



State Council of
Higher Education for Virginia

Initiative 5: Communications Strategy
SCHEV Council Meeting
January 12, 2016
Executive Committee

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Communications Initiative

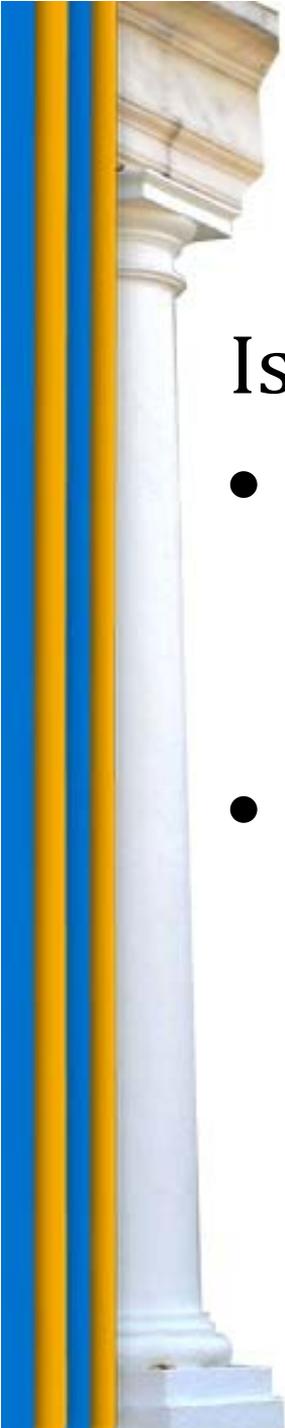
Launch a communications strategy to address public knowledge and benefits of higher education, through Council reports, traditional media, social media and other means.

Activities Since Last Meeting

- Held calls with Council Chair and Vice-chair
- Consulted with marketing experts
- Worked with Virginia Economic Development Partnership and institutions on a higher education message to support economic development
- Hired an associate of communications

Proposed Activities for 2016

- Determine audience, message and desired outcomes of communications initiative
- Create a structure for input and engagement by institutions and other stakeholders
- Build awareness of The Virginia Plan and progress made in the goals, initiatives, measures and targets
- ~~Hire and associate of communications and outreach~~



Issues Related to Communications

Issues:

- Multiple messages by higher education stakeholders that are not tied to a broader outcome
- Lack of consistent message and awareness of value higher education brings



Examples: Higher Education Community

Issue 50,000 STEM-H Credentials

~Governor McAuliffe

Triple Credentials by 2021

~Chancellor of VA Community Colleges

Support 100,000 Additional Degrees

~Top Jobs 21 Legislation

Best-educated State by 2030

~VBHEC, Council on Virginia's Future, SCHEV

Institution Messages



Examples: Higher Education Provider Community

Sample of Providers

- Career coaches in high schools
- Access providers
- Counselors
- One-stop centers
- Adult-education providers
- VA529
- Gear-up

Each provides specialized services, but no assurance that consistent key messages are delivered

Example: Business and Economic Development



Asset
Rich

Pro-
Business

Glob
Focu

Site Selection Tools / Announcements & Closings Database / Maps and GIS Data / Helpful Links
Higher Education Business Resources / Blog / NewsCenter / Media Gallery

Higher Education Business Resources

With over 214,000 students enrolled in Virginia's 15 public four-year institutions, the state is the ideal location for individuals seeking to excel and further their education. Virginia has several colleges and universities that have achieved national acclaim and have areas of studies lending great value to companies across the state. The state's public four-year institutions awarded over 51,100 degrees in the 2012-2013 academic year.

Please follow the links below for selected university based economic development resources:

[Christopher Newport University](#)

[George Mason University](#)

