



DEPARTMENT OF
HIGHER EDUCATION &
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT 2022 Strategic Plan Initiatives

**Prepared for Discussion During
the Coordinating Board for Higher Education's
November 16, 2021, Meeting**

Why?

Missouri must develop and implement strategies to support adult learners in order to achieve the state's goal of becoming Best in Midwest. Currently 1.3 million Missouri adults have no postsecondary credential. While current attainment for white adults is 42%, for Black and Hispanic adults it is around 28%. Further, in urban regions, attainment is 46%, and in rural areas it is 29%. To meet workforce demand projected for 2030, an additional 220,375 adults will need to earn credentials, with additional emphasis on underrepresented populations.

Although there is widespread recognition that the adult population is important, most institutions are struggling to recruit and retain adult students. As a percent of all Missouri college students, adults have declined 40% in the last 10 years.

DHEWD plans to use a network approach to bring institution staff together to learn and problem-solve as a community rather than push top-down solutions. This network will emphasize voluntary participation and respect institutional autonomy. System work is needed to accomplish real change, rather than focusing only on initiatives.



Department Lead:

Dr. Mara Woody

Assistant Commissioner for
Postsecondary Policy

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Adult Learner Network

What?

DHEWD will model this network on its successful COVID-19 “office hours,” through which department staff brought together practitioners from public and private institutions across the state, coordinated access to experts, created a forum for problem-solving, and advocated for resources and favorable policy decisions. Institutions will be invited to identify participants to engage in a series of structured conversations, with the goal of learning from each other and potentially developing recommendations for policy changes, funding, or other future activities. The initiative will kick off in January 2022. DHEWD staff will survey institutions in the spring to identify the most significant and consistent barriers to serving adult students, with additional emphasis on serving underserved racial and rural populations, and use those responses to develop a focus. The department will host a statewide network convening in June. The group will evaluate feedback and data to determine how the network might continue in 2023.

Who?

While this initiative will ultimately result in increased educational attainment for adults, its most immediate impact will be on institution staff.

Win

- Thirty-five public and private two- and four-year institutions participating, with no more than 20% attrition over the course of the year.
- More than 80% of participants indicate that network conversation was productive at conclusion of the year.
- Concrete and actionable next steps and/or recommendations identified at conclusion of process.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicators Impacted:
Enrollment, Completion Rate

Why?

Summer bridge programs vary in focus and format, but they often provide students from similar backgrounds opportunities to build relationships with each other, tackle prerequisites or other remedial work early, and learn about important college resources that can increase their chances of graduating. National data for community college programs indicate that students who participate in summer bridge programs take three more credits in their first year and have an average GPA of 2.3 versus 2.0 for students who did not participate in bridge programs, leading to increased retention rates of at least 10%.

Opportunities like summer bridge programs provide especially important support for students who have historically persisted and completed at relatively low rates. Black students persist past their freshman year at a rate 13% lower than their white peers and complete 10 fewer credits on average. The rates for first generation students are similar, with a 10% greater chance of dropping out compared to families with higher education levels. Students who live below the poverty line are 1.5 times less likely to persist than their more affluent peers. When these students are surveyed, they cite lack of academic preparedness, financial challenges, limited access to mentors or guides, and few meaningful connections made on campus as reasons they dropped out.

Department Lead:



Dr. Mara Woody

Assistant Commissioner for
Postsecondary Policy

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Summer Bridge Expansion

What?

In April 2021, DHEWD staff convened an Equity Advisory Committee to create a Community of Action framework that brings practitioners together to implement evidence-based practices that will build a more equitable educational ecosystem in Missouri. After discussing community needs, existing inequities in outcomes, and areas of focus, the group decided that the first evidence-based practice that will be implemented is creating and expanding summer bridge programs.

The Community of Action will begin with five months of training around equity in practice, project management, and data collection. Subject matter experts will be brought in as coaches to advise participating institutions on program design, building robust partnerships, data collection, and other relevant topics. After this training period, the group will plan and implement new or expanded summer bridge programs.

Who?

Teams will be made up of individuals from postsecondary institutions – such as those from admissions, financial aid, student services, and TRIO offices – as well as individuals from local K12 schools and business and industry.

