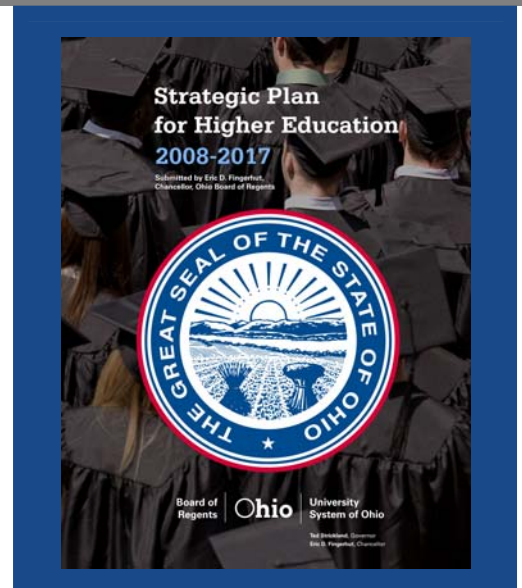


A Brief Summary of the Ten-Year Plan for Ohio Higher Education

Release of Ten-Year Plan

Chancellor Eric Fingerhut submitted his *Strategic Plan for Ohio Higher Education* (the “Plan”) to the Governor on March 31, 2008, with a focus on college attainment, collaboration, and accountability. The Plan addresses primarily public higher education in Ohio, but discusses the contributions of private colleges and universities through their research and innovation, marketing potential, and ability to contribute to the ultimate goal of improving educational attainment in Ohio. The Plan includes several ideas and recommendations similar to those contained in *Collaborate.Educate.Innovate*, the report of the Northeast Ohio Universities Collaboration and Innovation Study Commission, and references the report in End Notes.

Released simultaneously with the Chancellor’s Plan was the Ohio Board of Regents’ *Report on the Condition of Higher Education in Ohio*, which will be issued annually under House Bill 2, the same legislation which raised the Chancellor to a cabinet-level position. That report reviews a variety of measures and concludes that Ohio must produce more college graduates in addition to increasing work force development and research and technology transfer. The report notes ten significant challenges to Ohio, including addressing anticipated declines in Ohio’s youth and working age population, making higher education more affordable, and improving degree attainment while maintaining quality.



The full report can be found online at <http://universitysystem.ohio.gov>

Improving Educational Attainment

Improving educational attainment is identified as “the clear purpose” of the Chancellor’s Plan. In the 25 to 64 age group, Ohio ranks 38th nationally in the number of Associate’s and higher degrees, 37th in Bachelor’s and higher degrees, and 29th in graduate and professional degrees. These and other nationally and internationally comparative statistics are reflected in a Dashboard which will be updated regularly to show progress over the next ten years toward “Raising Educational Attainment in Ohio.” The Dashboard is accessible through the University System of Ohio web site at <http://universitysystem.ohio.gov>.

To accomplish this goal depends on Ohio **graduating more people, keeping them in Ohio after graduation, and attracting more talent** to become a “net importer” of talent. This goal is consistent with Governor Strickland’s call in his first State of the State address to enroll 230,000 more students by 2017 and to graduate 20% more from higher education. Clearly, private institutions will need to be involved in this endeavor and are invited to participate in meeting the Plan’s goals.

Among a variety of strategies to meet this goal is the establishment of clear **college readiness standards**, the creation of the **University System of Ohio Foundation** to raise money for need-based scholarships, and implementation of the new “**Seniors to Sophomores**” program in which qualifying seniors can spend their senior year on a college campus and receive their first year of college free.

Twenty accountability measures across four categories of **Access, Quality, Affordability and Efficiency, and Economic Leadership** will track progress. Each year the public institutions’ presidents will be required to submit to the Chancellor a plan for meeting these measures.

The University System of Ohio

A key centerpiece of the Plan is The University System of Ohio (“USO”), created by Executive Order from the Governor in August 2006. The USO comprises the state’s 13 public universities (with their branch campuses), 23 community colleges, and public medical college. Northeast Ohio (and NOCHE’s membership) has four of those universities, four of those community colleges, and the medical college.

The USO seeks to link these institutions through such initiatives as a **guaranteed credit transfer system, common procurement collaborations, technological compatibility, and uniform calendars and admission applications** (although not common admission standards). All public universities will be required to join the Voluntary System of Accountability, a national system reporting data on price, financial aid, degree programs, retention and graduation rates, and other characteristics, in order to compile an **Ohio College Portrait** on each school. Competition for students and funding among these institutions would be reduced by fostering **mission distinctiveness** and **Centers of Excellence**, focusing on the unique academic and programmatic strengths of each school. The 13 universities will be required to submit a report to the Chancellor at the end of 2008 identifying their Centers of Excellence and establishing goals for the centers, all of which must be approved by the Chancellor in consultation with the director of the Department of Development. Through these missions and centers, the Plan seeks to ensure a breadth of programming strength to drive Ohio’s economic competitiveness in a global economy.

