

The background of the slide features a city skyline at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and light blue. In the foreground, a river flows from the bottom right towards the center, with a long bridge crossing it. The bridge has a series of concrete pillars. The city buildings are silhouetted against the bright sky, with some windows glowing. The overall scene is a mix of urban and natural elements.

# Higher Education Six-Year Planning

OpSix summary of key takeaways and policy considerations

OCTOBER 2023

# Context

**These materials summarize findings from the 2023 biennial six-year higher education planning process outlined in the Code of VA**

- Biennial process led by “OpSix” group comprised of the Secretaries of Education & Finance, Directors from DPB and SCHEV, and Staff Directors from House & Senate Appropriations
- Six-year planning process has several goals:
  - Give OpSix greater and more consistent visibility on institutional contexts and budget requests in advance of legislative session
  - Facilitate ongoing dialogue on key strategic topics between OpSix and institutions
  - Enable OpSix to look across institutions and identify statewide opportunities and challenges

**This year’s process focused on developing a deep, data-driven, understanding of the current state of public higher education in VA across three broad levers**

- Enrollment volume and composition: adapting to shifts in the student pipeline and addressing implications for IHE<sup>1</sup> operations
- Student & labor market needs: innovating to prepare students for success and meet VA's evolving labor market needs
- Financial effectiveness & sustainability: improving cost effectiveness to maximize the ROI of students and taxpayers

**As part of this year's process, OpSix, with the support of a team from Boston Consulting Group, spent 6 months examining the health, performance, and trajectories of VA's 17 public higher education institutions through:**

- Analysis of how COVA is situated in the context of higher ed trends across the US
- Identification, compilation, and review of ~30 sets of key metrics across each institution and COVA as a whole
- Review of six-year plans submitted by each IHE including written responses to ~30 targeted questions, financial projections, and expected budget requests
- Analysis of recent enrollment projections relative to prior trajectories & demographic trends
- Individual 2-hour meetings with each IHE's leadership teams to better understand their strategies and deep dive into key topics
- Follow-up questions and responses for each institution to address any open items identified by OpSix

**This document, which was prepared by BCG in consultation with OpSix members, summarizes OpSix’s collective key takeaways on the current state of public higher education in VA, reasons for optimism, and opportunities for improvement to inform go-forward focus areas for policymakers and education leaders**

# Executive summary (I/II)

## There are many reasons to be optimistic about the future of public higher education in VA:

- A successful, decentralized ecosystem comprised of a wide range of institutions with unique missions, identities, and populations
- Strong overall completion rates and post-completion outcomes, relative to rest of US
  - Near-universal improvements in retention and graduation rates; VA has 3<sup>rd</sup> best overall 6-year graduation rate from public 4-year IHE<sup>1</sup>s nationwide (and rising)
  - Strong post-graduation wage outcomes, with graduates' earnings 10-years after workforce entry higher than national average
- Early signs of recovery from COVID-era and current macro challenges
  - Estimated 1.5% increase in Fall 2023 enrollment vs. Fall 2022
  - Post-graduation wages increasing at higher than the rate of inflation
- Strong data assets at state level (e.g., from SCHEV, VOEE) to guide strategic discussions
- Institutional interest and commitment to tackling key state priorities
  - IHEs focusing on career readiness, mental health, workforce-aligned programs
  - Productive collaborations between some IHEs on pathways / admissions, programs, workforce development, and more

## At the same time, VA's public higher education institutions face challenges and opportunities across all categories of institutional health:

- Enrollment: 11 of 17 IHEs saw enrollment fall from 2013-23, by 3-37%; most IHEs also saw falling selectivity / yield, likely to be exacerbated by demographic trends
- Affordability: average cost of attendance for selective and non-selective 4-year IHEs grew by 2.7% and 3.2% annually, respectively, vs. US avg. of 2.3% and 2.6%, from 2012-21
- Completion: though overall retention and graduation rates are relatively high / stable, completion gaps remain: five of 17 IHEs have six-year graduation rates below 60%; students of color, lower-income / Pell-eligible students have lower avg. completion rates
- Resource effectiveness: total E&G cost per student grew by 4.9% annually from 2012-22; major driver was institutional / admin spend per student that grew at 6.7% in same period

# Executive summary (II/II)

**To continue to be successful in an ever-changing, increasingly challenging landscape, COVA and its institutions will need to address a number of critical statewide priorities:**

- Partnering more intentionally across K-12, 2-year, and 4-year IHEs to improve awareness and access to pathways that maximize postsecondary outcomes
- Managing enrollment and enhancing differentiation in an increasingly competitive market at both the IHE and state level
- Taking a student-centered, transparent approach to affordability, discounting, & aid
- Improving completion via data-driven, evidence-based interventions and strong execution
- Developing a comprehensive and coordinated approach to maximize post-completion outcomes and fill labor market needs
- Containing the cost of college while improving outcomes by increasing resource effectiveness via pursuit of cross-IHE shared services and introduction of more structured program evaluation processes
- Making data more transparent to all audiences (policymakers, IHEs, students & families, etc.) to drive better decision making, including filling key data gaps across enrollment, completion, and post-completion
- Being more targeted with state funding to better drive key priorities, incentivize desired actions, support students, and address critical institutional needs
- Proactively supporting institutions facing acute challenges through different support mechanisms

**By deeply understanding the full set of topics, drawing from best practices from other states, leveraging current strengths, and working together across the ecosystem, VA can achieve even greater results and position itself as a higher education leader for years to come**



Virginia aspires to be the best state for postsecondary education



Giving all students the **transformational benefits of a postsecondary education**, including the knowledge and preparation to excel in the economy of the future



Serving as an **engine that promotes the social, cultural, and economic well-being** of individuals, families, and communities across the Commonwealth