Win

- Eight institutions participate in the Community of Action in 2022.
- New or expanded summer bridge programs go live in summer 2023.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
Completion Rate

Why?

A quarter of all Missouri households make less than \$30,000 a year. For this population, an average of 92% of family income is required to attend a four-year undergraduate institution full time.¹ This means a significant number of college students have unmet financial needs. According to national data and DHEWD's College Affordability Survey, Black, disabled, and adult learners are the most likely to have unmet financial need.

Services that may assist in areas such as hunger, healthcare, and child care are available to students in these groups, but very few students are aware of or take advantage of these programs. DHEWD survey data indicates that 0.4% of college students receive TANF and 4.9% receive SNAP benefits, despite evidence that many more would likely be eligible. Furthermore, 19.7% of Missouri college students report having dependents.²

Students whose basic needs are met have increased retention and graduation rates. Increasing access to state benefits will help all low-income students succeed in postsecondary education.



Department Lead:

Dr. Mara Woody

Assistant Commissioner for
Postsecondary Policy

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Social Services on Campus

What?

In 2020, DHEWD partnered with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to place DSS staff on seven college campuses. Each DSS staffer is on campus one day a week to help students and other members of the campus community who may qualify for benefits through programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and child care assistance.

Through this initiative, DHEWD will expand to an additional five campuses in 2022. DHEWD will also raise awareness of the resource by meeting and sharing resource materials and success stories with chief academic officers, student services personnel, academic advisors, and other professionals on each campus who can identify students who could benefit from additional assistance.

Who?

This initiative will help low-income students.

Win

The goal of this initiative is to increase the number of participating campuses by 50% by the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, meaning a total of 18 campuses would have DSS staff in place.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
Completion Rate

Why?

One in six children in the U.S. has a mental health disorder. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among people aged 15 to 24, and suicide rates among ages 10 to 24 has increased by 56% in two decades. The percentage of U.S. adults with symptoms of anxiety and depression increased by 13% from August 2020 to February 2021. The CDC reports that since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, the largest increases in unmet mental health needs were among adults aged 18-29.

The Active Minds Student Mental Health Survey found almost 76% of college students reported COVID-19 has worsened their mental health. Specifically, 88.8% experienced stress or anxiety, 79.4% experienced disappointment or sadness, and 77.8% experienced loneliness or isolation.

Students with emotional or mental health concerns are more likely to drop out of school, experience financial hardships, live in unsafe environments, and experience food and housing insecurity. Hardest hit are minority, low-income, and modern students.



Department Lead:

Dr. Mara Woody

Assistant Commissioner for
Postsecondary Policy

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Student Mental Health

What?

COVID-19 has exacerbated a longstanding mental health crisis among students in secondary and postsecondary institutions. Through this initiative, DHEWD will build on a successful model established in 2021 and develop longer-term strategies and recommendations for addressing mental health challenges.

In 2021, DHEWD partnered with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Show Me Hope to create [HappierU](#), a digital resource center for students to promote mental health. It features a series of videos, podcasts and digital content. Since it was released October 1, 2021, HappierU has had almost 2 million impressions. DHEWD will work with partners to expand the reach of HappierU.

In addition, DHEWD will partner with the departments of Elementary and Secondary Education and Mental Health to lead a student mental health task force. The task force will identify ways the departments can work together to bridge the gap between the mental health services provided in high school and the services available at postsecondary institutions.

Who?

The task force's work and recommendations will ultimately benefit college students struggling with mental health issues.

Win

- By the end of 2022, HappierU is viewed 40,000 times with 10 million impressions.
- The task force identifies a unified approach to resolving gaps in mental health services.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
Completion Rate

Why?

Dual credit and dual enrollment refers to coursework provided by postsecondary education institutions to high school students that can provide both high school and college credit.

A recent report by the U.S. Department of Education found evidence of positive benefits of dual credit/enrollment on college degree attainment, college access and enrollment, college credit accumulation, high school completion, and general academic achievement in high school. Additionally, because of reduced tuition rates for dual credit, many students reduce the overall cost of their certificate or degree programs by participating in dual credit coursework.

Because existing state and federal financial aid programs are not designed to serve high school students, many first generation and low income high school students find it difficult or impossible to access dual credit or dual enrollment coursework due to the cost.