Another feature of the USO will be the **integration of Ohio’s community colleges** into the system with easier transfer to four-year programs (with “dual admission” opportunities), the uniform availability of Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees at all community colleges, and a shared course and program network. In addition, as recommended in the Study Commission report, the Mahoning Valley will realize community college education through the collaboration of Kent State University, Youngstown State University, Jefferson Community College in Steubenville, and adult work force centers. Pursuant to the Study Commission report, YSU has been spearheading this effort.

The Plan also recommends the expansion and permanence of two innovation programs, the **Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program** – which provides scholarships to recruit talented students to STEM studies – and the **Ohio Research Scholars Program** – which provides funding to attract faculty to Centers of Excellence. The Chancellor also expects to establish an “**Excellence Fund**” to solicit public and private contributions for the Chancellor to allocate to particularly worthy or needy Centers of Excellence.



Northeast Ohio Schools

Northeast Ohio has **twenty-six public and private institutions** of higher learning. Particular attention is given to Northeast Ohio’s five public institutions because of their mission differentiation challenges in light of their proximity to each other. The Chancellor, having accepted responsibility for monitoring achievement of the Study Commission’s recommendations, will convene the trustees of the institutions annually to evaluate progress toward the goals of improving quality, mission differentiation, greater collaboration and reduced competition, and increased regional economic contribution. Business leaders will be invited to participate in these discussions.

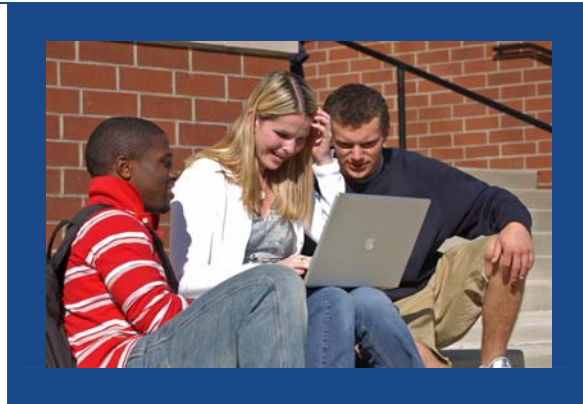
Further, consistent with the Study Commission report, the Chancellor recommends the expansion of the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine into Cleveland, focusing on primary care physicians, and into Akron, focusing on orthopedics research in collaboration with polymer expertise at the University of Akron and medical expertise at Akron hospitals. The Chancellor also recommends adding Cleveland State to NEOUCOM’s participating schools and changing its Board of Trustees to an independent board of nine members appointed by the Governor.

The state’s Plan recognizes the research stature of Case Western Reserve University and its participation in state-funded research programs, and commits to encouraging research centers and STEM programs at **public and private** institutions.



Funding

In consultation with state and university officials, the state funding formula will be revised to support the goals of the Plan. Among the considerations will be a funding system to reward outcomes aligned with Ohio's priorities, to support ongoing collaboration, to foster increased enrollment or degrees awarded, and to encourage academic excellence, all while providing funding predictability and recognizing institutional mission and cost differences. The goal is to build a low-cost system without sacrificing quality, so the out-of-pocket cost to students is among the lowest in the nation. However, the Plan notes that **"raising the quality of all our facilities will clearly take creativity, bold decision-making, and more money, both from the state and the private sector."**



Private Colleges and Universities

In describing a **"partnership"** with private colleges and universities in Ohio, the Plan states that they "play an important role in determining our state's educational attainment levels." The statewide breakdown of the student population is close to 80% public and 20% private, but to meet the enrollment and graduation goals of the Governor, as well as to meet the economic development needs of the state, the private institutions will need to play a strong role.

The Plan indicates that through their association, private institutions have expressed a **"desire to contribute to the public good in the state and to support the goals described..."** For instance, private schools can choose to participate in the USO's **articulation and transfer clearinghouse** that allows students to know whether credits will be accepted at other USO schools. Committing to research funding fairness and the reform of the academic program approval process, the Chancellor likewise hopes for the private institutions to **expand credit transfer arrangements** with public institutions, to partner with community colleges in **"two plus two"** associate to bachelor's degree programs, and to develop **more adult learning** opportunities. The Chancellor also commits to working with the private schools for consensus reforms in **Student Choice Grants**.

Business Collaboration in the NOCHE Model

One of the legislative mandates in House Bill 119 was for the **Chancellor to work with the business community** to help higher education meet the talent needs of business. A **business satisfaction survey** will be issued annually, but the Chancellor squarely places the quality of education in the hands of the faculty who are directly involved in designing and teaching courses, developing content for majors, assessing content mastery, and hiring new teachers.

A "compact" will be entered with the business community to increase the number of students participating in **co-ops and internships**, to increase the number of adult workers receiving **credentialled training**, and to **collaborate in the marketing** of higher education nationally and internationally.

Message on NOCHE's Mission

NOCHE clearly brings public and private institutions and business together in a relevant forum for addressing these issues regionally. With a vibrant internship program, an Industry Roundtable series bringing faculty and business together, a higher education advocacy agenda and an international recruitment project, NOCHE can further key state goals across the Northeast Ohio higher education landscape.



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