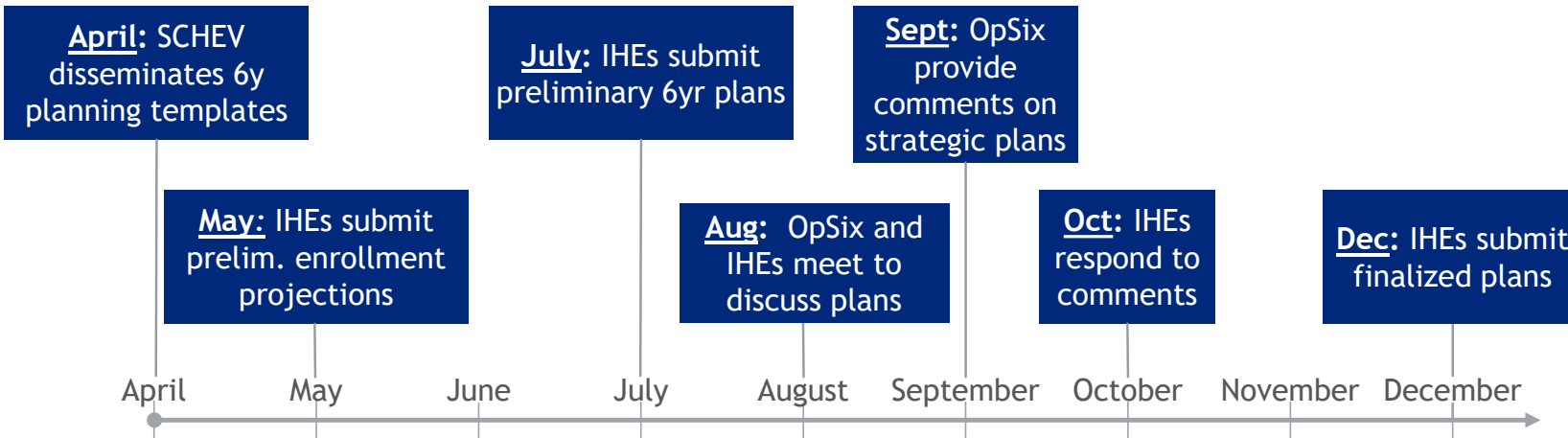


Providing a **diverse set of high-quality institutions that effectively meet student needs** while serving as responsible stewards of student & taxpayer dollars

# Biennial higher ed six-year planning process established in VA Code in 2005; serves as key input to General Assembly's budget process

**6-year planning process**  
(for odd-numbered years)

*IHE = Institution of Higher Education*  
17 public IHEs in VA must submit plans



**OpSix Members:**

- Secretary of Finance
- Secretary of Education
- Director of Dept of Planning & Budget
- Director of State Council of Higher Ed
- Staff Director of House Appropriations
- Staff Director of Senate Finance & Appropriations

## Process feeds into or runs parallel to related processes, including:

- State appropriations for Educational & General Services (E&G) funding
- State appropriations for capital outlays
- Institutional performance standards (~\$15M per \$23.1-206)
- Approvals of new academic programs, mission statements
- Statewide strategic planning
- Institution strategic planning
- External program administration (e.g., discounted tuition via Academic Common Market)

*(non-exhaustive)*

# To meet the needs of students, employers, and COVA, this year's planning process focused on three "levers"



## ENROLLMENT "VOLUME" & COMPOSITION

Adapting to shifts in student pipeline in design and operations of IHEs and programs



## STUDENT & MARKET NEEDS

Continuing to innovate on how to best prepare students for success and meet VA's evolving labor market needs



## FINANCIAL EFFECTIVENESS & SUSTAINABILITY

Improving cost effectiveness to ensure both tuition payers and taxpayers are getting the greatest possible ROI

## OPERATING NORMS

**Using data** to be honest about what needs to change and to measure progress

**Working together** across institutional boundaries for the betterment of the Commonwealth

**Being strategic** in choosing where to focus and how to move forward



# Findings were informed by a wide range of data sources and stakeholder perspectives



## Trends analysis

- **Analysis of key metrics** across all 17 of the institutions
- **Development of 50+ page data fact packs** for each of the 17 institutions to display trends along a common set of key metrics over the past 10 years, using existing data from SCHEV, DPB, and VOOE
- **Examination of national and regional trends** across enrollment, affordability, completion, post-completion outcomes to build common context / assumptions for institution performance



## Institution narratives and projections

- **Narrative submissions by each institution** in response to 30+ targeted questions on topics of strategic focus, including detailed policy & budget requests / recommendations
- **Collection and analysis of detailed enrollment and financial projections**, as well as expected budget requests
- **Summary and analysis of key metrics across all IHE plan submissions**



## Institution/OpSix conversations

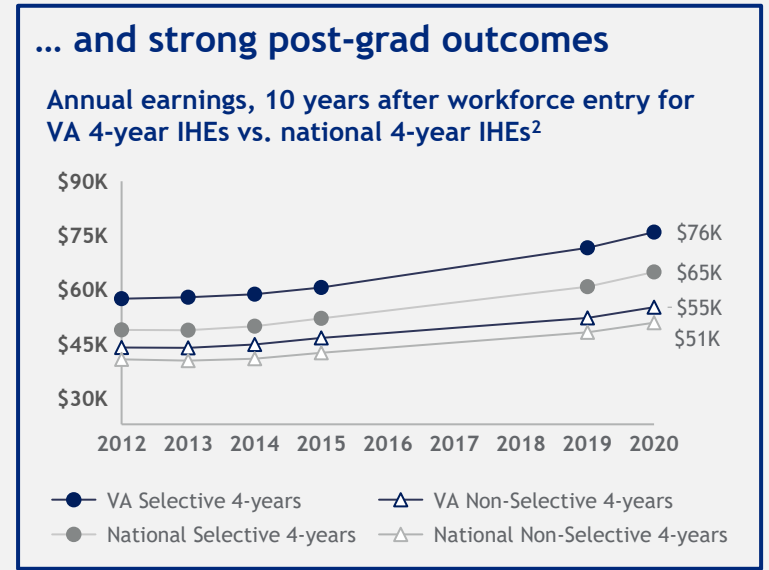
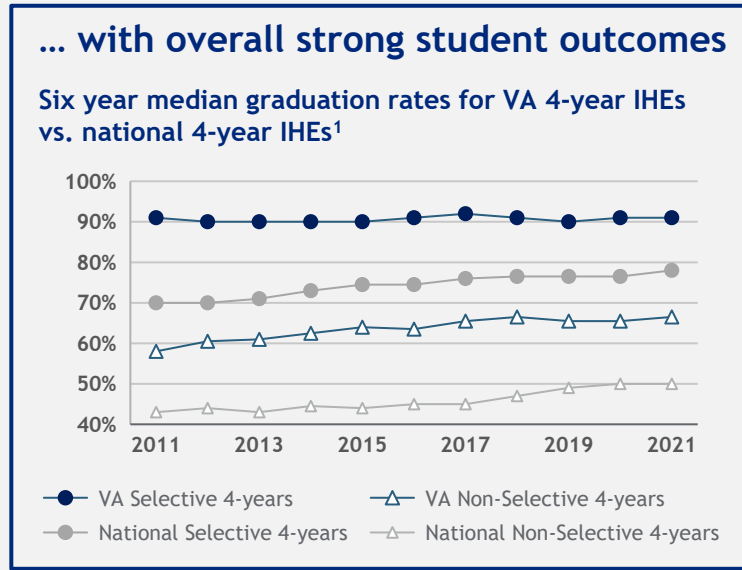
- **Multiple listening sessions with** presidents, provosts, finance officers, and board members across all 17 IHEs
- **OpSix & IHE 2-hour meetings with leadership from each institution**, covering individualized priority strategic topics
- Individual and group **reflection discussions / interviews with OpSix members** and their teams