Department Lead:

Leroy Wade

Deputy Commissioner for
Operations

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

A+ Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment

What?

This initiative will continue and complete the development and implementation of the recently funded A+ Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment program. Actions to be taken include continued collaboration with stakeholders to streamline and improve the program's operation, automation of additional components of the program, and expanded marketing of the program to ensure high school counselors and potentially eligible students are aware of its existence and understand how it works.

Who?

This work will benefit many of the 60,000+ high school students who enroll in dual credit and dual enrollment coursework each year. In addition, it will impact postsecondary financial aid offices and high school counselors by making the program more streamlined.

Win

The goal for this program is to increase the number of students who take dual credit and dual enrollment coursework, with a particular focus on students from low-income backgrounds.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
Net Price/Cost

Why?

Missouri's Job Centers of the Future initiative identified significant gaps in service, outdated investments, processes, and strategies, and a new formula for measuring performance. Over the next nine years, Missouri Job Center Connect will focus on increasing access, efficiency, and effectiveness as a means to help nearly 700,000 citizens participate in the labor force.

Missouri serves 69,000 citizens through career service programs and 2,075 citizens in career training programs every year. Growth of 10% from this baseline is projected. The current baseline for job retention six months after service is 64%, with median earnings of \$23,800. Thirty-two percent of citizens currently served represent a minority population and 53% are male, 47% female.



Department Lead:

Dr. Mardy Leathers

Director of Workforce Development

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Missouri Job Center Connect

What?

This initiative will continue to redesign infrastructure, awareness, and performance of the state's public workforce development system to expand access to career service and training programs for Missouri citizens. This includes working with local workforce development boards and state job center staff to increase the number of citizens served and expanding virtual service platforms, offering specialized training and credentials, and improved enrollment processes.

DHEWD has also requested ARPA funding that will expand the reach of this initiative if appropriated. The additional funds will allow the department to offer adaptive technology to serve Missourians with disabilities, expand virtual delivery of services, update equipment, and standardize branding. Additional funds will also allow the department to raise awareness of career assistance and training services.

Who?

This work benefits the individuals who participate in the new programs, as well as the employers who gain access to skilled employees.

Win

The primary goal of this initiative is to serve 76,674 Missourians each year through career service programs. This includes resume design, job posting and application, and interview coaching. Additional goals include job retention six months after service of more than 70% of participants and median earnings of more than \$24,600.

The secondary goal of this initiative is for local workforce development boards to enroll 2,309 Missourians into career training programs each year. This would lead to 690,066 Missourians served and 20,781 Missourians enrolled in training programs that lead to employment by 2030.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
Employment to Population Ratio

Why?

Apprenticeships are a key path in DHEWD's "5 to Thrive" model. Apprenticeships offer opportunities for individuals to gain skills (often including postsecondary credit and credentials) through hands-on education while earning income. While traditionally apprenticeship programs were concentrated in the skilled trades and run almost exclusively by labor organizations, Missouri has driven growth in apprenticeship programs by increasing the diversity of industries that offer apprenticeships.

In addition, state staff are working with local partners to expand "pre-apprenticeship" programs that prepare people to succeed in apprenticeship programs. Pre-apprenticeships may last from a few weeks to a few months. Program elements vary, but all focus on putting individuals on a path to employment through a registered apprenticeship program. In Missouri, over 80% of pre-apprentices successfully complete those programs and enter full registered apprenticeship programs.



Department Lead:

Dr. Mardy Leathers

Director of Workforce Development

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Missouri Apprentice Ready

What?

This initiative will continue to expand access to pre-apprenticeship programs in IT and healthcare, as well as construction and manufacturing. Missouri Apprentice Ready will invest \$1.5 million in partner agencies including community colleges, local workforce development boards, and labor management organizations. These funds are already included in the department's budget. Participation by both employers and apprentices will be further leveraged with the Missouri Apprentice Connect portal. The portal is the result of a partnership between the Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry and DHEWD.

Who?

This work benefits the individuals who participate in the new programs, as well as the employers who gain access to skilled employees.

Win

The goal of this initiative is to create opportunities for an additional 500 individuals through pre-apprentice programs every year. Based on historical completion rates, an additional 3,690 individuals would enter full registered apprenticeship programs by 2030.

