

Topics and Assignments 11/15/17

How do we improve the affordability of and access to higher education for students?

Potential initiatives: statewide Open Educational Resources Initiative, changes to application fees, tuition/waiver policy revisions (caps, standardized rates, need-based waivers), etc.

Regents: Marlin Jensen (Chair)
Cristina Ortega (Vice Chair)
Thomas Wright
Jessellie Anderson
Steve Lund

Stakeholders: TBD

Staff Lead: Kimberly Henrie and member of Finance/Facilities staff TBD, and Julie Hartley

How can we help students complete their program in a timely way?

Potential initiatives: accelerated graduation plans (e.g. 3-year graduation or other), stackable credentials, reverse transfer/exit strategy, graduation process and fees, etc.

Regents: Nina Barnes (Chair)
Bob Prince (Vice Chair)
Teresa Theurer
Alex Trujillo
Mark Stoddard

Stakeholders: TBD

Staff Lead: Liz Hitch and Jessica Miller

How can we meet critical workforce needs and make sure students are prepared to make meaningful use of their degree?

Potential initiatives: expand campus career services opportunities to include meaningful workplace learning experiences and other partnerships, define workforce alignment to guide institutions' programs, etc.

Regents: Bob Marquardt (Chair)
Patricia Jones (Vice Chair)
Ron Jibson
Joyce Valdez
Wilford Clyde

Stakeholders: TBD; likely a representative from DWS & GOED

Staff Lead: Liz Hitch and Blair Carruth

2017-18 BOARD OF REGENTS ADVOCACY PROPOSAL

OVERVIEW

Higher education in Utah is at an inflection point. Immediate, bold, strategic action is required to meaningfully increase higher education participation and achievement for all Utahns and to be responsive to stakeholder input.

Included in this proposal is a change to one of the objectives of the strategic plan, *Innovative Discovery*. While an important aspiration, *Innovative Discovery* is challenging to define in metrics. In consultation with the Executive Committee, the Commissioner recommends replacing this metric with *Research & Workforce*, which better captures the importance of higher education in today's economy.

This proposal is a significant revamp of how the Board of Regents defines its priorities and how the Commissioner's Office executes those priorities. It includes:

1. Prioritization of key initiatives by the Regents that have meaningful, statewide impact
2. Appointment of working groups and consideration of revisions to the format of Board meetings
3. Comprehensive communications and legislative strategies, focusing on initiatives

1. Prioritization of key initiatives

It is proposed that the Board prioritize the following immediate initiatives to help meet the goals of the 2025 strategic plan. Key initiatives should be identified as a starting point that can be intentionally built on over time. There must be a collective willingness to critically examine processes, resources, and policies across the system and in the Commissioner's Office to implement them successfully. The following six questions can be used to guide which initiatives the Board wants to prioritize:

How can we make higher education simpler to access for Utahns?

Potential initiatives: common student identifier, reduction/standardization/elimination of application fees, standardized admissions process or application,, universal acceptance to open admissions institutions, etc.

How can we reduce the cost of higher education for students?

Potential initiatives: statewide Open Educational Resources Initiative, changes to application fees, tuition/waiver policy revisions (caps, standardized rates, need-based waivers), etc.

How can we help students make the most of their time while they are in college?

Potential initiatives: first-year guided experience, meta-major pathways with refined statewide course equivalency and program alignment system, high-impact practices, remedial courses, etc.

How can we help students complete their program in a timely way?

Potential initiatives: accelerated graduation plans (e.g. 3-year graduation or other), stackable credentials, reverse transfer/exit strategy, graduation process and fees, etc.

How can we meet critical workforce needs and make sure students are prepared to make meaningful use of their degree?

Potential initiatives: expand campus career services opportunities to include meaningful workplace learning experiences and other partnerships, define workforce alignment to guide institutions' programs, etc.

How can we improve the processes on our campuses to leverage our system structure?

Potential initiatives: enhance certain system data/IT capabilities, consolidate or standardize administrative/business functions (e.g. procurement, payroll, HR, fleet management), etc.

2. Establish working groups

It is proposed that three working groups be appointed by the Chair, each of which address a single issue based on the questions from above. Each Regent will serve on one working group. The working groups will report to the full Board on recommendations for initiatives in their area, work with staff in defining scope, metrics and outcomes, and follow up with the Commissioner's Office on implementation of these initiatives. The working groups will meet at a time other than the regularly scheduled board meeting.

The Board may consider having more of its business conducted in the Committee of the Whole in order to better facilitate full-board understanding of key issues and discussion/participation, or other ways to streamline the committee meetings.

3. Strategic advocacy

The Commissioner's Office is concurrently developing a statewide advocacy campaign, with the help of external experts, to better understand state level higher education issues, seek stakeholder feedback, and communicate initiatives in combination with a broader higher education advocacy message. A legislative strategy is being developed in tandem that includes one-on-one interviews, regional legislative discussions and targeted messaging to address legislative concerns.

This statewide advocacy campaign will:

- Build on current statewide education initiatives (Our Schools Now, P2020, Governor's Education Roadmap)
- Anchor messaging in Regent initiatives to stay current, keep stakeholders involved, and show innovation and momentum
- Develop a statewide message delivery strategy

IMMEDIATE TIMELINE

October

- Engage with consulting firm: schedule focus groups, research other state systems
- Board to provide feedback on working groups

November

- November Board of Regents meeting: working groups appointed, discuss proposed goals and initiatives, schedule initial working group meetings, discuss and approve advocacy plan
- Consulting firm to conduct one-on-one interviews with legislators, stakeholder focus groups
- Commissioner's Office to allocate necessary resources/staffing toward Board-defined priorities
- Consulting firm to finish focus groups, synthesize data
- Commissioner's Office to host legislative meetings informing of new initiatives with Regent participation, sharing the Board working group efforts and areas of focus, etc.