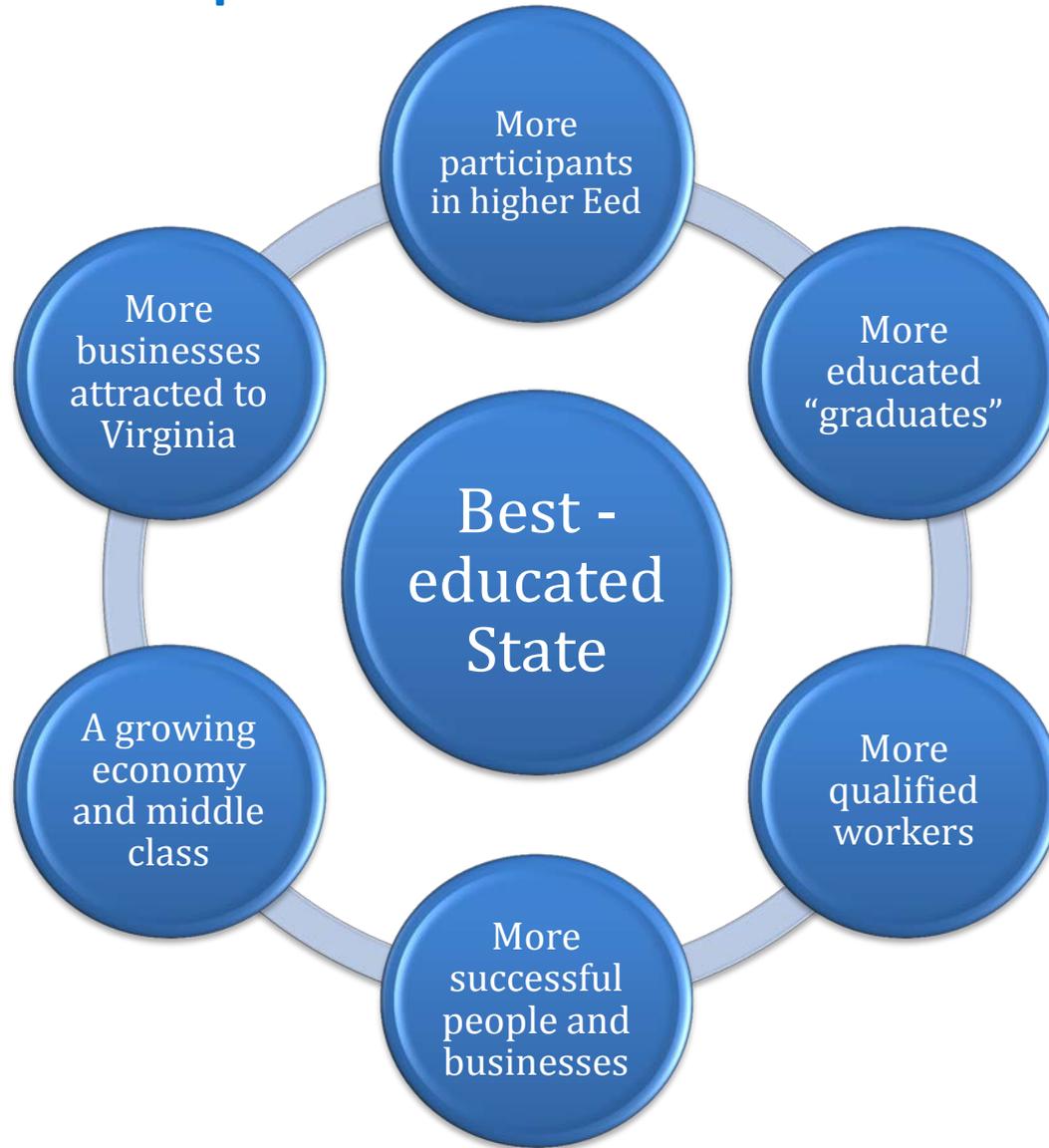
[Longwood University](#)

[The College of William and Mary](#)

[James Madison University](#)

[Norfolk State University](#)

Result: Need to develop messages that will be used across multiple audiences and stakeholders



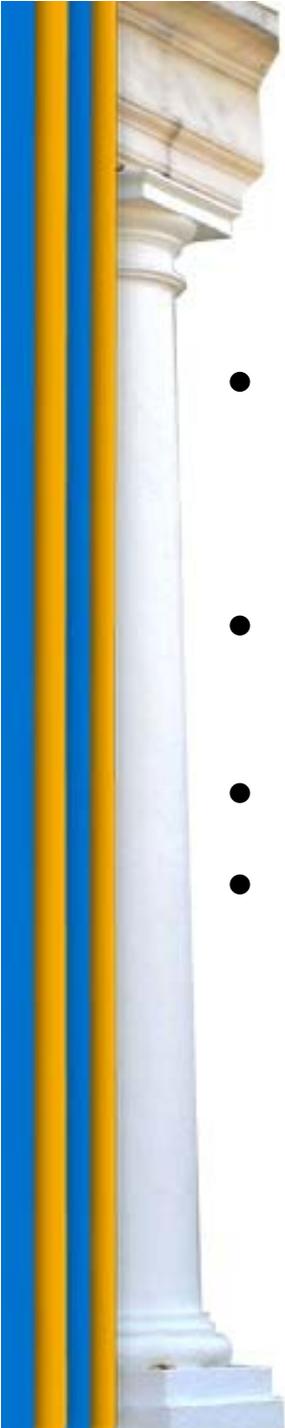
Communications Strategy: Two Key Areas of Focus