# Reasons for optimism (I/II) | Diverse set of IHEs make COVA's public higher ed ecosystem among the strongest in the US

**Broad set of public IHEs across VA ...**

- 3** selective 4-year institutions
  - VT
  - UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
  - W&M
- 12** non-selective 4-year institutions
  - GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
  - JMU
  - ODU
  - VCU
  - NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY
  - CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY
  - VSU
  - U of MW
  - UVA WISE
  - RADFORD UNIVERSITY
  - RU
- 24** 2-year institutions
  - Virginia's Community Colleges



**Resulting in national recognition as a top state for higher ed**

smartasset™ 2022 Best States for Higher Education<sup>3</sup>

**#2**  
overall ranking

**#7**  
student-faculty ratio

**#1**  
undergrad grad rate

**#20**  
in-state attendance

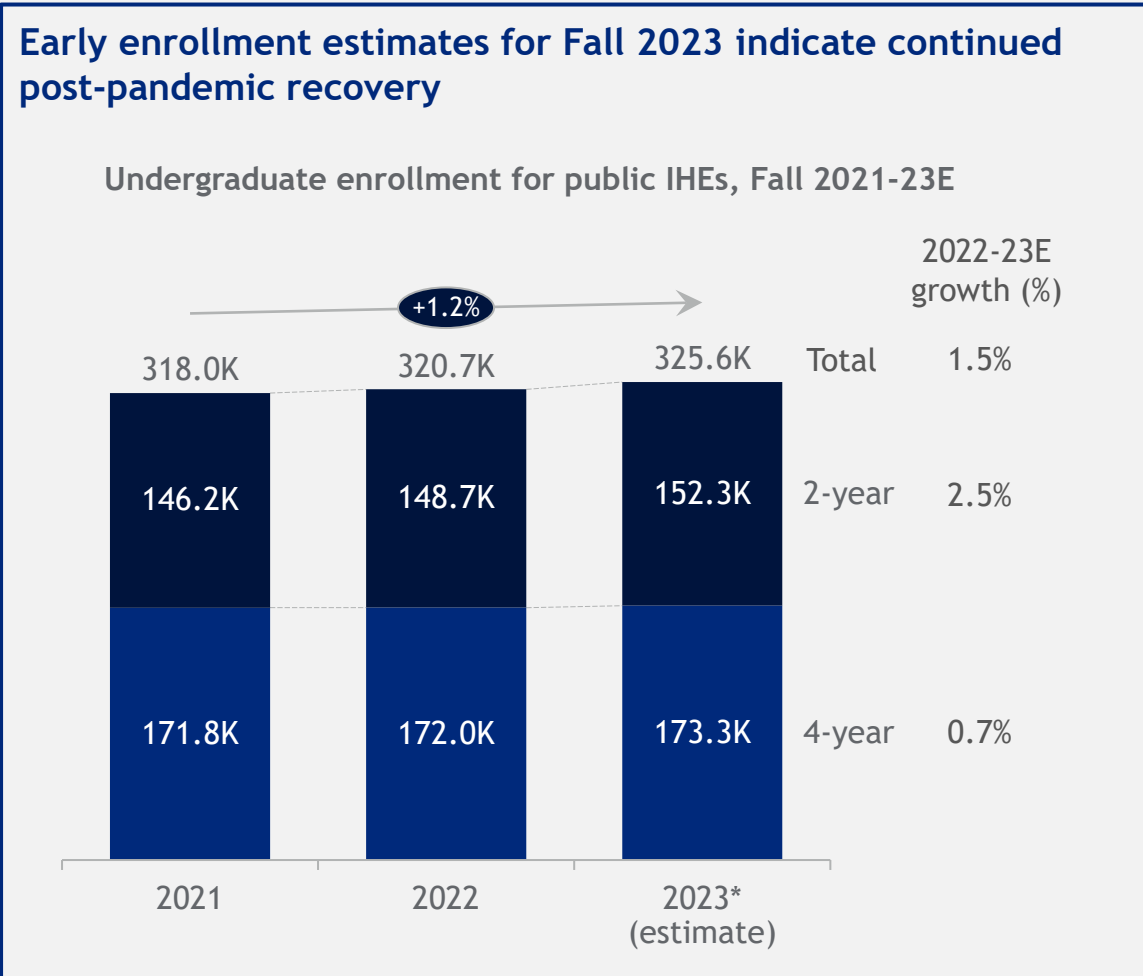
US News & World Report 2024 Best Colleges Ranking

**3**  
public universities in top 100 nationally (UVA, VT, W&M); 6 in top 150

**4**  
public universities in top 100 Southern regional universities (CNU, LU, VSU, NSU)







1. Median graduation rates across applicable IHEs based on IPEDS data. 2. Figures reflect earnings of working graduates 10 years after workforce entry, excluding graduates who are currently enrolled as students; figures shown are the average of each category's institutions' reported median earnings. Due to data constraints, figures unavailable 2016, 2017, and 2018; most recent available data are 2020. 3. Subscores based on IPEDS data; average net price and 20-year ROI metrics not shown. Source: IPEDS; College Scorecard; U.S. Census Bureau; BCG analysis

# Reasons for optimism (II/II) | IHEs show resilience in difficult macro environment, interest in tackling VA priorities



**Many IHEs are focusing on COVA higher ed priorities**

# of IHEs selecting as one of top 3-5 strategic priorities

	<b>Career readiness / workforce</b> Via new programs, partnerships, work experience initiatives, etc.	<b>15 of 17</b>
	<b>Affordability &amp; accessibility</b> Via higher cost efficiency, affordable pathways (e.g., online), aid expansion, etc.	<b>8 of 17</b>
	<b>Cost efficiency / financial sustainability</b> Via cost containment, greater focus on operational efficiency	<b>6 of 17</b>
	<b>Enrollment</b> Via efforts to grow applicant funnel across different demographics	<b>6 of 17</b>
	<b>Student mental health</b> Via support for counseling services, mental health-related programs, etc.	<b>5 of 17</b>
	<b>Pathways</b> Via dual enrollment options, collaboration between IHEs, etc.	<b>4 of 17</b>

**Six priorities above account for ~60% of all priorities named in strategic narratives**

# VA IHEs also face real challenges, with declines starting well before the COVID period



## Enrollment

Majority of VA IHEs saw **declining enrollment, selectivity, and yield** over past decade

- **11 of 17 IHEs saw enrollment declines** of 3-37% between 2013-23
- **12 of 15 4-year IHEs increased acceptance rates** by 1-28 ppt between 2013-22; **10 out of 15 had acceptance rates greater than 85%**
- **All IHEs saw declining yields** between 2012-21, with decreases ranging from 4-21 ppt

