

**Council on Postsecondary Education  
September 10, 2009**

**2011-2015 Strategic Agenda  
Initial Discussion**

**Background**

The *Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997* (House Bill 1) requires the Council to review its strategic agenda every four years and the strategic implementation plan every two years. The purpose of the strategic agenda is to “identify specific short-term objectives in furtherance of the long-term goals” established in HB 1.

The current strategic (public) agenda covers the period 2005-10 and is called *Five Questions - One Mission: Better Lives for Kentucky’s People*. It is focused on five policy areas: (1) college preparation, (2) affordability, (3) participation and completion, (4) learning, and (5) economic and community impact.

To monitor progress on the strategic agenda, the Council tracks approximately 20 state-level key indicators and a smaller number of institutional key indicators. The Council reviews progress on its strategic agenda by setting performance goals and producing an annual accountability report.

The Council’s strategic implementation plan is essentially in two parts, statewide plans and institutional plans. The “How We Get to Yes” statements published in the public agenda serve as part of the statewide strategic implementation plan. Much of the policy work and initiatives that the Council focused on over the last four years originated from these “How to Get to Yes” statements.

At the institutional level, campus action plans were originally created in collaboration with the institutions based upon their strategic plans. However, in practice, instead of tracking and reporting separately on the campus action plans, the Council monitored institutional strategic plans for alignment with the strategic agenda and received periodic progress reports on the various institutional strategic plans, which typically are reviewed annually on campus and get updated every four to five years.

As part of the last strategic planning process, the Council used data and information to assess progress on HB 1 goals, solicited feedback from the public using regional forums, revised the key indicators of progress (reducing the total number to 20), and developed the campus action plans for each public university, KCTCS, and AIKCU. The Council also used

the opportunity to review institutional missions as required by statute by approving mission parameters for the public universities and KCTCS.

The work was carried out in five phases, outlined below:

Phase 1: Planning process design

Phase 2: Assessment of the current state of postsecondary education (data analysis, policy scans, national and international trends, and best practices)

Phase 3: Conversations with key stakeholders on the future of postsecondary education in Kentucky (regional forums, work groups, individual meetings)

Phase 4: Institutional mission review

Phase 5: Development of strategic plan documents (Public Agenda and Campus Action Plans)

The new strategic plan, which is scheduled to be unveiled in fall 2010, will take effect on January 1, 2011, and extend until the end of 2015.

## **The Current Landscape**

There have been several important changes in Kentucky's postsecondary education landscape that will shape the development of the new strategic plan and may necessitate a different approach:

- New leadership, which includes the Governor, Council chair, Council president, KDE commissioner, Secretary of Education, Secretary of the Cabinet, and Secretary of the Economic Development Cabinet.
- New legislation, in particular Senate Bill 1 of 2009.
- A new budget and fiscal environment, which demands doing more with less and greater financial transparency.
- The publication of Double the Numbers in 2007, the Council's plan for doubling the number of bachelor's degree holders in Kentucky by the year 2020, and the development of institutional business plans.
- A 2007 postsecondary education task force report, coordinated by the Kentucky State Chamber of Commerce, calling for a recommitment to the goals of House Bill 1 and better alignment between planning documents and reform legislation.

- Work by the Council's Developmental Education Task Force in 2007, the STEM Task Force in 2007, and the Governor's Higher Education Work Group in 2008-09.
- The impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

### **Guiding Questions**

- At the half-way point to 2020, what has worked well with the Council's strategic agenda and implementation plan, and what needs to be changed in order to increase the rate of improvement?
- How can campus representatives be more actively and meaningfully involved in the strategic plan development process?
- How can executive and legislative leadership be more actively and meaningfully involved in the strategic plan development process?
- What is the proper relationship between the Council's strategic agenda and institutions' strategic plans and business plans?
- Does the strategic agenda and accountability system give appropriate focus and attention to the specific goals outlined in HB 1?
- Should mission review be part of the next strategic planning process or is it a separate process?

### **Next Steps**

For the next Council meeting, the Council staff will begin soliciting informal feedback from key policy leaders on the strengths and weaknesses of the Council's current strategic agenda and implementation plan.

In addition, based upon Council member and key stakeholder feedback, a more detailed development process and timeline will be drafted for discussion.