This initiative is one element of a broader goal to serve 20,000 through registered apprenticeship programs by 2025. Since the goal was established in Governor Parson's Executive Order 19-20, 14,993 citizens have been served.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
Apprenticeship and Certificate Completion

Why?

Missouri is home to 425,000 veterans, representing 9.1% of our population over the age of 18. Nearly 63,000 veterans sought career services from DHEWD's Office of Workforce Development between April 2012 and November 2018, with nearly 1,110 veterans enrolled in programming each year. DHEWD can do more to reach this population and increase access to labor force participation through a comprehensive effort to realign services, funding, and programming.

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Connecting Missouri's Heroes

What?

This initiative will continue to expand access to sustainable employment opportunities for Missouri's veteran population, including their spouses and immediate family members. Connecting Missouri's Heroes will expand access to training programs and career services directly related to connecting Missouri's heroes with employment. This initiative includes a redesign of the Show Me Heroes program, expanded investment, and a new structure to better serve this population.

Who?

This work will benefit the individuals who participate in the new programs, as well as the employers who gain access to skilled employees.

Win

The goal of this initiative is to create opportunities for enrollment of an additional 500 individuals through job training and career service programs every year, leading to a goal of 4,500 more Missourians participating in the labor force by 2030.



Department Lead:

Dr. Mardy Leathers

Director of Workforce Development

Educational
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Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
Enrollment to Population Ratio

Why?

Missouri's emerging workforce population, those under age 24, has declined by 8.8% since 2010. To meet the demand of employers, and to ensure Missouri's future workers are prepared for Missouri jobs, a significant focus on youth training and career service programs is necessary.

Missouri currently enrolls more than 1,400 youth annually in training programs and provides career services to more than 4,000 youth for a total of 5,400 annual youth engagements.

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Missouri Youth Connect

What?

This initiative will continue to expand access to Missouri youth, both in school and out of school ages 14-24, to employment opportunities. DHEWD will partner with programs such as Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), Future Farmers of America (FFA), Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), Boys and Girls Club, YouthBuild, and Summer Jobs League. Missouri will also leverage expanded access to ACT WorkKeys Assessments for 20,000 high school students over the next 2 years.

Who?

This work benefits the individuals, aged 14-24, who participate in the new programs, as well as the employers who gain access to skilled employees.

Win

The goal of this initiative is to create opportunities to double the number of youth engagements annually to 10,000 youth. This includes providing WorkKeys Assessments for more than 7,000 youth and serving at least 1,500 JAG students, 250 YouthBuild participants, and 1,000 Boys and Girls Club participants.

Through expansion of workplace readiness programs, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeships, and employment assistance, DHEWD plans to help 90,000 Missourians participate in the labor force by 2030.

Indicators Impacted:

Number of Job Seekers per Job Opening



Department Lead:

Dr. Mardy Leathers

Director of Workforce Development

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:

Number of Job Seekers per Job Opening

Why?

Child care and early childhood education are important to the Missouri workforce, especially for working families and/or those in training or education programs in need of care. Missouri had insufficient child care capacity before COVID-19, and the additional child care capacity needed has more than doubled during the pandemic¹.

When compared to pre-pandemic data, there are approximately one-third fewer providers today, resulting in an increase of “child care deserts” (eight counties in Missouri are without child care options), and a third fewer low-income children (those receiving subsidies) in child care².

Additionally, long-term occupation projections by the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) identify child care as a top job outlook and classify it as a “Now” job, which typically requires short-term on-the-job training with little to no experience and/or a high school diploma or equivalent. MERIC has also identified child care workers as one of the top occupations for annual openings.³



Department Lead:

Dr. Mara Woody

Assistant Commissioner for
Postsecondary Policy

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Child Care Expansion

What?

This initiative is a partnership with the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) that will increase the number of child care facilities on college campuses and increase the child care/early childhood education workforce. Grants will be made available to higher education institutions to offer or expand on-site child care, providing services for students and other residents.

Grant funding is also available to allow for the start-up or expansion of Early Childhood Professions programs at area career centers. Additionally, DESE and DHEWD will partner to develop and disseminate resources that illustrate professional pathways for early childhood professionals interested in joining the profession from multiple entry points.

Who?