**College-aged population expected to peak by 2025**, likely exacerbating enrollment pressures for IHEs



## Completion

Some **meaningful gaps in completion exist** for certain IHEs

- **Five IHEs have six-year graduation rates below 60%**
- **Three IHEs have experienced declines in six-year graduation rates** between 2006-16
- Significant **disparities in completion rates by race / ethnicity, income level**



## Affordability

Average **published tuition prices for VA IHEs are 30-35% higher than national averages** and growing faster

- Selective 4-years: 15% higher than national avg.; 2.7% annual growth from 2012-21 (vs. 2.3% nationally)<sup>2</sup>
- Non-selective 4-years: 27% higher; 3.2% annual growth (vs. 2.6%)
- 2-years: 34% higher; 2.5% annual growth (vs. 2.3%)


Average **cost of attendance has grown by 2.7% and 3.2% annually** for selective and non-selective 4-years, respectively, between 2012-21, also **outpacing national averages** (2.3% and 2.6%, respectively)





## Cost effectiveness


**Total E&G expenditures per student FTE grew by 4.9% annually** (61% total) between 2012-22, from \$12K to \$20K; **one significant growth driver is institutional / administrative spend** (6.7% annual growth between 2012-22, or 91% total growth)


# To maintain position of strength, COVA and its institutions will need to address critical statewide priorities


- 


**1** Partnering more intentionally across K-12, 2-year, and 4-year IHEs to raise awareness and access to **high-impact pathways** for each student
- 


**2** Managing enrollment and enhancing differentiation in an increasingly **competitive market** at both the IHE and state level
- 


**3** Taking a more **student-centered, transparent approach to affordability, discounting, and financial aid**
- 

**4** Improving completion for all student populations via **data-driven, evidence-based interventions** and strong execution
- 

**5** Developing a **comprehensive and coordinated approach to maximize post-completion outcomes and fill labor market needs**
- 

**6** **Containing the cost of college**, including minimizing unnecessary spending and identifying opportunities for **cross-IHE shared services**
- 

**7** **Making data more transparent to all audiences** (policymakers, IHEs, students & families, etc.) to drive better decision making, including **filling key data gaps** across enrollment, completion, and post-completion
- 

**8** **Being more targeted with state funding** (E&G + Financial Aid) to better drive key priorities, incentivize desired actions, support students, and address critical institutional needs
- 

**9** **Proactively supporting institutions facing acute challenges** through different support mechanisms



# Readiness & pathways | Partner more intentionally across K-12, 2yr, 4yr IHEs to raise awareness & access to best pathways for each student

IHEs can more tightly coordinate pathways and supports amidst current and potential gaps in student readiness

- 1 K-12 learning loss from COVID likely having implications for college readiness**  
Pass rates on 8<sup>th</sup> grade math and reading Standards of Learning tests declined by 16 and 5ppts, respectively, in 2022-23 vs. 2018-19<sup>1</sup>
- 2 More than half of IHEs approaching open enrollment, raising questions about whether they are accepting students who are not prepared to succeed**  
10 of 17 IHEs had FTIC acceptance rates of >85% in Fall 2022<sup>2</sup>
- 3 Some IHEs setting up pathways, but solutions are not implemented at scale / statewide**  
Bright spots include ODU partnership with Tidewater CC, GMU's ADVANCE pathways but not all IHEs can point to pathways partnerships; opportunity to explore statewide initiatives

## Potential areas for action

### **Collaborate with K-12 systems to ensure college readiness**

Including robust data feedback loop between postsecondary and secondary to identify gaps and joint development of strategies / interventions to address them (e.g., through convening of K-12 systems and IHEs)

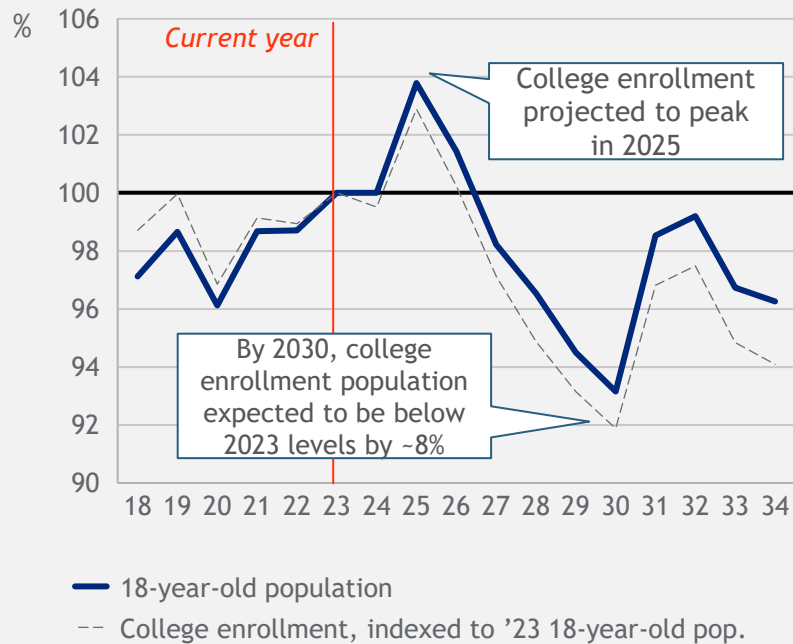
### **Coordinate & incentivize pathways between high school, community college, and 4-year institutions**

Including building on / learning from existing pathways initiatives and sharing of pathways best practices between IHEs

# Enrollment | Adapt to increasingly competitive market by growing the enrollment pool and differentiating IHE "value"

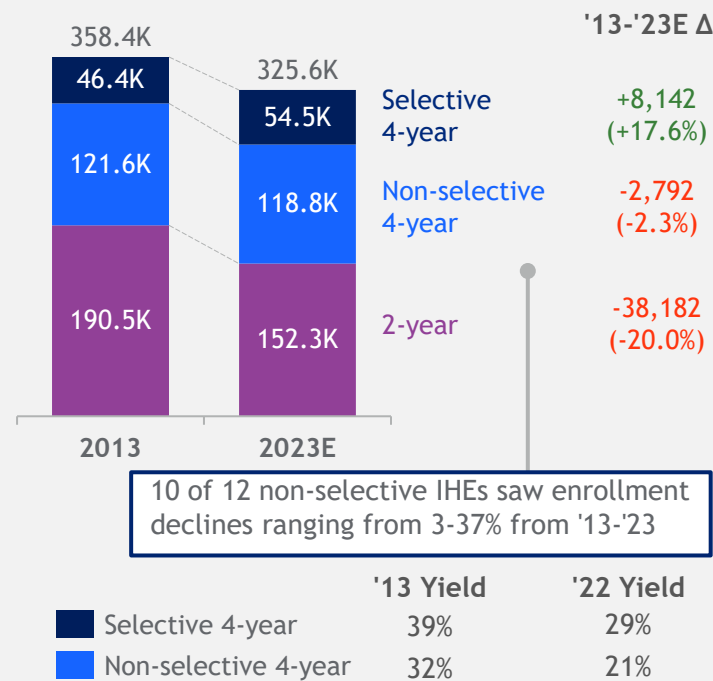
Demographic cliff is coming, with real implications on college population

