

Governor's Higher Education Task Force

According to the U.S. Census, as of 2016:

- Idaho's population is 1,683,140, ranked 39th among the states;
- a +15% change in population occurred between 2006-2016, ranked 9th among the states;
- 25.7% of the population is under the age of 18, ranked 6th among the states;
- 18% of the population is between the ages of 5 and 17 (299K), ranked 38th ;
- 59.1% of the population is between the ages of 18 and 64, ranked 49th ;
- Idaho has 163 operating school districts, ranked 30th among the states,
- 89.5% of Idaho high school students graduate (ranked 22nd); 25.9% have a bachelor's degree (ranked 38th); and 8.2% have an advanced degree (ranked 42nd); and
- in 2015, instructional staff at public higher education institutions (3,673), ranked 39th

According to the National Education Association Research, in 2016:

- High school fall enrollment was 294,471, ranked 38th among the states;
- 17,029 high school students graduated, ranked 40th among the states; and
- public school revenue per students in fall enrollment was \$7,669, ranked 51st

Other relevant rankings:

- The Rural School and Community Trust ranked Idaho 50th in the amount of money the state spends per student in rural schools.
- The Idaho Center for Fiscal Policy reports a fivefold increase in the state's college tuition since 1980, making a degree more expensive than in MT., UT, WY, and NV.

According to the Idaho State Board of Education, in 2016:

- Total headcount for the eight public higher education institutions was 74,666, composed of 94% academic and 6% CTE, and 53% full-time and 47% part-time students;
- with direct admissions, 20K+ graduating high school seniors were automatically admitted to six or more of Idaho's public institutions annually in 2015 and 2016;
- in fall 2016, enrollment of Idaho high school graduates into an Idaho public institution was 6.4%, the 3rd highest year-over-year postsecondary enrollment growth in the nation;
- 31% increase of Idaho high school graduates from 2011-2012 to 2025-2026 is projected;
- for community colleges, the 2-year graduate rate is 10.2% for 2-Years, and 20.1% for 3-Years, and for undergraduate students at 4-year public institutions, the graduate rate is 19.1% for 4-Years and 41.6% for 6-Years, underperforming the national average;
- Complete College America estimates \$150K per student cost for each additional year of education in tuition, lost wages, and retirement and other costs;
- the goal for 60% of the population ages 25-35 to earn post-secondary certificates or degrees by 2020, was set in 2010 when the rate was at 38%; in 2017, the rate is 42%;
- 65% of the Idaho population has no college (38%) or some college (27%); and
- the total economic impact (FY13-14) for the public higher education system was \$4.1B (EMSI Nov. 2015 Economic Impact Analysis).

Considerations/Recommendations:

- Reset **60% goal** for **2025** and extend target population to ages **25-64** (IND)
- Increase annually SBOE staffing by Legislature through a strategic financial plan (only RI has a combined governance system like Idaho's; MT has 60 staff, ID has 30 staff).
- Change SBOE structure to provide for student and faculty member representation (IND);
- Articulate SBOE Vision, e.g., Student Centered, Workforce Aligned, Technology Driven
- Expand **Opportunity Scholarship**. Although the program doubled in size from 2011-2015, and is a combination of merit and need-based aid, it is underutilized and requires more marketing; however, Idaho is still at the bottom ranking of the states for need-based scholarships. Reformulate the program to mirror *Indiana's 21st Century Scholars* (1990), with implementation of the *Scholar Success Program* (2013), and in 2014-15, a student coaching program at 25 college campuses with high Scholar populations. Key points are:
 1. Twenty-first Century Scholars has a 25-year track record of success, with 110K socio-economically challenged and first generation students currently enrolled in the program and 30K students having realized the dream of a college degree.
 2. The program transforms the way the students and their parents view their access and opportunity for college through a four-year (9-12) commitment for success.
 3. Scholars are 1.4 times more likely to be the first in their family to go to college, and their reported family income was 75% lower than the average student who applies for financial aid.
 4. The Scholar Success program requires activities that help students stay on track for college and career success, e.g., in the 9th grade, complete a graduation plan, participate in extracurricular or service activity; in the 10th grade, take a career interests assessment, get workplace experience; in the 11th grade, visit a college campus, take a college entrance exam (ACT or SAT); in the 12th grade, submit college application, and file the FAFSA (can use aid during summer session); overall, must maintain a 2.5 g.p.a. and complete a required Core 40 diploma.
 5. College transition programs expanded and *ScholarCorps* created, which places support staff dedicated to helping Scholars success at 17 campuses, and uses *College Success Coaches*, for proactive advising to make sure students feel connected to campus resources and are on track to meet academic requirements.
 6. Indiana passed financial aid reforms requiring students to take 30 credit hours per calendar year to receive state financial aid (e.g., the Scholars program).
 7. Regarding a) college access and b) readiness to enter college, 76% of Scholars compared to 65% of all Indiana students and to 42% of non-scholars with low incomes, and 72% of Scholars compared to 77% of all Indiana students and 61% of non-scholars with low incomes on these two measures respectively.
 8. Measure of college performance, retention, on-time college completion, and extended-time college completion are comparable for Scholars and all students.
 9. Fifteen percent of Scholars earn an associate's or bachelor's degree on time and 33% of Scholars graduate after three and six years relative to institutional type.

