

Access and Affordability

Recommendation – Provide a statewide digital delivery system- a digital campus that integrates and incorporates the current public system and partnering private institutions. This system is scalable, high quality, accessible and affordable.

Principle

Citizens of any age can now access higher education without leaving their families or communities. Flexibility in delivery systems and asynchronous course availability will provide an ideal environment for working adults.

Short-term Actions

1. Actively support the K-20 Pipeline recommendations.

Idaho needs to enroll and graduate 40,000 additional students annually in their chosen one, two or four year degree program. The digital campus will expand capacity, access and affordability. We must increase the go on and, ultimately, the retention and success rates. Every high school student will have had access to information that will help them navigate the world beyond high school through a course that provides exposure and support to college and career readiness

2. Dual credit courses

Ensure transferability of courses taken in high school for postsecondary credit with an emphasis on general education credits applicable to certificates and degrees. Employ a common course numbering system with standardized credit hours across the State of Idaho. Expand dual credit offerings through the Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA) to assure all students have access to the classes needed to earn an associate's degree at high school graduation. Expand dual credit offerings to ensure students have access to both academic and CTE dual credit courses.

Long-term Actions

1. Workforce skills alignment.

Support and implement the strategies outlined in the work force development report. Include mastery certification/testing for those with significant work experience or previous education (including military education/experience, industry certification, etc.) Explore issuing competency-based degrees.

2. Expand online college delivery to non-completers or adult learners

There are approximately 277,700 former students in Idaho with some higher education. Re engaging those in a system that meets their time lines and is affordable is a key element in reaching our 60% goal.

Competency-based assessment should be streamlined and systematized so that transferability of prior learning is seamless and uniform across the Idaho public postsecondary system.

Example: Boise State University has a bachelor of general studies degree that is competency-based. BSU applies participant's prior learning and work experience as college credit toward this degree.

3. Game Changers

Support and incorporate Complete College America policies and proven focus, i.e., co-requisite remediation, math pathways, structured schedules, and 30 academic credits per year to finish on time. In addition, our current institutions may increase capacity by adopting a trimester schedule or other innovative student-centric techniques.

4. Leverage current outreach centers

Access to local support for distance learners provides a coaching, mentoring, lab, IT access, and communication portal that will be there when needed for students going through the challenges we expect in online higher education.

5. Bolster e-tutoring and e-mentoring

3. Identify degree-granting institution for online degrees

4. Create additional outreach centers where necessary

Consider the use of public libraries, schools or city or county training or meeting facilities, and leverage existing infrastructure that would meet the needs for large numbers of online students.

5. Higher education support and involvement in Parents Academy across Idaho

Owner

Higher education institutions
IDLA
State Department of Education
State Board of Education
Communities

Government & Industry Roles (if applicable)

Accreditation (Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities)
Legislature (funding)
Outreach centers (libraries, regional labor offices, etc.)

Outcomes

The delivery of a system that attracts, supports, and makes more affordable the higher education experience for those that do not see a reason or a path to engage in higher learning today. The system must be designed to scale so that cost of attendance for the student is low, yet the system maintains the same degree of quality as a student would find on campus.

Improve accessibility for all levels of postsecondary instruction to a diverse range of populations.

Access and Affordability

Recommendation – Systemically increase dollars to fund all eligible Idaho high school students while not losing sight of the goal of lowering cost/improving access.

Principle

Remove affordability barriers for new and returning students who currently do not qualify for merit-based assistance.

Short-term Actions

1. Increase funding for merit-based and need-based state scholarships

In FY 2018, 5,238 new students applied for the Opportunity Scholarship. Due to limited funding, only 1,195 new students received the award. An increase in funding would allow more students each year to receive the award and help defray the costs of college.

2. Lower GPA requirement for Opportunity Scholarship eligibility from 3.0 to 2.5

An additional 4,150 students would have an opportunity to consider postsecondary education in the FY 18 class.

3. Fund Adult Completers

There are potentially 60,000 people in Idaho who would qualify for the scholarship. At a rate of \$3,000 per award, approximately 1,000 scholarships would have an ongoing fiscal impact of \$3M. Actual amounts would be dependent on the final scholarship eligibility details, such as minimum number of credits already earned or financial need calculations. The actual number of scholarships awarded and amount of each scholarship would be contingent on annual appropriations.

4. Kick Start Program

Colleges should look at creating a “kick start” program for all Idaho freshmen or adult learners taking courses through the

Long-term Actions

1. Increase tax credit for scholarship donations

2. Provide incentives for businesses to participate in paid internships and apprenticeships and co-ops

3. Recognize and reward institutions that increase availability of need-based funding

digital campus or in person at an Idaho public postsecondary institution.

5. 30 Credits to Complete

Modify the renewal requirements for the Opportunity Scholarship so that in order to renew, students must have taken 30 credits in the previous academic year.

Owner

Legislature (funding)
State Board of Education
Higher education institutions
Business and industry
Idaho Tax Commission

Government & Industry Roles (if applicable)

Outcomes

Improving affordability for all student populations through increased availability of need-based and merit-based aid.

Increased participation of employer-driven programs designed to assist students in paying for postsecondary education.

Access and Affordability

Recommendation – Centralize and standardize processes to promote systemwide efficiencies.

Principle

The system would benefit from economies of scale, elimination of redundancies, and organizational structures that support highest quality, while lowering costs.

Short-term Actions

1. Standardize financial aid and application deadlines

The application and financial aid must occur as early as possible prior to graduation.

2. Establish uniform processes for dual credit registration and enrollment
3. Establish a working group to look at systemwide efficiencies. State Board to begin the work with a sense of urgency.

Other states have found significant funds through centralization and standardization to reinvest in system priorities, like the digital campus proposal. Areas of possible review for cost savings opportunities include: human resources, finance, procurement, facilities, and IT. Idaho invests over \$400 million in higher education each year from the general fund. A 10% reduction represents significant savings to reallocate to priorities.

Owner

Higher education institutions
State Board of Education
State Department of Education
IDLA
Community College Taxing Districts

Long-term Actions

1. Take action on working group recommendations as appropriate

2. Develop a systemwide degree audit program

Government & Industry Roles (if applicable)

Outcomes

Improved efficiencies result in a lower cost to deliver education, which can then be used to reduce the cost of instruction to the student.