

APPENDIX D: CURRENT (OCTOBER 2023 ENDORSED) PATHWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY PLAN INITIATIVES AND SUPPORTING ACTIONS

Goal 1 – Equitable: Close Access and Completion Gaps

Plan Strategy	Pathways to Opportunity Biennial Initiative	Actions underway to implement initiative
<p>S1: Expand postsecondary opportunities and awareness to Virginians who may not view higher education as an option.</p> <p>S2: Advance digital access, adoption and literacy as well as high quality, effective remote-learning programs.</p> <p>S3: Strengthen student support services for persistence and completion: mental health, career services, social, student basic needs, information technology, disability support and other services.</p>	<p>I.1: Promote Access to Postsecondary Education: Develop, implement, and collaborate on a variety of strategic activities, including marketing, professional development, and direct student and family programming (such as mentoring, summer bridge programs, counseling and advising via GEAR UP), to improve awareness and access to a variety of postsecondary education opportunities for Virginia’s low-income and underserved students.</p> <p>I.2: Support Online Virginia Network (OVN) Market Survey: Gather insight on Virginia higher education alumni including those who obtained some college and no degree and their interest in completing a degree through OVN.</p> <p>I.3: Develop Resources for Mental Health and Disabilities Supports: Partner to deliver additional resources to institutions and support front line professionals that provide mental health services to students and/or assist students with disabilities.</p>	<p>1. Level Up Virginia: Develop and implement a comprehensive communication campaign focusing on those that might not view higher education as an option, highlighting both traditional and alternative postsecondary pathways, including apprenticeships and high-quality certificate and workforce credential programs.</p> <p>2. SCHEV/VDOE Access Strategic Plan: Collaborate with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to increase FAFSA completions, campus tours, college advising and shared access goals.</p> <p>1. OVN/VCU outreach survey and analysis: Work with VCU research team to survey alumni and match findings with those who obtained some college and no degree. The alumni finder tool will be used to reach out to those with some college but no degree and survey to understand/identify what it would take to get those alumni back to complete their degree. Analysis of results will inform next steps.</p> <p>2. SCHEV Mental Health Pilot: Evaluate impact of the mental health pilot and the ability to scale across the state. Pilot is intended to simultaneously expand mental health and well-being supports for students and the pipeline of licensed mental health providers working in Virginia.</p> <p>2. SCHEV/Virginia Mental Health Access Program Collaborative Training: Partner to provide additional training/webinar(s) to on-campus healthcare professionals to diagnose, treat and manage common mental health disorders. In 2022, this partnership provided training for continuing medical education credits on managing anxiety in college-aged youth.</p> <p>3. Disabilities Access to Higher Education Action Plan: Close access and success gaps for students with disabilities by implementing strategies in the Disabilities Access to Higher Education Action Plan including the data collection pilot.</p>

