equity minded and supported by data and allow for stackability across all institutional types. Review policy R473, R401, R472 for articulation and transfer between technical colleges and degree-granting institutions.~~ [MOVED TO SYSTEM LEADERSHIP, INSTITUTIONAL ROLES & REWORDED]
 - b. ~~Develop standardized approach to understand number of students utilizing current articulations between tech colleges and degree-granting institutions.~~ [MOVED TO SYSTEM LEADERSHIP, PATHWAYS & REWORDED]
 - c. ~~Develop standardized approach to understand number of secondary students receiving credit for course work completed at the high school.~~ [MOVED TO SYSTEM LEADERSHIP, PATHWAYS & REWORDED]
 - d. ~~Explore potential for transitioning technical education from clock hours to credit hours.~~ [MOVED TO COMPLETION, TRANSFER & REWORDED]
3. ~~Merge system policies and align data and measures as appropriate~~ Unify system policies, data, and measures.
 - a. Review policies to ensure alignment between technical colleges and degree-granting institutions. ~~Regularly review System policies to ensure they are equity focused.~~ [MOVED TO SYSTEM LEADERSHIP, EQUITY & REWORDED]
 - b. Align data and measurements between tech colleges and degree-granting institutions; ~~when appropriate~~
4. ~~Train~~ Engage boards of trustees on delegated responsibilities.
 - a. Train boards of trustees on program approval process (include verifiable workforce needs); tuition processes; equity, diversity, and inclusion; etc. Develop ongoing training for trustees.
 - b. Develop qualifications for Board members that prioritize equity and diversity. Advocate that boards of trustees have similar qualifications.
 - c. Facilitate Board of Trustees consortium group.
5. ~~Streamline~~ Reevaluate presidential evaluation and R&R processes.
 - a. Support presidents in meeting expectations of the Board, including incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion in evaluations and R&R.
6. Leverage Board policies and System leadership to close attainment gaps for each Utahn.
 - a. Review and revise all USHE policies aligned with closing attainment gaps through an equity lens on a 3-year basis.
 - b. Train Board, System, and institutional leadership on USHE Equity Lens Framework and concepts related to excellence in equity-mindedness and shared equity leadership.

- c. Leverage System leadership to address practices and initiatives tied to Board equity-related resolutions
- 7. Implement shared services
 - a. Assess and prioritize opportunities for expanding shared services across institutions.
 - b. Support the implementation of shared services and measure gains in quality, risk mitigation, financial sustainability, and cost efficiency.
- 8. Strengthen and develop educational pathways to increase students' access to and completion of higher education aligned to Utah's workforce.
 - a. Lead cross-agency cooperation to create a shared goal and definition of educational pathways within Utah.
 - b. Collaborate with USBE, USHE institutions, and OCHE units to lead and coordinate all college-in-high school programs and pathways containing postsecondary coursework or credentials.
 - c. Develop a data collection and reporting framework to assess the quality of educational pathways within Utah.
 - d. Train and support Utah's Regional Pathways Coordinators to develop and implement clear educational pathways from technical colleges to regional universities.
 - e. Utilize Talent Ready Utah's connection to the workforce to align educational attainment with industry-validated occupations.
- 9. Ensure Utahns and key stakeholders are meaningfully informed on the value and return on investment (ROI) of higher education.
 - a. Develop and assess statewide marketing campaign.
 - b. Collaborate with institutions to develop legislative narrative to advocate the value of higher education.

Priority: Access

Board's Role: Remove structural barriers to entry

Goal: Increase the college-going rate of high school grads by 3% in 5 years

Goal: Increase the college-going rate of underrepresented groups by 4% in 5 years

Strategies & Tactics:

1. Ensure high school students are meaningfully informed on scholarships, dual enrollment programming, financial aid, and higher education pathways.
 - a. ~~Fund statewide expansion of the Utah College Advising Corps (UCAC). Ensure advisors are meaningfully trained on technical education opportunities. Evaluate program data to determine efficacy and best practices.~~ Expand the Utah College Advising Corps statewide. Determine the effectiveness of alternate program models. Evaluate program data to determine efficacy and best practices.
 - b. ~~Facilitate collaboration among college access partners such as TRIO, GEAR UP, AVID, Latinos in Action, USHE CE Directors, CTE directors, institutions, and advisors.~~ Facilitate greater regional collaboration among college access partners, with a focus on networking, training, and working toward shared college access goals aligned with the Board Strategic Plan.
 - c. Provide accessible training to access partners on USHE access programming to prepare them for meaningful conversations about post-secondary options.
 - d. In partnership with Success in Education, redevelop the USHE segment of the Keys to Success mobile app to provide the most actionable and essential pieces of information to high school students during their college selection process.
 - e. ~~Standardize structural and systemic processes and policies to ensure access of CE and TE in high school [MOVED TO SYSTEM LEADERSHIP, PATHWAYS & REWORDED]~~
2. Simplify institutional admissions processes
 - a. Identify system-level ways to simplify the admissions process for students and institutions.
 - b. Connect institutions to high school student data to improve access, particularly for underrepresented student populations. Implement the Single Student Identifier systemwide. Analyze available data to determine more inclusive future measures.
3. ~~Ensure systemwide institutional supports for student basic needs~~ Support institutions in helping students secure their basic needs.
 - a. ~~Develop baseline expectations for student basic needs for degree-granting/technical institutions. Support institutions in meeting baseline expectations.~~ Empower institutions

- to adopt relevant best practices and deploy staff to case-manage with students in need of institutional and external basic needs services.
- b. Elevate higher education's representation in state and local poverty reduction initiatives and enhance the Board's role in advocating for funding and policies that support institutional basic needs work.
- 4. ~~Support institutions and USBE in diversifying the pipeline of P-20 educators, faculty, and staff [STRATEGY ELIMINATED]~~
 - a. ~~Review policy to support all USHE institutions in their efforts to attract and retain diverse faculty and staff. Facilitate collaboration on best equitable hiring and retention practices.~~
 - b. ~~Use TH Bell Scholarship to recruit and financially support underrepresented students into the educator and counselor workforce. [MOVED TO AFFORDABILITY, COORDINATE AND OPTIMIZE FINANCIAL AID & REWORDED]~~

Priority: Affordability

Board's Role: Remove structural barriers to affordability

Goal: Increase student ability to pay cost of attendance

Goal: Ensure institutional costs of attendance remains within the standard of affordability year over year

Strategies & Tactics:

- 1. ~~Develop an expanded standard of affordability~~ Improve fiscal transparency and understanding
 - a. ~~Standardize the cost of attendance across all USHE institutions.~~ Develop and implement full cost of attendance reporting standards and tools.
 - b. Refine the Board's standard of affordability.
- 2. Evaluate and prioritize state student financial aid. Coordinate and optimize financial aid.
 - a. ~~Implement, evaluate, and prioritize state scholarships.~~ Evaluate, prioritize, and implement state student financial aid and scholarships.
 - b. Streamline statewide H.B.144 affidavit process. Benchmark student participation in affidavits. Clarify how citizenship data is collected and used in relation to scholarships and admissions forms.
 - c. ~~Review policy, statute, and procedures on waivers. Identify how waivers are being used at each institution.~~ Review and analyze the use of tuition waivers and identify opportunities for enhancing their efficacy.
 - d. Evaluate the quality, effectiveness, and return on investment of existing scholarship and financial aid programs, identify opportunities for better coordination and improvement.
- 3. Increase completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
 - a. Partner with USBE to consider ways to increase FAFSA completion in high school. Develop and implement a statewide FAFSA strategy.
 - b. ~~Study FAFSA completion in Utah and determine best practices from other states. [REMOVE AS ENCOMPASSED IN PRIOR TACTIC]~~
- 4. Develop a cost structure model to compare the cost of delivering degrees and awards for each USHE institution. Ensure institutions maintain strong fiscal health and operational efficiency.
 - a. ~~Create a model to compare the cost of delivering degrees and awards for each USHE institution.~~ Create a standardized cost structure model to compare the cost of delivering credentials across USHE and other relevant institutions.
 - b. ~~Expand cost study to include technical education.~~
 - c. Develop and implement a fiscal health assessment tool.
 - d. Update capital facilities funding policies and procedures to encourage efficient planning and requests.

Priority: Completion

Board's Role: Remove structural barriers to graduation

Goal: Increase timely completion of degrees and awards by 3% in 5 years

Goal: Increase the timely completion of underrepresented students by 4% in 5 years

Strategies & Tactics:

- 1. ~~Structure awards to~~ Facilitate completion and transfer among institutions within the system
 - a. Conduct transfer study to determine barriers to transfer.
 - b. Facilitate coordination between institutions and among technical and academic disciplines to align program structure and to support transfer and completion.
 - c. ~~Update policies on transfer from technical colleges to degree granting institutions~~ Review and update policies related to transfer and award structure.

