

Governor's Advisory Commission on Postsecondary Education: RECOMMENDATIONS BRIEF

November 14, 2012



Pennsylvania enjoys a **vibrant, diverse, and high quality** postsecondary education system with a rich variety of education choices that employs our residents, educates our workforce and raises our reputation worldwide. The strength of this system is a **competitive advantage** of our Commonwealth.

THE GOVERNOR'S CHARGE

The Governor has called on the Commission to consider recommendations to support:

- 1 The development and maintenance of a robust and sustainable postsecondary education system that meets workforce needs and provides for educational options for students;
- 2 The accessibility and affordability of postsecondary education for all students;
- 3 Governance and financial structures that would enhance the postsecondary education system in Pennsylvania; and
- 4 Opportunities for increased collaboration among academia, private sector and government.

BY THE NUMBERS: THE SYSTEM

402

Public and private postsecondary institutions (for-profit and not-for-profit credential granting institutions)

143,766

Bachelor Degrees, Associates Degrees and Certifications earned in Pennsylvania in 2010-11

279

Private licensed schools in Pennsylvania

THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Together as representatives of postsecondary, business, K-12 education and student leaders, the Commission provides these 19 recommendations:

The Commission believes postsecondary education should be **driven by and responsive to Pennsylvania's current and future learners.** We believe the recommendations will further **promote innovation** and help postsecondary learning become more accessible and affordable with outcome-based results to **enhance the economic vitality** of our Commonwealth.

Putting Consumers in the Driver's Seat: Affirming Lifelong Learning

- 1.1 Develop a "passport for learning" that will transform postsecondary education into a learner-based, consumer-driven system through a dynamic online platform.
- 1.2 Ensure all K-12 students and the future adult workforce have access to practical, contemporary and age-appropriate educational and career planning resources, including financial literacy education, to build students' foundation for making informed educational, career and financial decisions.
- 1.3 Expand high-quality personal financial literacy education Pennsylvania's schools.
- 1.4 Encourage the growth of dual enrollment programs with priority given to fields such as technical and STEM education, health care, manufacturing and other high-priority occupations.
- 1.5 Support academically underprepared students by improving access to high quality remediation programs, including GED preparation programs, through early identification and instituting outcomes-based best practices.
- 1.6 Support students' ability to save time and money by minimizing seat time and earning postsecondary credits based on competencies, including current knowledge and skills.

Postsecondary Adapts to Change: Increasing Accessibility, Affordability, and Usability

- 2.1 Serve as a national role model for developing innovative solutions to the pressing challenge of constraining the growth of tuition rates, fees and costs to students.
- 2.2 Minimize duplication of services, increase reach to geographically underserved areas and further the use of best practices by reviewing and implementing collaborative opportunities between all sectors of postsecondary education, with a specific focus on community colleges and career and technical centers.
- 2.3 Increase student access through PHEAA by delivering more opportunities to rural and/or educationally underserved communities, identifying gaps to better support veterans, and expanding distance education.
- 2.4 Increase the percent of Pennsylvanians served by postsecondary education with a focus on those populations who have had significantly lower rates of credential and degree attainment.

Postsecondary Adapts to Change: Building Upon the Diversity and Richness of the System

- 3.1 Establish a long term finance and accountability funding model based on performance

by all institutions in the postsecondary system that receive annual public funds through PDE or PHEAA.

- 3.2 Renovate and modernize existing instructional facilities for the purpose of academic improvement, advancing the capacity of research institutions, enrollment growth and degree completion for students in STEM programs and supporting workforce development initiatives.
- 3.3 Perform an assessment of postsecondary delivery at the program, institutional and sector levels that outlines opportunities and recommendations for reform including, but not limited to, consolidation and elimination of programs and/or institutions with a focus on increasing geographic access, securing economies of scale, reducing duplication of program delivery and securing the efficient use of Commonwealth resources.
- 3.4 Promote efficiency through the reduction and/or elimination of state and federal regulatory barriers that create unnecessary institutional burdens and contribute to costs for our citizens and learners.

Investing In Innovation: Enhancing Pennsylvania's Economic Vitality and the Ability to Compete Globally

- 4.1 Create a consortium of research institutions to deliver an Innovation Agenda to the Governor, which guides these institutions, policymakers,

business leadership and venture capitalists on a shared and cohesive plan for contribution to economic growth that furthers Pennsylvania's capacity to compete on a national and international stage.

- 4.2 Focus and encourage intensive and deliberate collaboration between business, postsecondary education and government on strategies to fuel Pennsylvania's economic progress such as jointly meeting the training needs of business employees; providing degrees, certifications and/or credits toward degree for partnership programs; and expanding Keystone Innovation and Opportunity Zones to encourage corporations to locate on or near higher education campuses.
- 4.3 Advocate for an increased level of commitment from the state, business community and K-20 education sector for STEM education.
- 4.4 Ensure students, job seekers, institutions and employers have access to user-friendly, real-time labor market and postsecondary data for such purposes as tracking postsecondary graduates and programs as well as assisting with career counseling, job forecasting, job placement and overall more informed decision-making.
- 4.5 Create or utilize the established committee structure within the Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board to foster connections between the business sector and the K-20 education continuum.

BY THE NUMBERS: THE PROCESS

16

Public field meetings held across the commonwealth to solicit feedback.

58

Invited expert speakers who participated in public meetings

31

Commissioners appointed by the Governor to the Advisory Commission on Postsecondary Education

THE COMMISSION

For a copy of the full report, go to www.pahigheredcommission.com

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Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce

Don Block
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council

Frank Britt
Penn Foster

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National Federation of Independent Businesses

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Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education

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Temple University

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