

2017  
Progress  
Report



Utah: A State of Opportunity

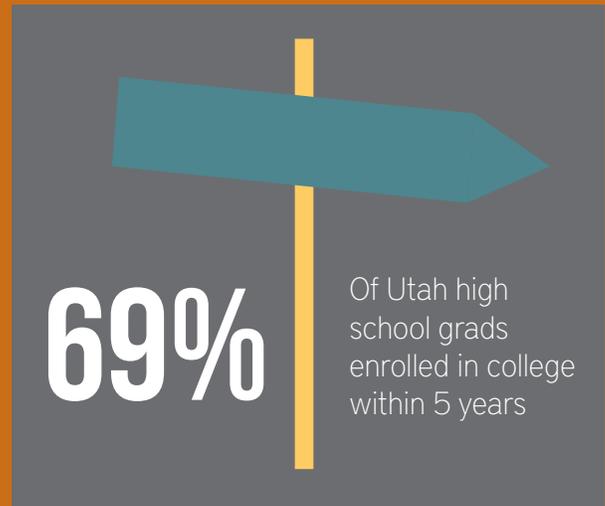
Utah State Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2025

# Utah System of Higher Education FACTS AT A GLANCE

## AFFORDABLE PARTICIPATION



8 out of 10 Utah high school graduates who enroll in college, enroll in a USHE institution



69%

Of Utah high school grads enrolled in college within 5 years



Fall 2016 enrollment (123,398 FTE)



Enrollment grew 2.78% in 2015-16



11%

Latino enrollment growth since 2015

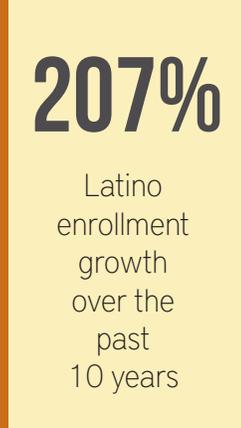


USHE expects 52,000 additional students (headcount) in the next 10 years



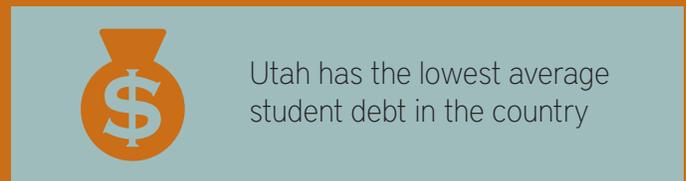
4<sup>TH</sup>  
LOWEST TUITION

At Utah's public universities, compared to the nation



207%

Latino enrollment growth over the past 10 years



Utah has the lowest average student debt in the country



The Utah Educational Savings Plan received a Morningstar® rating of Gold for the 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive year

## TIMELY COMPLETION

**33,794**

Degrees & certificates awarded in 2015-16

**65%**

Of USHE students start on their math pathway during their first year in college

Only 30% of first-time freshmen take 30 credits over 3 semesters, the amount needed to graduate on time



8% of USHE students earned college-level math credit in high school through concurrent enrollment



**26**

Awards per 100 FTE

**43%**

of first-time freshmen graduated within 150% of time

**51%**

of first-time freshmen graduated within 200% of time



## INNOVATIVE DISCOVERY

Provides 70% of all career and technical education (CTE) in Utah



USHE institutions are among the most efficient in the country, ranking 45<sup>th</sup> in overall educational revenues per FTE



**\$688M**

In research and grant funding (5% increase over 2015)

**100+**

New certificates as a result of direct collaboration with industry

# Introduction

As Utah's public institutions enroll the vast majority of Utah high school graduates, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) is the primary workforce pipeline in the state. USHE's ability to encourage students to participate in higher education and graduate with a meaningful credential is key to Utah's prosperity.

But over the next ten years, this pipeline will face significant issues: USHE institutions are expecting over 52,000 new students by 2025, and will need to grow capacity academically, physically, and virtually to keep pace. In addition, the educational attainment of Utahns needs to increase to meet the workforce demand of the future.

*"USHE's ability to encourage students to participate in higher education and graduate with a meaningful credential is key to Utah's prosperity."*

Seeking to proactively address these issues, the Board of Regents adopted a ten-year strategic plan in January 2016, focusing on three key objectives: Affordable Participation, Timely Completion, and Innovative Discovery. Each objective has associated statewide goals and metrics to measure progress.

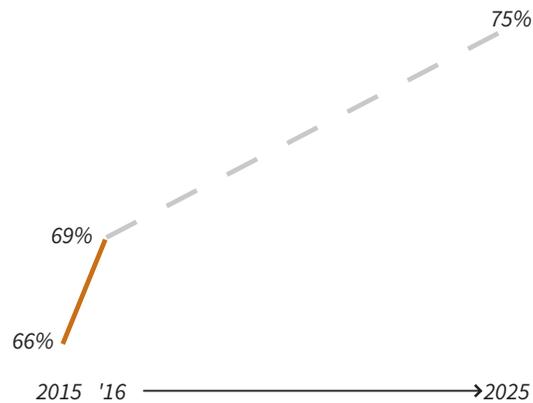
Throughout 2016, the Board of Regents laid the framework for specific initiatives, programs, and collaborations to prioritize to ensure the three objectives were addressed. There are numerous efforts underway at all USHE institutions in support of these objectives; the focus here is on those efforts directly by the Commissioner's Office to advance the Board's priorities. The following annual update highlights progress made on these objectives, and what next steps the Commissioner's Office—in close partnership with USHE institutions—will take to achieve further progress.