This work will most immediately benefit the low-income families of some of the nearly 11,000 students who lost child care services during the course of the pandemic.¹ It will also impact some of the nearly 17,000 learners who have children under the age of six³ and may need child care, as well as those wanting to return to training, education, and employment but who face unmet child care needs.

Win

The goal of this initiative is to increase the level of child care to pre-pandemic levels, by establishing and expanding child care facilities on campuses and increasing training programs for child care employment opportunities.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicators Impacted:

Enrollment, Completion Rate, Unemployment Rate

Why?

During the 2021 Missouri legislative session, House Bill 297 created the “Students’ Right to Know Act.” The goal of the act is to help students make more informed decisions about their future and ensure students are aware of the cost of college and alternative career paths.

The new law presents an opportunity to support the department’s vision of “Every Missourian empowered with the skills and education needed for success” by making it easier for students to access and understand education options, in-demand job opportunities, student debt and default, and the cost and outcomes of education through an attractive and easy-to-use webpage. The online resource will also include information on academic programs, student financial aid resources, and information on transferring academic course credit.



Department Lead:

Veronica Gielazauskas

Assistant Commissioner for
Performance & Strategy

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Students’ Right to Know

What?

DHEWD’s Performance & Strategy team will collect and organize the required data elements, entering into memoranda of understanding as needed with other agencies to fulfill the required data elements. That data will be analyzed and synthesized into dashboards and other website interfaces. DHEWD Communications staff will create an attractive webpage as part of the existing Journey to College website. Institution staff and key stakeholders such as college counselors will be provided opportunities for input and feedback.

DHEWD Communications staff will support the final product with a promotional plan to educate Missourians about this new resource.

Who?

This initiative will benefit current and future students, as well as provide a resource for those who support student decision-making.

Win

All data collection and draft dashboards are planned to be completed by April 1, 2022. Stakeholder feedback will occur in May 2022. Final design and functionality of the site to be completed in June and July 2022. The planned launch is August 2022, including meeting the requirement of informing DESE of the completion of the project. Data is to be maintained and updated by October 15 each year. DHEWD will track visits to the site and include it as a resource in future publications.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:
FAFSA Filing, Enrollment

Why?

Postsecondary educational attainment is integral to Missouri's future economic success, and to the prosperity of the state's citizens. Unfortunately, perception of the value of higher education has decreased among some groups, especially since 2020. Adults have declined significantly as a percent of the total student population in Missouri. Individuals aged 25-64 now make up 40% less of the student body than they did ten years ago. The share of the student body that is Black or male has also declined significantly during that time.

A national survey conducted by Strada found that the percent of adults who express confidence about the value of higher education dropped dramatically in 2020. In 2019, 37% of survey respondents strongly agreed with the statement "additional education will be worth the cost." In 2020, only 18% strongly agreed with the statement. In 2019 56% of survey respondents strongly agreed with the statement "additional education will make me an attractive job candidate to potential employers and help me get a good job." In 2020, only 24% strongly agreed with the statement.

Department Lead:



Jessica Duren

Assistant Commissioner for
Communications & Outreach

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Promoting Pathways

What?

DHEWD will launch a communication campaign to share information about the value of postsecondary education and its role in workforce development. The campaign will include public speaking, social media, and other communication channels. It will be based loosely on "Kentucky's Higher Education Matters/#KYHigherEdMatters" campaign.

DHEWD has also requested ARPA funding that will expand the reach of this initiative if appropriated. Additional funds will allow the department to launch a paid awareness campaign to provide Missourians of all ages with information about the importance of earning credentials, services offered at Job Centers, and the resources associated with the state's Journey to College and student financial aid programs.

Who?

The Commissioner will be the primary spokesperson for this campaign. DHEWD's Outreach team will also include talking points from the campaign in their presentations to students, families, school counselors, and others around the state. Finally, board members and others who wish to participate will also have opportunities to do so.

Win

- The Commissioner will speak at at least one community event per month.
- Videos highlighting each pathway and student journeys will be released.
- The Outreach team will develop presentations to raise awareness to junior high students
- The department will launch a podcast featuring employers, educators, students, and partners.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicators Impacted:
FAFSA Filing, Enrollment

Why?

