

# **Kentucky Board of Education**

## **August 9, 2012**

### **Report from the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education**

#### **Postsecondary accountability report shows gains in degrees, credentials**

The Council recently released its state-level 2010-11 accountability report. The report shows substantial gains in degrees and credentials conferred, especially at the undergraduate level. GEDs, associate and graduate-level degrees are on track to meet state targets by 2014, and bachelor degrees are making progress.

The accountability report measures progress toward meeting House Bill 1 (1997) goals and the state's strategic agenda for postsecondary and adult education. The report measures 31 performance targets in the following four priority areas: college readiness; student success; research, economic and community development; and efficiency and innovation.

The extensive report provides transparency and accountability to guide progress moving forward.

The state targets reflect the level of progress needed to meet HB 1 goals, especially parity with the nation in educational attainment and quality of life. Benchmarking against other states helped guide the target-setting process, as well as a report issued last September by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).

#### **Report highlights:**

- Some progress was made in the college readiness focus area, although less than would be needed to meet the aggressive 2015 goals established in Senate Bill 1 (2009). Of particular concern is the need to improve new teacher excellence, given the key role higher education plays in training P-12 educators. Adult education saw a strong increase in the number of GED graduates and is well on its way to reaching its 2015 target.
- Graduation rates ticked upward, but some achievement gaps widened. The financial support necessary for student success eroded at the state level, with declines in state appropriations and in the availability of need-based financial aid. Fortunately, federal investment in the Pell grant program provided stability in the net direct cost of education for low-income students.
- Key measures of higher education's impact on economic and community development – the educational attainment of young adults and completions in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and health – both improved. However, research and development were flat, largely in response to decreases in federal research expenditures.
- Instruction at Kentucky's institutions of higher learning continues to innovate, as seen in the strong growth of online learning. Officials are committed to improving how efficiency, an important dimension in postsecondary education, is measured and reported.

The report is available on the CPE website at <http://www.cpe.ky.gov/planning/>.

### **Adult-learner Project Graduate wins major national award**

The Council is pleased to announce that Project Graduate has won a major national award from Noel-Levitz for developing one of the “most successful, state-of-the-art retention programs in use today.”

Project Graduate is Kentucky’s collaborative effort with public universities to recruit, retain and graduate former students with 80 or more credit hours but no bachelor’s degree. The program offers a smooth transition and high-touch student services and incentives for busy, working adults who want to complete their degree.

“Each year these awards recognize the most successful, state-of-the-art retention programs in use today,” said Tim Culver, vice president, Noel-Levitz. “This year’s honorees have made great strides in student retention, and we are pleased to recognize them for these efforts. The winners demonstrated measurable institutional outcomes, originality and creativity, as well as excellent use of resources and adaptability for use at other institutions.”

Project Graduate was launched by campuses in the spring term of 2008. As of spring 2011, 605 former students had earned their bachelor’s degrees through the program, and another 651 adults were enrolled in fall 2011.

For more information, visit <http://www.knowhow2goky.org/pg/index.php>.

### **Council on Postsecondary Education sets tuition**

The Council approved 2012-13 tuition and mandatory fee proposals for the state’s public colleges and universities at its meeting June 21st in Frankfort.

The rate increases for undergraduate, in-state students include: Kentucky Community and Technical College System, 3.7 percent; Eastern Kentucky University, 5.2 percent; Kentucky State University, 5 percent; Morehead State University, 5 percent; Murray State University, 4 percent; University of Kentucky, 6 percent; University of Louisville, 6 percent; and Western Kentucky University, 4.9 percent. The Council approved Northern Kentucky University’s tuition and fee schedule in April.

State funding cuts to higher education over several years are the principal force driving the tuition increases. The new tuition revenue, estimated at \$45.1 million, will help offset the recent \$62.6 million of cuts contained in the 2012 budget bill (HB 265). Institutions are also projecting a \$62.1 million increase in institutional fixed costs.

Council and campus officials worked to keep tuition increases as low as possible for students even with the cuts in state funding, while balancing campus priorities to maintain quality programs and services to students during consecutive years of state funding cuts.

The tuition action also included non-resident undergraduate floor rates of two times the resident rate and some requested exceptions, as well as graduate rates for in-state and out-of-state students.

## **Institutional Diversity Plans**

The institutions will conduct their first evaluation of their Institutional Diversity Plans in fall 2012, to assess annual progress towards the goals and objectives they identified in their plans.

The institutional plans were developed in response to the Statewide Diversity Policy that focuses on four areas:

- Student Body Diversity
- Student Success/Closing the Achievement Gap
- Workforce Diversity
- Campus Environment

## **Exomedicine Institute Announces Formation of International Exomedicine Research Groups**

The Exomedicine Institute announced this spring the formation of a series of international exomedicine research groups to establish medical research and commercialization targets in ten initial disease and health areas including, infectious diseases, Alzheimer's, oncology, neurology, aging, stem cells, diabetes, immunology/autoimmune disorders, regenerative medicine and cardiology.

The Institute is a newly formed enterprise to pursue work in the emerging field of exomedicine, defined as the research and development of medical solutions in the microgravity environment of space.

Each group will be comprised of three experts in the health area of focus and will spend four to six months developing a strategic white paper detailing areas of high promise, potential impact and commercialization in each respective field. The purpose is to target research investigations to be conducted on the U.S. National Lab aboard the International Space Station (ISS)...that have the highest potential to show promising results in therapies and medical treatments on Earth. The first papers are expected in the summer of 2012.

The Institute is a direct result of the engineering programs' outreach, research and innovation of the Kentucky Space Program. Out-of-state postsecondary institutions from Florida to Rome are assuming leadership roles with researchers engaged in development of International Space Station studies utilizing the cube laboratories developed by Kentucky students and faculty.

## **Assessment Academies Host Professional Development**

The Kentucky Assessment Academies, initially launched as part of Senate Bill 1, have held professional development activities at Northern Kentucky University and Morehead State University during the past three months. These offerings were designed to cultivate partnerships between postsecondary and P-12 education, involving faculty and administrators from various roles across districts and institutions. Furthermore, a partnership between St. Catharine College, Elizabethtown Community and Technical College, and Washington County Schools launched in June 2012 to provide further understanding and implementation of College Readiness and Common Core Standards in Kentucky.