Create a structure for input, engagement, and coordination with:

- Institutions
- Governor's staff
- Higher education stakeholders

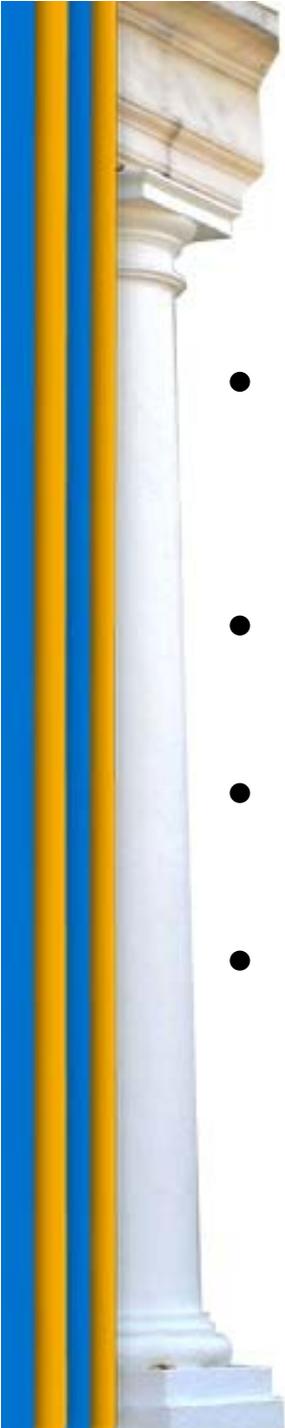
Market and support outreach of the value of higher education to:

- Parents
- Students
- Businesses
- General population
- General Assembly members



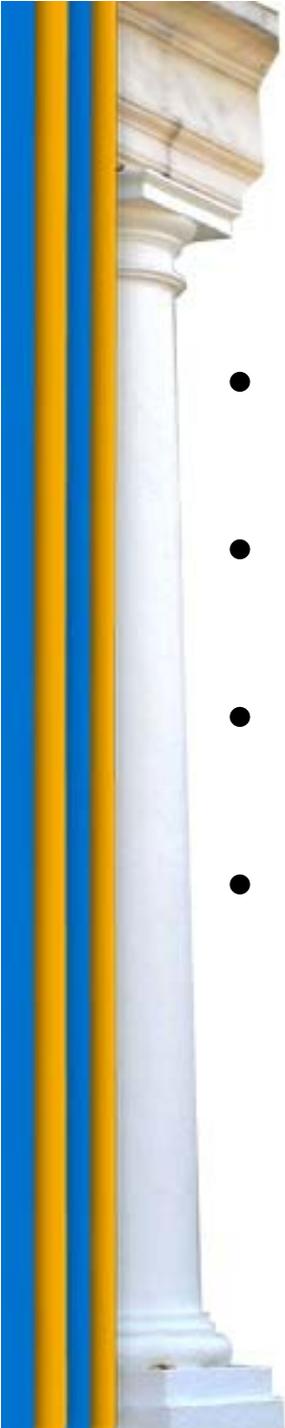
Next Steps: Create Structure and Input

- **February/March:** Convene a group of key stakeholders to provide input, identify strategies and expected outcomes
- **March/April:** Create message and develop full communications plan
- **May/June:** Launch strategy
- **June-December:** Hold regular check-in meetings, conference calls, and surveys to assess impact on message use and opportunities to adjust and improve



Next Steps: Market and Support Outreach of the Value of Higher Education Parents and Potential Students

- **February/March:** Coordinate a meeting with higher education outreach providers identify strategies to support consistent messaging and content needs
- **March-May:** Identify and develop a communications strategy, that supports consistent content
- **June:** Hold a forum focused on access and student success. Introduce the strategy and gain feedback
- **August-September:** Launch strategies and messages as students return to school



Next Steps: Build awareness of The Virginia Plan

- **Jan/Feb:** Seek endorsements of the plan with key stakeholders
- **March:** Launch new website, initiate external newsletter, develop data insights related to measures
- **April:** Identify and begin reports on promising practices related to The Virginia Plan
- **May-December:** Ongoing release of newsletters, data and practices reports and briefings with key stakeholder groups