- d. ~~Develop standardized approach to understand number of students utilizing current articulations between tech colleges and degree-granting institutions. [MOVED TO SYSTEM LEADERSHIP, PATHWAYS & REWORDED]~~
- e. Transition technical education from clock hours to credit hours
- 2. ~~Increase awarding of credit for prior learning~~ Standardize awarding of credit for prior learning and ensure PLA aids in completion.
 - a. ~~Implement annual institutional reporting of credit for prior learning, proactive communications to students, and training of faculty and staff and assess the impact of credit for prior learning on student completion. Ensure standardization in the awarding of credit for prior learning and the transferability of credit for prior learning.~~ Implement consistent practices for the award of articulated credit, including training of faculty and staff, and annual institutional reporting of articulated credit awarded. Assess the impact of the award of articulated credit on student enrollment and completion.
- 3. Ensure systemwide institutional supports for student mental health and campus safety
 - a. ~~Develop baseline expectations for mental health for degree-granting /technical institutions. Support institutions in meeting baseline expectations. Facilitate collaboration on best practices.~~ Identify and implement system-based mental health strategies and policies in accordance with institution mental health strategic plans being developed in partnership with JED Foundation and Huntsman Mental Health Institute.
 - b. ~~Develop baseline expectations for student safety for degree-granting /technical institutions.~~ Support institutions in meeting baseline expectations. Facilitate collaboration on best practices.
- 4. Expand supportive entry-level education practices
 - a. ~~Refine policy to~~ Develop standards for placement, supportive instruction, co- requisite remediation, and other models to support student entry into and success in introductory academic college-level coursework and technical education.

Priority: Workforce Alignment

Board's Role: ~~Increase availability and stackability~~ Prioritize and incentivize the approval of high-demand, high-wage programs aligned with workforce

Goal: Increase completion rate of graduates in high-demand, high-wage programs by 7% in 5 years

Goal: Increase the completion rate of underrepresented groups in programs aligned with high-wage, high-demand jobs by 8% in 5 years

Strategic & Tactics

- 1. ~~Increase higher ed participation rate of adults with/without a high school diploma~~
 - a. ~~Collaborate with DWS and USBE to support enrollment of adult learners in academic and technical education.~~
 - b. ~~Identify what institutional services are currently supporting higher education for incarcerated individuals. Determine if System intervention is needed.~~
 - c. ~~Increase awareness of reskilling/upskilling for employed students to increase wage and employment progression.~~
 - 2. ~~Ensure students are meaningfully informed on the value and ROI of higher education~~
 - a. ~~Advocate for statewide marketing campaign. Focus on the unique needs of adult learners. [MOVED TO SYSTEM LEADERSHIP, EQUITY AND REWORDED]~~
 - b. ~~Ensure technical education program information, articulation of secondary course work, and opportunities for educational, career, and wage progression are represented in USHE online tools.~~
 - 3. ~~Increase student participation in work-based learning [INCLUDED IN REVISION]~~
 - a. ~~Consider policy to define systemwide practices for participation and reporting of work-based learning activities. Develop systemwide practices for participation in work-based learning activities.~~
- 1. Engage industry to align education with workforce demands that result in career placements.
 - 2. Initiate industry feedback loops with the Utah Board of Higher Education.
 - 3. Develop legislative priorities, policies, and funding requests for workforce development programs.
 - 4. Increase stakeholder collaboration to develop and promote workforce programs.
 - 5. Increase student participation in high-quality Work-Based Learning.

Priority: Research

Board's Role: Advocate for the role of research and support funding for research

Goal: TBD

Strategies and Tactics:

1. Advocate for the role of research at degree- granting institutions in innovation, technology transfer, economic development/workforce, and community engagement and impact.
 - a. Build research into legislative narrative and integrate role of research into strategic marketing campaign. Consider mechanism for research to be more ingrained in Board discussions and decisions.
 - b. Utilize Point of the Mountain Innovation Hub.
2. Ensure institutions have needed support to conduct research
 - a. Consider one-time funds in 2022 budget request to support research facilities.
 - b. Include high-impact research initiatives in Board budget process.
 - c. Identify state-level issues, rely on degree-granting institutions to lead out on innovations and solutions and serve as leaders for other institutions through demonstrated partnerships and strategic funding.