Collaboration is one of DHEWD's four values. The department works regularly with partners whose work impacts the state's big goals for educational attainment and labor force participation. It is important to recognize the contributions of those people, organizations, and state agencies. Their efforts, coupled with DHEWD's, make a big difference.

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Celebrating Partners

What?

DHEWD will spotlight the work of people, organizations, and state agencies whose work drives progress toward the state's big goals for educational attainment and labor force participation through a series of videos and panel discussions. Videos will be shared on the department's social media channels and at Coordinating Board for Higher Education and State Workforce Development Board meetings. Panel presentations that allow a more in-depth conversation about partners' work will be planned for the CBHE's quarterly work sessions.

In addition, DHEWD's Outreach team will share information about resources available through partner organizations when they meet with students, families, school counselors, financial aid officers, and others around the state.

Who?

Increased awareness of resources will benefit students and job-seekers.

Win

- DHEWD's Outreach staff will include general descriptions and links about the Missouri Scholarship & Loan Foundation's financial aid programs in publications and presentations.
- The CBHE will have an opportunity to engage with partners at each quarterly work session in 2022.
- DHEWD's Communications team will produce four videos showcasing great work being done by partner organizations in 2022.

Department Lead:

Jessica Duren

Assistant Commissioner for
Communications & Outreach



Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

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Work

Why?

Fast Track. By 2028, 65% of good jobs in Missouri will require some kind of postsecondary credential. Before 2019, Missouri did not have a financial aid program designed to meet the needs of the 1.3 million adults whose highest level of education is a high school diploma. Fast Track offers those individuals an opportunity to earn a certificate or associate degree, or to complete work toward a bachelor's degree. Removing or extending the sunset will allow that work to continue, and removing the clawback provision will encourage increased participation.

Access Missouri. The 2021 Equity in Missouri Higher Education Report found that almost half of Missouri students struggle to pay for tuition and fees, and about a third struggle with to cover the cost of books and supplies. Fifty-six percent had jobs, and 27% had more than one job. About half of respondents faced food insecurity. Access Missouri, the state's only need-based financial aid program, provides financial resources to students struggling to meet these basic needs.

MoExcels and Core Funding. Funding for public colleges and universities has fluctuated for years, and was only restored to FY 2010 levels (not adjusted for inflation) in FY 2022. Missouri was 46th of 50 states in per-capita public higher education support in 2018-2019, the most recent year for which data are available. Limited funds restrict schools' ability to maintain existing programs, offer new programs, and provide student support.



Department Lead:

Gerren McHam

Special Assistant for External Relations

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Advocacy

What?

DHEWD staff will advocate for legislative support for items that will allow the department to drive progress toward the Big Goals, including removing the sunset and clawback provisions of the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant, funding for MoExcels, and increased funding to bring Access Missouri awards up to the statutory maximums. DHEWD staff will also advocate for increased core funding for public colleges and universities.

Who?

Fast Track provides financial support to low-income adults who seek to earn a degree or certificate that leads to work in a high-wage, high-demand occupation. MoExcels allows institutions to enroll more students in programs and lead to work in high-wage, high-demand occupations, and to reach populations that have historically been underserved by higher education. Access Missouri provides financial support to low-income Missourians. Increased core funding allows public colleges and universities to cover mandatory/inflationary costs without reducing spending for services that are vital to student learning and success.

Win

- Fast Track sunset is removed or extended, and the clawback provision removed or softened. Removal of these provisions will allow the program to continue to grow.
- MoExcels funded at at least the level requested by the Coordinating Board.
- Access Missouri funded at the level requested by the Coordinating Board.
- Increase in core funding for public colleges and universities.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicators Impacted:

Enrollment, Completion Rates, Net Cost/Price, Per-Student Funding for Public Institutions, Unemployment Rate

Why?

The Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development is a new state agency, formed in 2019 from the former Department of Higher Education, Division of Workforce Development, and Missouri Economic Research and Information Center.

Succession planning, updated job descriptions tied to the principles and values, and performance metrics for each position are essential to develop positive organizational culture and expectations. Retention can be positively impacted when team members are satisfied and have clear expectations.

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Succession Planning

What?

DHEWD will develop a succession plan to capture accurate and updated job descriptions to ensure continuity of work, include performance metrics, and ensure job descriptions are aligned with the department's principles and values.