US 18-year-old & college enrollment population, indexed to 2023



Most non-selective IHEs already facing falling enrollment, yield

VA undergraduate enrollment, 2013-23E (000s)<sup>1</sup>



Potential areas for action

**Seek to drive up college-going rate**

E.g., via increased marketing, investments in college preparation, counseling / coaching

**Gain market share among in-state students and / or attract more out-of-state students**

E.g., via consideration of increased incentives for OOS, expanded outreach / guidance of potential applicants to institutions with best fit (across 2-, 4-year and credential programs)

**Actively encourage greater IHE differentiation / focus on core areas of distinctiveness**

To ensure IHEs are building unique value propositions to attract prospective students

**Increase transparency of enrollment data and projections**

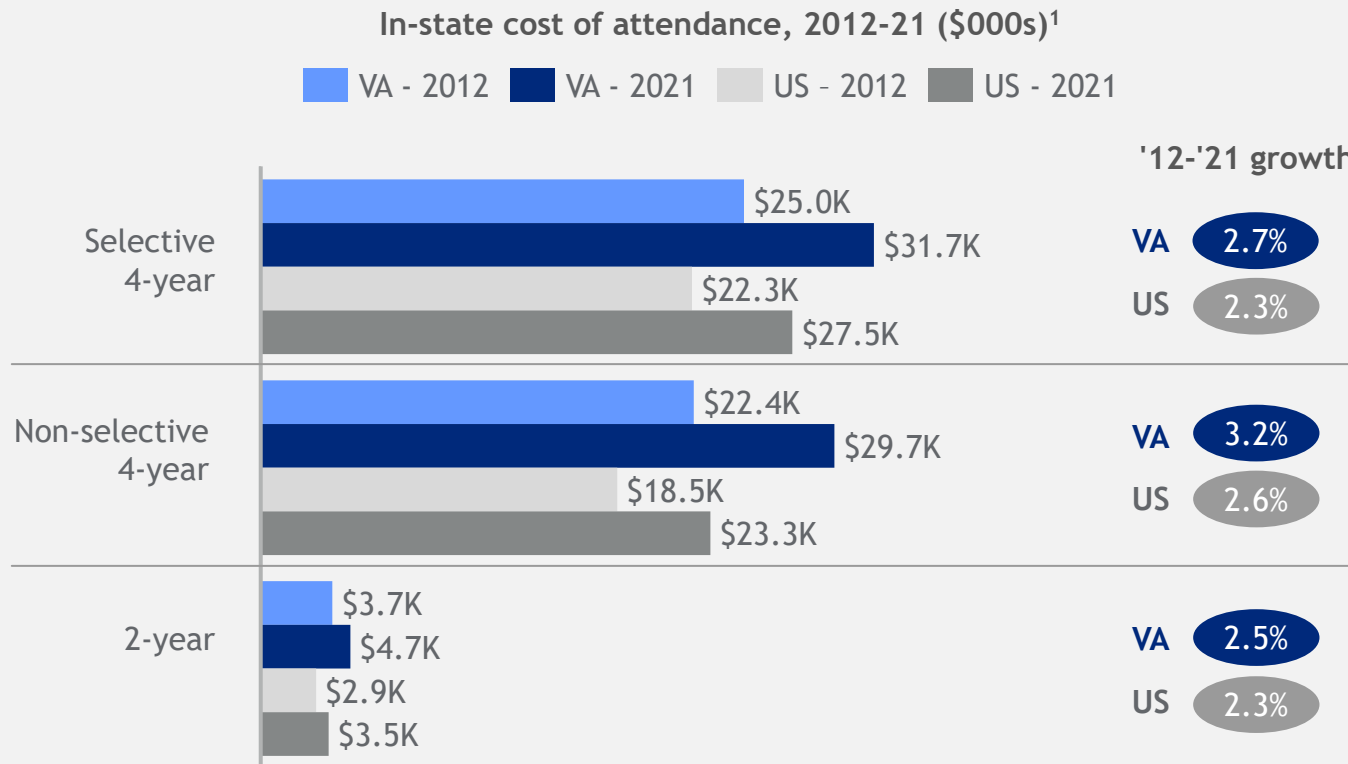
To develop a more nuanced understanding of competitive dynamics and to inform go-forward enrollment planning (accounting for peer projections)

1. Enrollment numbers based on undergraduate enrollment; VCCS and RBC includes certificates, associates, and not program-placed.

Source: 'Agile College' by Nathan Grawe, U.S. Census ACS, Mongoose, Vox, Chronicle of Higher Ed, Capture Higher Ed, CUPA-HR, Higher Ed Dive, WICHE Knocking at the College Door; SCHEV Fall Headcount Enrollment; IPEDS; BCG analysis

# Affordability | Explore a more student-focused, transparent approach to affordability, discounting, and financial aid

Cost of attendance above national averages and growing more quickly across selective, non-selective, and 2-year IHEs



## Potential areas for action

### Increase access to need-based financial aid

Expand need-based financial aid, with a continued focus on directing additional dollars to students / IHEs with greatest need; explore universal FAFSA completion policies to ensure students maximize available aid

### Promote greater aid transparency

Build on existing SCHEV guidelines for award letters to encourage / mandate that IHEs provide clear, comprehensive information to students on available aid, expected net cost, estimated debt, loan options, etc.

### Explore further standardization of aid awards

To ensure that students & families with need receive consistent amounts of aid across different IHEs

**Encouraging / supporting lower tuition increases** to slow growth in cost of attendance

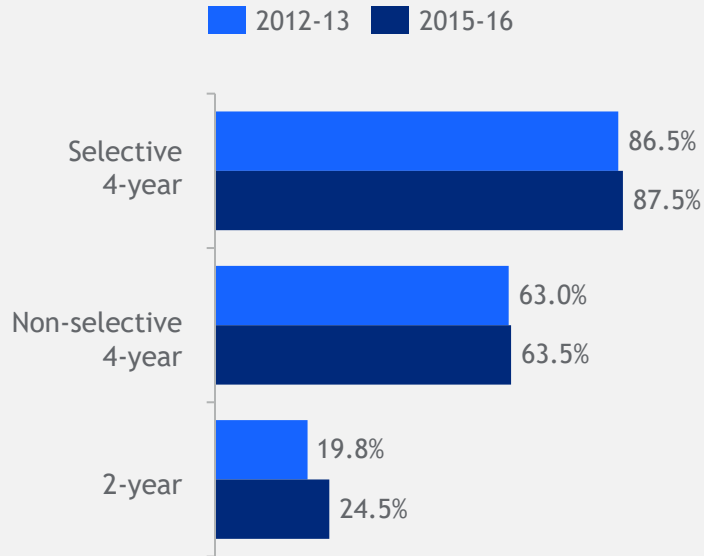
1. 4-year CoA includes tuition, mandatory E&G and non-E&G fees, average room & board, on-campus other expenses, and books & supplies. 2-year CoA includes tuition and mandatory fees. CoA numbers are for on-campus, in-state students and are a weighted average by in-state enrollment.

