

AGILE

Improve the *agility* of the higher education system by fostering a coordinated, data-informed environment that proactively generates innovative approaches to evolving challenges.

OBJECTIVE - PROACTIVE: Tennessee’s higher education system acts to improve conditions and adapt to changing needs.

STRATEGIES

- Regularly collect perspectives from the higher education community, including students and college leadership, to understand challenges and emerging practices.
- Leverage cross-sector data and labor market intelligence to anticipate future academic program demand.
- Promote and elevate academic research to propel State growth and achieve improved societal impact.

OBJECTIVE - COORDINATED: Tennessee’s higher education system is better coordinated to maximize student and institutional success.

STRATEGIES

- Collaborate with state agency partners and authorizing bodies to align definitions and clearly define who is operating in Tennessee.
- Regularly gather higher education to promote information sharing, shared understanding, and problem resolution.
- Cultivate and expand the intersection between state agencies and higher education to maximize efficiencies, enhance shared services, and shared resources. Use mapping to review process and streamline.

OBJECTIVE - DATA INFORMED: Tennessee’s higher education system leverages data for insights and improvement.

STRATEGIES

- Lead regular convenings of cross-functional teams to expand, improve, and utilize information to resolve problems and share insights.
- Develop and execute a research agenda, with input from the higher education community, to enhance understanding of the challenges facing higher education and evaluate programmatic efforts to improve conditions.
- Implement data governance across the higher education enterprise to promote data stewardship, strengthen communication, and enhance the quality, consistency, and timeliness of information.

STRATEGIC HIGHER EDUCATION MASTER PLAN: ENHANCING THE VALUE FOR TENNESSEE

EVERY TENNESSEAN CAN EARN A CREDENTIAL THAT LEADS TO LIFELONG SUCCESS AND A STRONGER TENNESSEE.

CALL TO ACTION: OUR NEXT STEPS ARE TO DISSEMINATE THE PLAN, ALIGN POLICY, IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE MEASUREMENT, AND REGULARLY ASSESS PROGRESS.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Core beliefs to ground higher education’s values and decision making.



STUDENT CENTERED

Prioritize the needs, aspirations, and success of students.



AMBITIOUS

Set the national standard for higher education by pursuing excellence, bold goals, and transformative outcomes.



COLLABORATIVE

Work together towards shared objectives by finding consensus and solving problems.



CONSISTENT

Maintain commitment to responsibilities, goals, and vision and stay dependable for stakeholders.



INNOVATIVE

Embrace original, forward-thinking solutions and re-evaluate established practices.



UNDERSTANDABLE

Simplify process and effectively communicate to make higher education easier for students, families, and staff.

TENNESSEE HAS A HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT IS...

ALIGNED

Strengthen alignment within the higher education enterprise and across the education to workforce continuum to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, continuity, and meaning for Tennesseans.

OBJECTIVE - EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE: Tennessee's higher education system is more efficient and effective while maintaining high standards.

STRATEGIES

- Strengthen credit mobility between all postsecondary sectors to maximize degree completion and minimize excess credit accumulation.
- Design and scale models that reduce time to completion while upholding academic standards.
- Leverage dual enrollment and dual admissions to promote intentional, streamlined pathways for Tennessee students.

OBJECTIVE - CONTINUOUS: Tennessee's higher education system offers seamless pathways for students at any point in their journey.

STRATEGIES

- Create a centralized repository of all credential types. Develop a skills inventory to translate learning experiences across credential types. Maximize opportunities for credentials to integrate and stack in degree pathways.
- Advance informational tools for careers, career pathways, and labor market needs. Identify opportunities for career exploration for all students.

OBJECTIVE - MEANINGFUL: Tennessee must translate student learning to real-world skills and experiences.

STRATEGIES

- Ensure all academic programs, including general education, clearly articulate durable and other skills acquired as relevant to students' study.
- Expand and integrate high-quality experiential learning to equip students with real-world skills and career readiness.
- Advance statewide accountability measures to foster continuous improvement and ensure quality academic programs. Establish policies and procedures to strength and monitor credentialing.
- Protect students and ensure institutional integrity through the regulation of higher education providers operating in Tennessee. Review expectations for regulation to meet the needs of students & the state.

TENNESSEE HAS A HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT IS...

ACHIEVABLE

Make the higher education system achievable for all Tennesseans by making it accessible, affordable, and supported.

OBJECTIVE - ACCESSIBLE: Tennesseans need clear tools and consistent guidance to navigate their higher education journey.

STRATEGIES

- Create common messaging to be used across higher education to streamline information sharing, improve efficiency, and get information into the hands of students and families.
- Regularly update, use, and train on centralized resources for students, families, and education partners.
- Enhance financial literacy for students and families.

OBJECTIVE - AFFORDABLE: Tennessee is committed to making higher education affordable for every Tennessean seeking to gain new skills, earn a short-term credential, or pursue a traditional degree.

STRATEGIES

- Maintain and strengthen operating investments in higher education by recognizing institutions' outcomes and improvement.
- Preserve the viability of Tennessee's financial aid portfolio through strategic communication, collaboration with state partners, and rigorous evaluation of financial aid programs.
- Explore opportunities to minimize cost to higher education by regularly evaluating processes and identifying places for shared services.

OBJECTIVE - SUPPORTED: Tennessee students and institutions are supported to ensure the biggest challenges in higher education occur in the classroom.

STRATEGIES

- Strengthen student access to basic needs resources by increasing awareness, institutional capacity, and cross-sector coordination.
- Support students with proactive, personalized academic advising to help them achieve their educational and personal goals.
- Provide flexible pathways and solutions to accommodate part-time and working students.
- Ensure all students have access to a student support coach to help achieve their educational goals.