# Affordable Participation

GOAL: Increase the number of Utahns who decide to access, are prepared for, and succeed in higher education.

METRIC: Increase the percentage of Utah high school graduates enrolling in college within five years to 75% by 2024-25.

PROGRESS:



## *Communicate college-readiness standards.*

In 2015, the outreach teams of the Commissioner's Office, the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA), and concurrent enrollment were consolidated into a single outreach effort: StepUp to Higher Education. Focus groups consisting of students, parents, and high school counselors were conducted in 2016 regarding StepUpUtah.com and associated outreach materials, and updates are underway to improve effectiveness and reach to high school students and parents regarding college readiness.

USHE has established partnerships with the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) and UtahFutures specifically to clarify information on college preparation, avoid duplication of efforts, and better reach the intended audiences of students, parents, and counselors. As a reflection of those partnerships, USBE has asked each high school create a single counseling center webpage that includes a direct link to StepUpUtah.com, providing students and parents with easy access to college readiness information.

In an effort to initiate college conversations earlier so students can better prepare for college, the Commissioner's Office and institutional recruiters have worked with Utah high schools to move the College Tour to the junior year of high school, instead of the senior year. This change will begin in Spring 2017.

Utah Scholars, an eighth-grade college readiness program, has been redesigned to emphasize a broad, grade-by-grade checklist through high school graduation rather than focusing primarily on the Regents' Scholarship Core Curriculum. These changes make the program more accessible for all students.

NEXT STEPS:

- Identify institutions already successfully implementing structured enrollment, and develop a recommended set of best practices for all open admissions institutions to adopt.
- Explore the feasibility of having an institutional college readiness coach in every Utah high school.

***Involve principals, superintendents, and the larger K-12 community more in college readiness efforts.***

In Fall 2016, the Commissioner's Office provided its second-annual High School Feedback Report to school district superintendents, showing the college performance of their graduates who enrolled in a USHE institution. In addition, a customized report was sent directly to every high school principal in the state.

NEXT STEPS:

- Establish MOUs with 60% of high school principals in 2017 to combine current successful outreach programming—such as College Application Week, FAFSA Completion events, data sharing agreements, and the College Tour—into one yearlong college preparation experience for that school.
- Offer toolkits to principals to encourage a college-going culture in schools, which include information on various college readiness programs and events.
- Launch outreach to local K-12 education stakeholders (school boards, community councils, PTAs, PTOs, etc.) to help increase understanding of college readiness.

***Address student financial need.***

The Regents' Scholarship and the New Century Scholarship have been successful programs; however, the Commissioner's Office is reviewing them to answer questions regarding their ongoing financial sustainability, duplication with institutional aid resources, and ability to assist students who cannot otherwise afford college.

NEXT STEPS:

- Examine Regents' tuition policies to identify potential changes in support of the Regents' strategic objectives.
- Work with USHE institutions to examine the use of institutional student aid and how tuition waivers are utilized.
- Identify possible improvements to the Regents' Scholarship and New Century Scholarship to enhance sustainability, focus on assisting college-ready students and partnering more closely with USHE institutions.

*Make admissions, enrollment, and other college entry services easier to navigate.*

Utah College Application Week gives high school seniors the opportunity to apply to college during the school day. In 2016, this program partnered with a record 117 high schools across the state, supporting over 20,000 high school seniors as they completed their college application during the month of November.

USHE received legislative approval to establish an online statewide participation enrollment form for concurrent enrollment that will help standardize participation. In addition, this process will better inform students of the advantages that earning college credit in high school provides through intrusive StepUp to Higher Education messaging on topics such as taking the right college-level courses in high school.

NEXT STEPS:

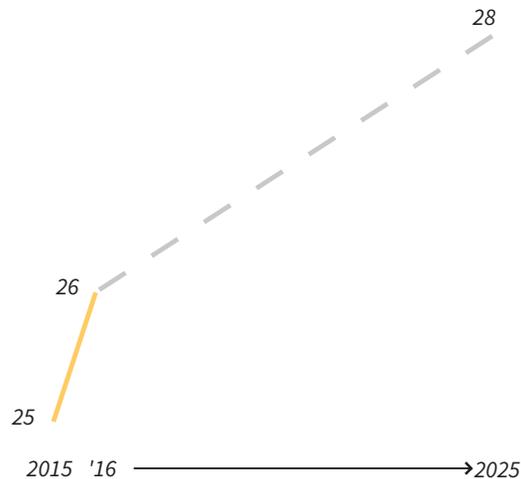
- Work with USBE to utilize electronic high school transcript information in USHE admissions and scholarship processes.

# Timely Completion

GOAL: Increase the percentage of students who persist in and graduate from higher education.