Goal 2 – Affordable: Lower Costs to Students

Plan Strategy	Pathways to Opportunity Biennial Initiative	Actions to implement initiative
<p>S4: Align tuition and fees, financial aid and state appropriations such that students have broader access to postsecondary opportunities regardless of their ability to pay.</p>	<p>I.4: Establish consensus on higher education cost and funding needs: Build consensus around higher education cost and funding needs in accordance with work done last year (SB800 2023 budget amendment).</p>	<p>1. Technical assistance: Per SB800, provide technical assistance to the joint subcommittee reviewing public higher education funding policies and enrollment management. The subcommittee will conduct an assessment that will be used to develop guidelines against which to measure higher education funding requests.</p>
<p>S5: Cultivate affordable postsecondary education pathways for traditional, non-traditional and returning students.</p>	<p>I.5: Establish Pathway Maps as a means to lower the cost to students by ensuring a smooth transition from two-year to four-year institutions: Create system-wide course equivalencies and complete pathways maps, strengthening pathways to the baccalaureate for transfer students as well as high school students.</p>	<p>1. Common curriculum: Work with two-year and four-year institutions to create common associate degree curricula, the development of a four-year plan of study and the development of a student-facing transfer guide.</p> <p>2. Pathways maps and transfer guides: Complete pathways maps for approximately 30 broad disciplinary areas across five phases. Develop transfer guides from completed pathways maps for each disciplinary major and make publicly available via Transfer Virginia website.</p>
<p>S6: Update and reform funding models and policies to improve equity, affirm return on investment and encourage increased and consistent levels of state funding.</p>	<p>I.6: Report on student choices and outcomes to ensure commitment to completion and student success: Produce report on public and private postsecondary education outcomes and transparently communicate the results. Similarly, assess factors influencing an individual's decision to pursue/not pursue higher education.</p>	<p>1. Biennial postsecondary education outcomes report: Produce report and share findings on postsecondary education outcomes.</p> <p>2. Assessment of college-decision making among high school students: With appropriate partners, assess factors influencing high school students' decisions to pursue/not pursue higher education.</p>
<p>S7: Foster program and administrative innovations that enhance quality promote collaboration and improve efficiency.</p>	<p>I.7: Automate Database for Private Postsecondary Education: Automate database to improve reliability and increase productivity in regulation of private postsecondary education.</p>	<p>1. New database development: Work with a selected vendor to replace current application process of online and hard copy applications with a web-based application that will provide access to real time information along with automation tools that simplify and streamline operations.</p> <p>2. Centralized “system of record”: Utilize the database to maximize organizational effectiveness, reduce compliance risk and provide easy access to centralized “system of record” information/data.</p>

Goal 3 – Transformative: Expand Prosperity

Plan Strategy	Pathways to Opportunity Biennial Initiative	Actions to implement initiative
<p>S8: Support experiences that improve students' employment outcomes, income and community engagement</p>	<p>I.8: Scale Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP): Scale the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership, launch new V-TOP initiatives that address barriers to work-based learning and evaluate progress/success to expand the statewide effort.</p>	<p>1. Statewide staffing agency: Expand internship opportunities by supporting small businesses with recruiting, hiring, and onboarding candidates.</p> <p>2. Employer matching funds: Provide incentives to small employers who hire students as interns through matching funds to cover wage and work-related expenses.</p> <p>3. Academic Data Governance Workgroup: Establish work-based learning standards, definitions, and data collection methods to be measured and considered across institutions.</p>
<p>S9: Improve the alignment between post-secondary academic programs and labor market outcomes.</p>	<p>I.9. Establish Criteria for High Demand Jobs: In cooperation with the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) and institutions, work to establish criteria to define and incentives to address urgent labor market needs.</p>	<p>1. Define "urgent labor market needs:" Identify and obtain additional data/forecasting needs to establish criteria to define "urgent labor market needs" and associated academic programs.</p> <p>2. Incentive development: Use the criteria and data findings from urgent labor market needs to develop recommendations for incentives to promote those academic programs and address specified labor market needs.</p> <p>3. Develop teacher preparation degree programs: Collaborate with institutions of higher education and Virginia Department of Education on approval of new teacher preparation degree programs for fall 2024 or later implementation.</p>
<p>S10: Cultivate a climate of inclusion and innovation through scholarship, research, a diverse faculty and other programming.</p>	<p>I.10: Foster activities and partnerships that improve students' civic knowledge and their ability to contribute effectively to civic life.</p>	<p>1. Implementation strategies: Partner with participating institutions and the Constructive Dialogue Institute (CDI) to help students, faculty, staff and other stakeholders to develop/enhance skills to have more effective conversations with people holding different views. Each participating institution will work with CDI staff to design an implementation strategy aligning with its institution's culture and existing programming.</p> <p>2. Community of practice: Faculty and staff from participating institutions will be invited to a "community of practice" to share experiences, challenges and seek support from each other, from CDI and access a library of resources.</p> <p>3. Day of Dialogue events: Facilitate cross-institutional conversations about high quality civic learning and engagement.</p> <p>4. Presentations/ongoing discussions on this topic: Include on subsequent Council agendas, presentations and discussions with the VDOE curricular standards experts about how civics is taught in Virginia.</p>