




COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor
The Honorable Barry Knight, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Janet Howell, Co-Chair, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee
The Honorable George Barker, Co-Chair, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee

FROM: Peter Blake, Director 

DATE: September 30, 2022

SUBJECT: Preliminary plan to address recruitment and retention of Pell-eligible students

The 2022 Acts of Assembly, Chapter 2 (Item 142 M) provides funding to improve the recruitment and retention of Pell-eligible/low-income students. In the first year SCHEV is charged with hiring a nationally-recognized consultant and to work with institutions that have below average Pell enrollments to develop recruitment and retention plans.

In the second year, funds are provided to support all institutions with the recruitment and retention of Pell students. The budget language includes reporting dates to provide periodic updates on the status of the project to the Governor and General Assembly. The following is a report on work completed to date and a preliminary plan for this initiative over the coming year.

SCHEV staff provided an overview of the project and received feedback from Council members, the Council of Presidents, other institution staff and staff of the money committees, Governor's office and the Department of Planning and Budget. Based on this input, SCHEV issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in early September to secure a consultant. The deadline for responses to the RFP was September 26, 2022. During the month of October, these proposals will be reviewed and a contractor will be selected.

In addition, SCHEV contacted the institutions with below average Pell enrollments to provide a primary point of contact for the first phase of the initiative. The institutions with below average in-state Pell enrollments are: Christopher Newport University, James Madison University, University of Mary Washington, University of Virginia, Virginia Military Institute, Virginia Tech and William & Mary. These are the seven institutions required to work with the contractor to develop plans to improve recruitment and retention of low-income students.

Over the coming months, the contractor is expected to provide the following four deliverables to SCHEV:

- **Deliverable 1:** Conduct an overview of the higher education pipeline and identify barriers to the enrollment of Pell-eligible and low-income students.
- **Deliverable 2:** Scan activities that have a demonstrable or potential impact on improving recruitment and retention of Pell-eligible or low-income students and develop a matrix of activities that are demonstrated to improve recruitment and retention of low-income students and the level to which institutions have engaged in each of these activities.
- **Deliverable 3:** Work with institutions with below average Pell-eligible enrollments to assess their current recruitment and retention practices and support their development of individualized recruitment and retention plans for low-income students.
- **Deliverable 4:** Issue a final report.

These deliverables are expected to be completed on or about the following dates:

- **By October 1, 2022** - submission of a preliminary work plan and progress to date to the Governor, the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees.
- **By November 30, 2022** – Partial completion of deliverable 1 and completion of deliverable 2; submission of preliminary results to SCHEV.
- **By February 1, 2023** – Completion of deliverable 3 so that institutions may submit plans for review.
- **By May 15, 2023** – Completion of deliverable 1 to include any applicable reports, tables and matrixes. Provide draft of deliverable 4 - a final report to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriation and Senate Finance and Appropriation Committees.

In addition to work with the below average institutions, SCHEV will begin working with stakeholders and the remaining institutions in the coming months to identify the application process to support the distributions of funds in the second year through a competitive grant process.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact me (peterblake@schev.edu) or Lee Andes (leeandes@schev.edu).

Reference text from Item 142 M of the 2022 Acts of Assembly, Chapter 2

M.1. Out of this appropriation \$250,000 the first year and \$25,000,000 the second year from the general fund is provided to enhance efforts to recruit and retain students eligible for Pell grant assistance at public institutions of higher education.

2. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia shall work with institutions with below average enrollment of Pell-eligible students to develop individualized recruitment and retention plans targeting low-income students. The Council shall partner with a nationally recognized consultant with experience in this area. The Council shall present a preliminary plan to the Governor, the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees no later than October 1, 2022. The Council shall present a final report on the final products for each institution to the same group no later than June 1, 2023.

3. Any Virginia public institution of higher education may apply for pilot funding in the second year through a competitive grant process. Applications must demonstrate efforts to restructure outreach, recruitment, admission and retention procedures. Funds may be used to support initiatives to attract, enroll, and retain low-income students. Institutions may also request funding for additional need-based financial aid. Priority shall be given to institutions with below-average Pell enrollment and to institutions with below-average endowments.

4. Any institutional grant under this initiative shall be subject to performance outcomes established in paragraph 5.

5. The Council shall establish eligibility criteria, evaluate proposals, determine award sizes, establish performance outcomes and monitor performance in consultation with staff from the House Appropriations and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees, the Office of the Secretary of Education, and the Department of Planning and Budget. The Council shall notify the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee 30 days prior to releasing funds to institutions.

6. The Council shall report periodically on activities related to this pilot and make recommendations for any potential future support to institutions that successfully meet their defined outcomes.

cc: The Honorable John Goettman, Chief of Staff
The Honorable Aimee Rogstad Guidera, Secretary of Education
Ms. April Kees, Staff Director, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee
Ms. Anne E. Oman, Staff Director, House Appropriations Committee
Mr. Michael Maul, Director, Department of Planning and Budget