Source: SCHEV TF01: Student Charges by Student Level and Residency Status; IPEDS

# Completion | Continue to improve completion for all students via data- & evidence-based interventions / strong execution

Overall completion rates increasing, but significant variation across IHEs

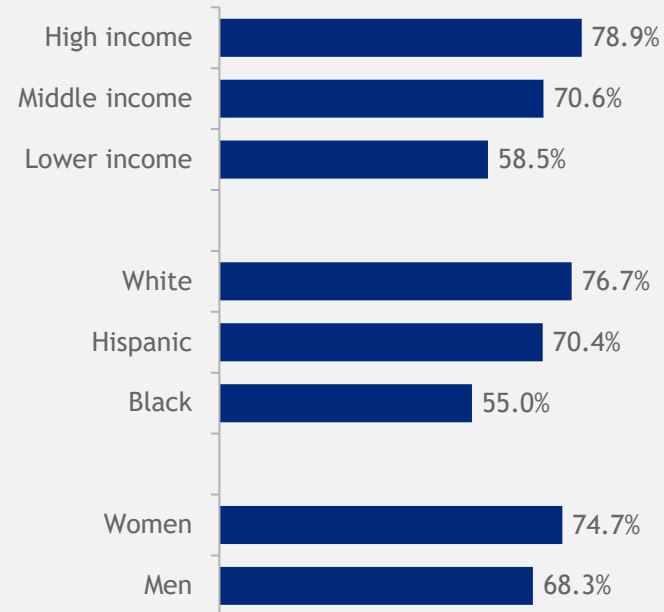
FTIC 6-year graduation rate for IHEs, 2012-15<sup>1</sup>



**5 of 17** 4-year IHEs with 2015-16 graduation rates <60%

Disparities in completion outcomes by income, race / ethnicity, gender

6-year graduation rate by income and race / ethnicity, 2015-16 cohort (%)<sup>2</sup>



Potential areas for action

**Data**

- Provide outcomes transparency**  
To provide greater visibility for students, IHEs on performance and drivers of completion
- Support development and scaling of data analytics tools / capabilities**  
To create shared data infrastructure to enable predictive analytics

**Supports**

- Support additional academic interventions**  
E.g., through tutoring, intrusive advising
- Introduce more comprehensive suite of wraparound services to fit student needs**  
E.g., counseling, health services, transportation
- Expand emergency financial support**  
E.g., state funding for greater IHE support for high-need students facing financial disruption

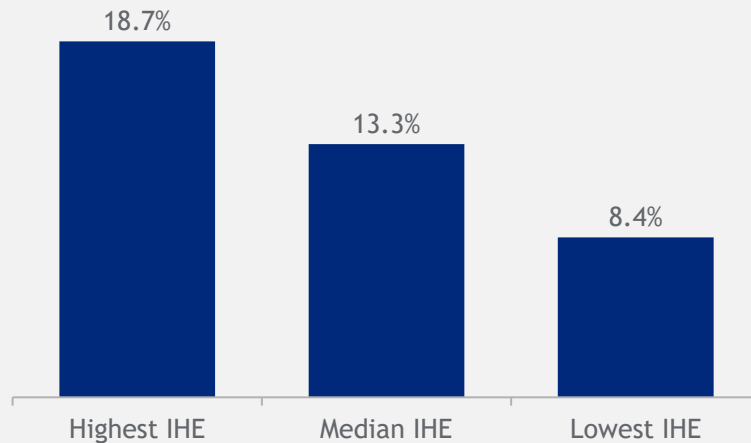
1. Compares 6-year graduation rate for 2012-13 and 2015-16 FTIC cohorts  
 2. Lower income = <200% of federal poverty line; middle income = 201-400% of poverty line; higher income = >401% of poverty line. Income data is based on in-state students only  
 Source: SCHEV GR-SC01: Six Year Graduation Rate Trends, by Economic Subcohorts; SCHEV Sub-Cohort Retention and Completion Rate Trends



# Post-completion & workforce alignment | Develop broad, coordinated approach to maximize career outcomes and fill labor market needs

Varying degrees of IHE alignment with high-priority workforce needs

% of IHE graduates working in VEDP priority industries, 1 year post-graduation, 2020



### VEDP high-priority industries

- Adv. materials
- Aerospace & defense
- Biopharma manufacturing
- Business services
- Financial services
- Food & bev manufacturing
- Software
- Transportation & logistics

IHEs are pursuing workforce initiatives, but inconsistent cross-IHE / stakeholder collaboration

Challenges / opportunities identified:

- **VOEE region-level data in early stages;** more work to be done to increase IHE awareness, comfort, and sophistication in dynamically integrating data into program portfolio decisions, career support processes
- **Absence of system-wide capacity planning,** resulting in IHEs operating independently on program portfolio decisions notwithstanding SCHEV program approval process
- IHEs working with individual employers on internships, work-based learning but IHEs / COVA **have not yet identified path or resources to scale**
- **Lack of sufficient career coaching** to point students towards high-potential programs / fields, improve job readiness

Potential areas for action

**Coordinate program alignment / capacity** across IHEs to collectively meet workforce needs and avoid oversupply (e.g., informed by VOEE work)

Strengthen **partnerships with employers, regional economic development** organizations at scale on **programs, skilling, internships, and in-state job placement**

Enhance **support or incentives for in-demand skills and degrees** (e.g., awards for IHEs based on student completion of high-demand programs, placement into high-demand occupations)