Tying team members' work to the strategic planning efforts provides transparency and clear expectations, while strengthening job satisfaction and personal ownership.

This initiative will be led by Human Resources and the Commissioner's Office,

Who?

The DHEWD succession plan initiative affects all team members of the department and, indirectly, the citizens and organizations we work with.

Win

Within the next 12 months, job descriptions will be reviewed and updated to include accurate duties, performance metrics, and alignment with principles and values. Cross-training opportunities will be identified to support continuity of work.



Department Lead:

Misty Nunn

Chief of Staff

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

**Best Place to
Work**

Indicator Impacted:
Retention of DHEWD Employees

Why?

The Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development is a new state agency, formed in 2019 from the former Department of Higher Education, Division of Workforce Development, and Missouri Economic Research and Information Center.

Within the next 12 months, job descriptions will be reviewed and updated, to include accurate duties, performance metrics, alignment with principles and values, and cross-training opportunities will be identified for continuity of work. Our goal is to have turnover no greater than 15%. The current rate is 23% (June 2021) .



Department Lead:
Misty Nunn
Chief of Staff

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Operationalize Values

What?

DHEWD established the Best Place to Work Steering Committee (BPTW SteerCo) in 2021. Throughout 2021, the committee has been gathering information about best practices in organizational culture, reviewed department Quarterly Pulse Survey (QPS) data and other feedback, and begun to develop recommendations to support positive department culture.

Through this initiative, the committee will review the department's current policies, practices, and procedures to ensure alignment with the department values of teamwork, collaboration, accountability, and work-life balance, while advancing positive organizational culture that strengthens diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Who?

This initiative will impact DHEWD staff and, indirectly, the citizens and organizations we work with.

Win

Success on this initiative will be reflected in QPS responses during 2022. Our goal is for employees' responses to the QPS statements, "Managers create a sense of belonging to the organization," and "Managers encourage employees to take a personal stake in their jobs," to indicate that 80% or more employees agree with the statements. In April, 69% of DHEWD staff agreed with the statements, compared to a state employee average of 57%.

Educational
Attainment

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Indicator Impacted:
QPS (Personal Ownership Question)

Why?

The Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development is a young state department, formed in 2019 from the former Department of Higher Education, Division of Workforce Development, and Missouri Economic Research and Information Center.

Strengthening the organizational culture is a top priority of the department, and recognizing team members for performance, which will have a positive impact on retention and overall organizational health.

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Rewards & Recognition

What?

The Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development has a non-monetary rewards and recognition playbook that was developed in 2019. With a focus on strengthening the organizational culture, the playbook will be reviewed and revised to reflect new and updated opportunities to recognize team members for performance.

Who?

The DHEWD Rewards & Recognition initiative effects all team members of the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, with leadership provided by the human resources department and revitalized rewards and recognition committee, and indirectly, the citizens and organizations we work with.

Win

Within the next 12 months, the rewards and recognition playbook will be reviewed and revised to enhance opportunities to recognize team members for performance, with increased growth documented in retention, with a goal of reaching and maintaining 85%. Current retention is 77% (June 2021). Our goal for employees' responses to the QPS statements, "Managers create a sense of belonging to the organization," and "Managers encourage employees to take a personal stake in their jobs," is that 80% or more employees agree with these statements. In April, 69% of DHEWD staff agreed with the statements, compared to a state employee average of 57%.



Department Lead:

Misty Nunn

Chief of Staff

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicator Impacted:

Retention of DHEWD Employees

Why?

The Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development is a young state department, formed in 2019 from the former Department of Higher Education, Division of Workforce Development, and Missouri Economic Research and Information Center.

Prior to the merger of departments, a social/fun committees existed. Reintroducing this committee will help have a positive impact on retention and overall organizational health. Additionally, the work of the committee can strengthen personal ownership and belonging in the department.



Department Lead:
Misty Nunn
Chief of Staff

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Fun Committee

What?

DHEWD has a focus of strengthening the organizational culture and being the best place to work among state agencies. Reestablishing the Fun Committee will create opportunities for social activities and interactive events for building relationships and creating a sense of belonging. Events such as food days, dress up/down days, celebrations, recognition of DHEWD anniversaries, and others will be scheduled at least monthly.

