



Kentucky will ensure more students earn high-quality degrees and credentials.



SUCCESS

A Strategic Priority

Statewide Successes & Challenges

Kentucky's colleges and universities made impressive gains in retention and completion over the last decade. The six-year graduation rate rose from 47.6% to 56.4% at public universities, while the three-year graduation rate at KCTCS jumped 13.3 points to 33%.

However, while institutions are narrowing completion gaps at a historic pace, more progress is needed to close them. The six-year graduation rate of African-American/Black, Hispanic/Latinx, indigenous and mixed-race students currently stands at 44%, and the three-year rate is 24.3%.

Increasing degree production for everyone is an overriding concern of this agenda, but we are not prioritizing quantity over quality. High-quality credentials equip students to thrive in a rapidly evolving world that demands critical thinking, ingenuity, flexibility and teamwork. From certificates to doctorates, we must ensure students master the content, skills and mindsets necessary for future success and fulfillment. The challenge is producing quality credentials at a pace commensurate with our overarching attainment goal.

Systemwide Responses

In the years ahead, Kentucky higher education will double down on the widespread adoption of high-impact practices that research has proven to be effective. As we begin this agenda, CPE is launching the Kentucky Student Success

Collaborative, a one-of-a-kind center dedicated to the advancement of innovative strategies and best practices. This entity will increase our capacity to engage and unite campuses in more sustained, comprehensive improvement efforts.

We will continue to improve transfer from two-year to four-year institutions by helping students and practitioners understand how credits apply to specific degree programs across the state. We will promote credit for prior learning and accelerated programs to make our institutions friendlier for working-age adults, an underserved market that is critical to creating a more competitive workforce and reaching our 60x30 goal.

The system will not prioritize the quantity of credentials over quality.

Just as technology is revolutionizing the way we work, it is also transforming teaching and learning. Digital classrooms, global online collaborations and personalized learning software are only the beginning. Combined with face-to-face instruction, technology can accelerate and deepen learning in profound ways. But we cannot harness this powerful tool if educators lack training and resources, or if broadband access is not universally accessible and affordable.

Finally, we intend to make internships, apprenticeships, service and other forms of work-based learning a mandatory curricular experience. Students should be able to connect classroom learning to the world of work, and articulate these connections to employers. More robust employer partnerships will increase the relevance and responsiveness of academic programs, and ensure students are able to secure meaningful employment in their field of study.



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Objectives, Strategies & KPIs

5. Increase persistence in and timely completion of postsecondary programs.

- 5a. Share, implement and evaluate emerging, promising and proven practices supporting student success and college completion.
- 5b. Identify and promote efforts to ensure “on-time” program completion.
- 5c. Work with campuses and other state and national partners to close opportunity and success gaps for historically underserved students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.
- 5d. Work with education providers to limit barriers to enrollment and completion for adult learners and other students balancing the competing demands of work, life, family and school.

6. Maximize transfer of academic and experiential credit.

- 6a. Work with campuses to reduce barriers that prevent the seamless transfer of credit.
- 6b. Promote transfer opportunities and program pathways.

7. Ensure academic offerings are high-quality, relevant and inclusive.

- 7a. Work with campuses to ensure the essential competencies and outcomes outlined in the Kentucky Graduate Profile are embedded in all academic programs.
- 7b. Work with campuses to ensure academic and co-curricular offerings are equity-focused and inclusive.

Key Performance Indicators

Undergraduate Credentials Conferred (State & Campus-Level): Total degrees and credentials awarded by public universities and KCTCS institutions.

Graduation Rate (State & Campus-Level): The percent of first-time, full-time credential-seeking students receiving a bachelor’s degree within 6 years at public universities, or an associate degree or credential within 3 years at KCTCS from their starting institution.

2-Year to 4-Year Transfer (Campus-Level): Percent of first-time, full-time credential-seeking students entering KCTCS in the fall who transfer to any in-state, 4-year public institution within 3 years of entry.

Persistence Rate (State-Level): Percent of first-time, credential-seeking students enrolled in the summer or fall who are still enrolled the following fall at any in-state postsecondary institution or, in the case of KCTCS students, have completed a credential.

Retention Rate (Campus-Level): Percent of first-time, credential-seeking students enrolled in the summer or fall who return to the same institution the following fall.