Increase funding and partnerships to support **work-based learning**

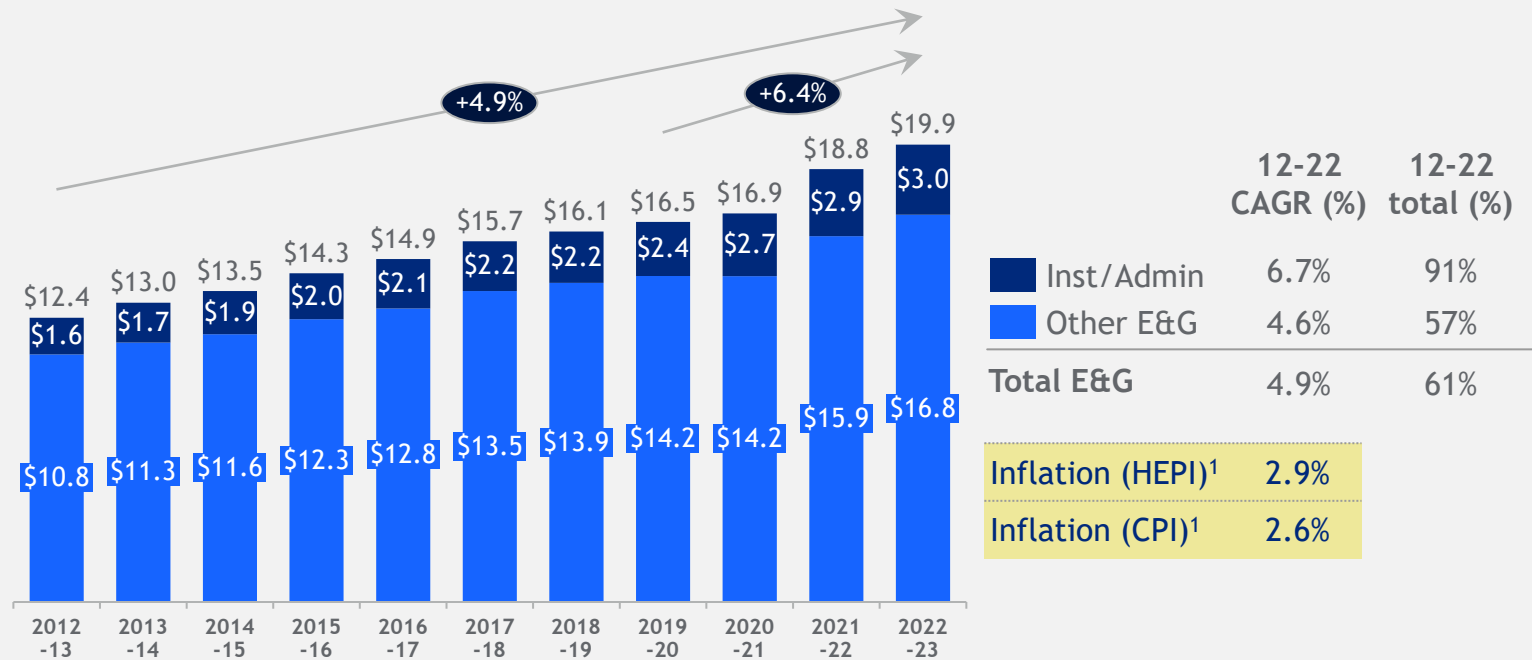
**Set up and incentivize employer mentoring programs** to provide students with career mentorship

Expand **career and job coaching at all IHEs,** as well as in **middle / high schools**

# Resource effectiveness | Containing cost growth by pursuing cross-IHE shared services & more structured and consistent program evaluation

Per-student E&G expenditures have increased at 4.9% annually from 2012 to 2022, with accelerating growth in recent years

VA IHE E&G expenditures per student FTE, 2012-22 (\$K)



1. Determined as growth in HEPI/CPI. Note HEPI estimate for FY2023 as of June 22, 2023.  
 Note: Includes all public 2- and 4-year institutions.  
 Source: Cardinal; SCHEV E5 Report: Annualized Student FTE and Credit Hours

## Potential areas for action

**Identify opportunities for shared services to realize cost efficiencies**  
 Including across admin functions, technology, procurement, facilities, Higher Ed Centers, etc.

**Encourage more consistent, transparent IHE evaluation of program portfolios**  
 Engage with IHEs and build alignment around best practices for consistent and transparent processes to regularly review and evaluate academic and non-academic programming for how well it delivers on objectives in a fiscally sustainable way

# Data transparency | Make data more visible & digestible, enhance state data assets to meet stakeholder needs and fill gaps

VA can leverage data assets from a variety of sources

Illustrative / not exhaustive



Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE)

Individual IHEs



## Potential areas for action

### Make data more visible and digestible for stakeholders



#### Policymakers

Assess ROI of taxpayer dollars, identify priority areas for outcomes improvement



#### IHEs

Examine outcomes across programs, compare with peer IHEs to find improvement areas



#### Students & families

Compare outcomes for IHEs / programs pre-matriculation; assess ROI relative to cost / debt



#### State & district K-12 leaders

Compare IHEs to inform college guidance; use to inform college readiness initiatives



#### State & regional economic development orgs

Inform employer collaboration and monitor inflow / outflow of students & graduates

### Further enhance data assets to answer key policy questions, evaluate initiative performance

#### Enrollment

(E.g., National Student Clearinghouse, SCHEV collection of student-level application data)

- **Enrollment tradeoffs / cannibalization:** is growth of some IHEs at the expense of others' enrollment?
- **Destination of VA HS graduates:** where are VA students who leave the state for college going?

#### Completion

(E.g., regular exit surveys, predictive analytics)

- **Completion drivers:** what are the most common barriers (academic, financial, personal, etc.) to completion?

#### Post-completion outcomes

(E.g., surveys, multi-state labor market data sharing)

- **Career outcomes:** what are outcomes for out-of-state alumni? How do wages compare to local COL?
- **Post-completion drivers:** what student / IHE / region characteristics are primary drivers of post-completion success?

#### Program performance evaluation

(E.g., surveys, cohort data)

- **Program effectiveness:** what is the impact of existing pathways, academic support programs?

# Funding | Deploy state funding (E&G + FinAid) in a more targeted way to drive priorities, incentivize desired actions, & meet student needs

## Opportunity for greater strategic lens to be used for funding decisions

- **Absence of funding formula or guidelines** that direct funds to areas of greatest need
- **Relatively small portion of funding allocated to specific statewide priorities;** bulk of funding is allocated to individual IHEs to use at their discretion for operating needs
- Remaining **gaps in financial aid funding levels and allocation method** resulting in \$162M in total unmet need in 2020

## Need for greater transparency on funding deployment / outcomes

- “ We want a 'report-back' process on previously funded initiatives and where they stand - there is no feedback loop to look at outcomes  
- OpSix member
- “ We need to better understand what allocated funding is actually going towards; there could be a better process of knowing what is funded and tracking the impact of that  
- OpSix member

## Potential areas for action

### Explore new funding formula

To enable more transparent, metric-driven allocation of state funding and appropriate funding levels across postsecondary (including dual enrollment, etc.)