10. Analyze and distribute data to stakeholders (IND), e.g., College Readiness Report, College Completion Report, College Values Index, and Return on Investment Report, using the strength, power, and veracity of information.
- Adopt the *Tennessee Promise* program aligned with the *Tennessee Achieves* program that incentivizes students to attend community and technical colleges with public/private partnership for last-dollar (gap funding) scholarships paired with volunteer mentors and that requires students to complete at least 8 hours of community service each semester.
 - 1) From 2008-2014, tnAchieves supported more than 10K students with more than \$15.5M privately raised for the last-dollar student scholarships. Statistics indicate that these students are retained and graduating at a rate 50% greater than the state average. Sixty-five percent of tnAchieves students are first generation college students; 70% come from families who earn less than \$50K annually; 94% of graduates completed post-secondary education debt-free.
 - 2) TnAchieves has 85 county-based advisory councils (which could be replicated by Idaho's four community colleges' governance advisory board structure) comprised of local higher education, secondary education, and business leaders, along with public officials, to ensure ownership and sustainability.
 - 3) TnAchieves annually recruits and trains 7,500 volunteers to serve as mentors to 60K Tennessee Promise applicants as they transition from high school to college (TnAchieves serves as the partnering organization to TN Promise).
 - 4) TnAchieves provides support for student success through emphasis on objectives such as increasing FAFSA filings to hosting summer bridge programs. Tennessee leads the nation in FAFSA filings (86%) and accounted for more than 40% in FAFSA growth across the entire country in 2015.
 - 5) TN Promise created an endowment for student scholarships and was launched under the *Drive to 55* campaign which seeks to achieve 55% postsecondary attainment for the state's population by 2025 (32.9% population had degrees).
 - 6) From Class of 2015 (16,291 students) attending an eligible institution as part of TN Promise, community colleges experienced a 24% increase of full-time students and technical colleges increased enrollment + 20%, representing a 10% increase in public higher education enrollment, and a 4.6% increase in the state's college going rate, more than the last seven years combined.
 - Work with African, Hispanic, and Native Americans for community-led and invested education pathways for students, including establishment of major scholarship support. An example is the *Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success* program in Montgomery County, MD, involving Montgomery County Schools, Montgomery College, and Universities at Shady Grove. The ACES program is designed to create a seamless educational pathway, comprehensive intervention, and a support structure from high school to college completion. The program starts with identifying qualified students in the 9th grade, assigning academic coaches from Montgomery College in the 11th grade to engage them and their families, and continuing academic/career/leadership support within post-secondary institutions to help with transitions from one educational level to the next.

- Model a system-wide student advising program based on data analytics similar to *eAdvisor* at Arizona State University, wherein the analytical framework enables advisors to chart a path for each student through developing criteria predictive of student success in each major, allowing the university to offer courses and seats that students must have to complete majors on time, and tracking patterns of success for large student populations (*Designing the New American University*, M.M. Crow & W.B. Dabars, 2015).
- Recalibrate dual credit program to provide intrusive advising/guided pathways for college articulation by applying credits earned to admission core/general education requirements.
- Apply unused funding in dual credit program to pay for students taking summer courses at community colleges to complete certificates in career technical education or associate's degrees and also at colleges/universities with associate's degree offerings.
- Offer extensive CTE dual credit options to mirror academic dual credit opportunities.
- Deliver blended or hybrid learning modalities, increasing on-line learning opportunities and flexibility (synchronous and asynchronous) for place-bound students in rural Idaho, including distance learning, along with augmented resources, strengthened infrastructure and decision-making authority for outreach centers in the state to meet local needs.
- Reestablish and enforce a common-course numbering system for transferability of general education/core course credits between Idaho public higher education institutions.
- Review and redress the articulation of credits between CTE and academic credits for ease of transfer between 2-year community colleges and 4-year colleges and universities;
- Promote 2 + 2 program articulation agreements and financial aid consortium agreements between institutions by system support to engender more seamless pathways for students.
- Continue SBOE initiative for co-requisite remediation through course design for English and mathematics and other "gateway" classes, and math pathways for student success.
- Provide stronger mechanisms for crediting work experience and competency-based skills.
- Develop a plan for alternative academic calendar to address "summer melt" for students, engaging faculty in mentoring and innovating, and better utilization of campus facilities.
- Structure class schedules (blocks) reducing time/cost for students to complete credentials.
- Facilitate learning communities/cohorts for student acculturation academically/socially.
- Create a robust statewide internship program through public/private partnerships for the "empty quadrant," i.e., graduates with a degree or certificate but no experience who are increasingly shut out of the 21st century job market and who question education's value.
- Engender a unified approach to recruit and retain veterans whose GI benefits pay for college, including a systematic granting of military credits applied to degrees/certificates.
- Publicize career entry and life-time earnings advantage of certificate/degree attainment.
- Align the teaching of skills, i.e. critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem-solving, numeracy, reading, writing, and computer literacy, teamwork, etc. with workforce needs.
- Attend to loan forgiveness to determine the viability of expanding the program in Idaho as student debt is one of the greatest disincentives to pursuing post-secondary education.
- Fund adequately college/university instructional staff, including adjunct and regular faculty, and student support staff, e.g., advising, career and mental health counseling.

(Submitted to Dr. Linda Clark, Task Force Co-Chair, by Dr. Bessie Katsilometes – 6/21/2017)