METRIC: Increase degree productivity to 28 awards per 100 FTE by 2024-25.

PROGRESS:



## *Help students stay on-track to graduation.*

Forty-three percent of USHE students graduate within 150% of time (six years for a bachelor's degree, three years for an associate). When extended to 200% of time (eight years for a bachelor's degree, four years for an associate), about half of USHE students have graduated. Students save time, tuition costs, and forgone wages by graduating on time.

In Fall 2016, "15 to Finish" messaging was revised to "30 in 3 Semesters" to encourage part-time students to stay on track to graduate on time and to take advantage of year-round options, including the summer semester. Only about 30% of USHE first-time freshmen are currently taking at least 30 credits in three semesters.

NEXT STEPS:

- Increase awareness of "30 in 3 Semesters" program.
- Analyze the rates of students who do not finish, who fail, withdraw, or earn an 'Incomplete' (DFWI) in the most significant (i.e., largest enrollment or gateway) courses. Work with institutions to re-examine the structure and supports provided within those courses to help students stay on track towards graduation.
- Expand the degree mapping project completed in 2015 to:
  1. Ensure transferability of credit.
  2. Assist part-time students.

3. Educate advisors about best practices for completion, especially regarding quantitative literacy.
  4. Encourage students to enroll in nine credits in their area of study during their first year.
- Work with institutions to develop and implement co-requisite remedial education and more effective remedial trajectories, with a focus on math.
  - Foster institutional partnerships to increase stackable credentials toward an associate or a bachelor's degree.

***Seek consistent implementation of Exploratory Pathways statewide, including associated Quantitative Literacy requirements.***

Too often math remains an obstacle to graduation. Taking and passing the appropriate math course early in college is crucial to student success. In 2016, about 65% of USHE students took math during their first year. The Commissioner's Office is working with USHE institutions to evaluate the general education Quantitative Literacy (math) requirements associated with specific majors in order to enhance student completion and ensure that math requirements are aligned with students' career plans.

*65% of USHE students took math during their first year in college.*

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Work with USHE institutions and K-12 to align Exploratory Pathways statewide, including their quantitative literacy requirement.
- Work with USBE/K-12 counselors to incorporate Exploratory Pathways content in working with K-12 students and their parents.

***Ensure student safety and support.***

Student safety and health issues are a growing concern for higher ed institutions nationwide. The need for counseling services has doubled—even tripled—at USHE campuses, and it is a significant challenge for institutions to keep up with the demand for services, such that it is impacting students' abilities to complete certificates and degrees.

Addressing campus sexual assault, harassment, and violence is a top priority for the Board of Regents and USHE institutions, and is now being incorporated into Regents' policy.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Convene the Regents' mental health working group comprised of a variety of higher education and professional stakeholders to address the issue.
- Work with institutions in implementing key aspects of Title IX and campus sexual assault policies, including training for staff and students, identification of best practices, a statewide climate survey, MOUs with local law enforcement, and better coordination statewide.

# Innovative Discovery

GOAL: Encourage innovation as a core value at each USHE institution, in keeping with its distinct mission.

METRIC: Regularly assess student involvement in high impact learning practices.

## ***Encourage, implement, and measure high impact practices at USHE institutions.***

The Commissioner's Office is currently working with USHE's Chief Academic Officers and the General Education Task Force to identify high impact practices in support of their institutional missions, and is finding ways to help Chief Academic Officers provide training for faculty on the importance and implementation of these teaching experiences.

### NEXT STEPS:

- Work with USHE institutions to implement innovative best practices in academic scheduling to enhance student retention and completion.
- Establish benchmark and USHE-wide 2025 goal for high impact practices by the end of 2017.
- The Commissioner's Office will develop strategies to highlight the impact of over \$688 million in research and grant funding to Utah's economy and higher education quality.

## Investing in the Strategic Objectives

The Board of Regents recognizes that an additional ongoing investment in both operating and capital budgets will be necessary in order to achieve the goals established in its plan.

Between 2015 and 2025, the Board projected that USHE will need an additional annual average increase of 5% in its operating budget to fund new enrollment growth and student support, compensation, operation and maintenance of facilities, program development, and information technology needs. This investment would be the result of a combination of tax fund increases, new student growth, and tuition rate adjustments.

*5% average  
annual  
increase in  
operating  
budget needed*

Over the past two years, the USHE operating budget has increased approximately \$130.7 million (an average annual increase of 4.6% compared to 2015), falling slightly behind the projected need.

The Board also projected that an additional \$1.5 billion in capital investment over the next years (an average of \$150.5 million per year) will be necessary to support the USHE capital needs related both to addition of new facilities as well as replacement of aging buildings and infrastructure in the system.

The Utah System of Higher Education has received a total of \$189.9 million from the Legislature to support capital development projects advanced during the last two legislative sessions.

### Next Steps:

- The Commissioner's Office and institutions will continue to advocate for the unified budget request, system priorities, and capital development projects advanced by the Board of Regents with the Governor, State Legislature and all other key stakeholders in order to meet anticipated investment objectives of this plan.