### Continue to explore performance-based funding models

To tie a portion of funding to outcomes and incentivize desired IHE action on state priorities

### Track expenditure growth, impact, and ROI

By collecting more information on deployment of allocated funding, progress on KPIs

### Review / optimize Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) to ensure program continues its important mission in a sustainable manner

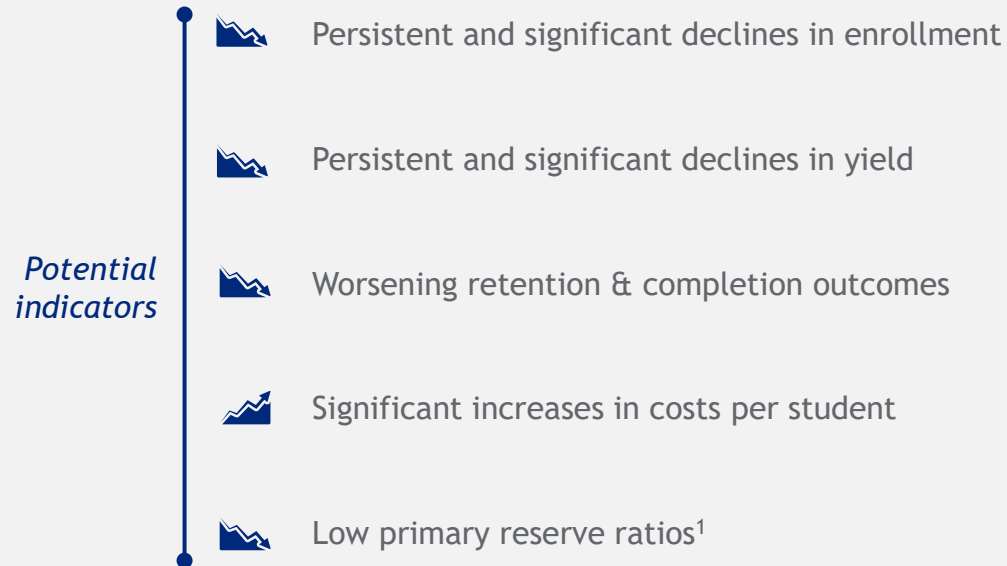
E.g., by making VMSDEP the "last dollar" after other sources of aid



# Challenged institutions | Proactively support institutions facing acute challenges through different support mechanisms

## Potential warning signs for institutions

Institutions exhibiting one or more of these characteristics may be more susceptible to future changes in demographics, competition, and resource constraints



## Potential areas for action

### **Determine definition, tiers of challenged institutions**

Align on what defines a "challenged institution"; determine different tiers of risk and / or performance levels

### **Identify and pursue key support mechanisms for challenged institutions**

Work with institutions to find and execute solutions to raise outcomes for students and ensure financial sustainability at challenged IHEs; optimal mechanisms may depend on drivers and severity of institutional challenges

1. Ratio of expendable net assets vs. total expenses, measuring IHEs' ability to meet financial obligations.

# Overview of potential areas for action (I/II)

Focus area	Potential areas for action
1 Partnering more intentionally across K-12, 2-year, and 4-year IHEs to raise awareness and access to high-impact pathways for each student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborate with K-12 systems to ensure college readiness</li><li>• Coordinate &amp; incentivize pathways between high school, community college, and 4-year institutions</li></ul>
2 Managing enrollment and enhancing differentiation in an increasingly competitive market at both the IHE and state level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek to drive up college-going rate</li><li>• Gain market share among in-state students and / or attract more out-of-state students</li><li>• Actively encourage greater IHE differentiation / focus on areas of distinctiveness</li><li>• Increase transparency of enrollment data and projections</li></ul>
3 Taking a more student-centered, transparent approach to affordability, discounting, and financial aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase need-based financial aid</li><li>• Promote greater aid transparency</li><li>• Explore further standardization of aid awards</li><li>• Encouraging / supporting lower tuition increases to slow down growth in cost of attendance</li></ul>
4 Improving completion for all student populations via data-driven, evidence-based interventions and strong execution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide outcomes transparency</li><li>• Support development and scaling of data analytics tools / capabilities</li><li>• Support additional academic interventions</li><li>• Introduce more comprehensive suite of wraparound services</li><li>• Expand emergency financial support</li></ul>

# Overview of potential areas for action (II/II)

Focus area	Potential areas for action
<p>5 Developing a <b>comprehensive and coordinated approach to maximize post-completion outcomes</b> and fill labor market needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate <b>program alignment / capacity</b> across IHEs</li> <li>• Strengthen <b>partnerships with employers, regional economic development organizations at scale</b></li> <li>• Enhance <b>support / incentives for in-demand skills / degrees</b></li> <li>• Increase <b>funding for work-based learning</b></li> <li>• <b>Set up and incentivize employer mentoring programs</b> to provide students with career mentorship</li> <li>• Expand <b>career coaching at IHEs / K-12</b></li> </ul>
<p>6 <b>Containing the cost of college while improving outcomes</b> by pursuing cross-IHE shared services and introducing more structured and consistent IHE program evaluation processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Identify opportunities for shared services</b> to realize cost efficiencies</li> <li>• <b>Encourage more consistent, transparent IHE evaluation of program portfolios</b></li> </ul>
<p>7 <b>Making data more transparent to all audiences</b> (policymakers, IHEs, students &amp; families, etc.) to drive better decision making, including <b>filling key data gaps</b> across enrollment, completion, and post-completion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Make data more visible / digestible</b> for stakeholders through dashboards</li> <li>• Further <b>enhance data assets by filling gaps</b></li> </ul>
<p>8 <b>Being more targeted with state funding</b> (E&amp;G + Financial Aid) to better drive key priorities, incentivize desired actions, support students, and address critical institutional needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore new <b>funding formula</b></li> <li>• Continue to explore <b>performance-based funding</b> models</li> <li>• <b>Track impact, ROI of funded initiatives</b></li> <li>• <b>Review / optimize VMSDEP</b> to ensure program continues its important mission in a sustainable manner</li> </ul>
<p>9 <b>Proactively supporting institutions facing acute challenges</b> through different support mechanisms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align on <b>definitions / tiers for "challenged institutions"</b></li> <li>• <b>Identify and pursue key support mechanisms</b> for challenged IHEs</li> </ul>

Several principles will continue to guide our efforts to strengthen and improve COVA's higher education system

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**Sustaining policymakers' and other stakeholders' attention and effort on challenges / opportunities** identified in the 6y plan process



**Preserving and building on existing strengths** driven by VA's strong ecosystem of IHEs with diverse missions, assets, and identities



**Continuing to promote and deepen data-driven, strategic conversation and collaboration** across the ecosystem



**Drawing inspiration from other states** that are tackling similar issues while also being willing to be a pioneer when appropriate



