

Meeting of the
OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
October 27, 2022

AGENDA ITEM #18.1:

2023 Legislative Agenda.

SUBJECT: Approval of the State Regents' 2023 Legislative Agenda.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the State Regents approve the 2023 Legislative Agenda, as described below.

BACKGROUND:

The Legislative Agenda is developed as a guideline to frame issues of interest to the Oklahoma state system of higher education that could be addressed by the Oklahoma Legislature.

POLICY ISSUES:

This action is consistent with State Regents' policy.

ANALYSIS:

The 2023 Legislative Agenda sets forward the following list of issues of interest to the Oklahoma state system of higher education, which may be brought before the Oklahoma Legislature during the 2023 Legislative Session.

- **Workforce development incentive programs.** Higher education continues to build strong connections between academic programs and high-growth, high-demand occupations and industries, including micro-credentials to equip learners to fill critical workforce needs. STEM bachelor's degree production has increased 47% over the last 10 years, and has increased 29% at all degree levels. Our public colleges and universities will create more pathways to degree completion in key fields, including engineering, nursing and computer science. Collaborating with the CareerTech system, state system institutions will work to better align the nursing student corridor from Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to Registered Nurse (RN) to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).
- **Strategic planning.** The State Regents are completing a comprehensive strategic planning process for the state system of higher education. Public higher education will engage the Legislature to advance recommendations to strengthen the student pipeline, enhance student success, expand workforce development and streamline system operations.
- **Expand the teacher education pipeline.** The Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program ("Inspired to Teach"), approved during the 2022 legislative session, is designed to draw high-quality, effective educators for our public schools through scholarship funds and targeted incentives to help our state meet the critical need for more teachers.

We propose statutory revisions for program administration, including establishing a pathway for home school graduates to enroll in accredited teacher education programs.

- **Concurrent Enrollment Task Force.** The concurrent enrollment program strengthens student preparation, reduces family college costs and decreases the time required to complete a degree. The state system of higher education will work in partnership with the Concurrent Enrollment Task Force to advance recommendations focused on access to concurrent enrollment, concurrent course options, and additional investment in the program.
- **Universal FAFSA Completion.** States across the country have reported increases in student enrollment when Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion is required. Public higher education recommends universal FAFSA completion for Oklahoma high school seniors with a waiver option to address student needs, when warranted.
- **Oklahoma's Promise.** The Oklahoma's Promise scholarship program has been named by the Southern Regional Education Board as a top promise scholarship program in the nation. Goals for the 2023 legislative session include streamlining high school course requirements for scholarship eligibility; an adjustable income limit to increase flexibility for eligible students and families; and an appeal process to assist students facing unique circumstances.

(Supplement)