Who?

The Fun Committee will include a diverse group of DHEWDs, and activities and events will be designed for all team members, and indirectly, impact the citizens and organizations we work with.

Win

The Fun Committee will be established, with monthly activities and interactive events planned. Within the next year, the retention rate of team members will increase to 85%, and agreement to the personal belonging statements on the Quarterly Pulse Survey (QPS) will increase to 80%. Current retention is 77% (June 2021). In April 2021, 69% of the DHEWD team members agreed to the statements, "Managers create a sense of belonging to the organization," and "Managers encourage employees to take a personal stake in their jobs," compared to a state employee average of 57%.

Educational
Attainment

Labor Force
Participation

Best Place to
Work

Indicators Impacted:

Retention of DHEWD Employees, QPS (Personal Ownership Question)

PARKING LOT

On Hold

ARPA Requests

DHEWD has requested that ARPA funds be allocated for IT projects, including several improvements to MERIC systems and programs and enhancement of the program used to manage the CORE 42 system; modernizing Missouri's job centers; and outreach projects including increasing FAFSA filing, raising awareness of DHEWD services, and the ReturnStrong campaign. Decisions about these requests will be made through the regular budget process. If granted, the additional work associated with these funds will begin on July 1, 2022.

Degrees when Due Expansion

Degrees When Due is a national initiative sponsored by the Institute for Higher Education Policy to identify and implement strategies to reengage Missouri students with some college credit but no degree. Ten Missouri institutions completed the first full two-year project, which ended October 31, 2021. Several institutions have indicated interest in participating in a second round. DHEWD staff will review data about the outcomes of the first round before deciding whether to proceed with the second round. If data indicate that the project was productive, the department will launch a second round on July 1, 2022.

Enterprise Resource Planning

The state's Office of Administration is planning to launch a significant redesign of its financial and human resource systems. When successfully implemented, this work will support DHEWD's efforts to make the department the best place to work by streamlining processes and reducing some workloads. OA is in the process of procuring some of the services that will be needed to begin work on the ERP. The official launch date of this initiative is unknown.

Website Redesign

DHEWD's Communications team plans to redesign the department's website to better reflect the full scope of the new department's work. That work cannot begin until the Office of Administration's IT Services Division has capacity to support it. The official launch date of this initiative is unknown.

In Development

Expansion of Apprenticeship Programs to Missouri National Guard

DHEWD's Office of Workforce Development is working with the state's Office of the Military Advocate to develop a plan to enroll members of the Missouri National Guard in apprenticeship programs. This work will likely be reflected in a new initiative added to the 2022 strategic placemat.

Pilot on Offering Training at Churches

DHEWD's Office of Workforce Development is working with the Department of Social Services, the Ecumenical Council of St. Louis, and a college to explore the possibility of establishing a pilot to test the feasibility of offering training services at churches. If this work continues to move forward, it will likely be reflected in a new initiative added to the 2022 strategic placemat.

Attainment Academy

DHEWD's Office of Postsecondary Policy is participating in the State Higher Education Executive Official's (SHEEO's) Attainment Academy. Through this work, DHEWD will identify best practices to increase educational attainment for Missouri adults. This work will likely be reflected in new initiatives on the 2023 strategic placemat.

REFERENCES

Summer Bridge Program

¹ Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development. *Report on High School Graduates Performance*. (2021) [LINK](#).

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³ Education Data Initiative. *College Dropout Rates*. (2021) [LINK](#).

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Social Services on Campus

¹ Institute for Research on Higher Education. *College Affordability Diagnosis: Missouri*. Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania. (2016). [LINK](#).

² Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development. *College Affordability Survey*. (2020).

Student Mental Health

¹ Jia H, Guerin RJ, Barile JP, et al. National and State Trends in Anxiety and Depression Severity Scores Among Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021;70:1427–1432. (2020–2021) [LINK](#).

² Active Minds, “Student Mental Health Survey (September 2020).” (2020).

Campus Child Care Expansion

¹ *Child-Care-Landscape-Data-Report-Executive-Summary.pdf* (mochildcareaware.org). 2020–2021.

² <https://meric.mo.gov/workforce-research/occupational-projections>.

³ American Community Survey.