

## Virginia Plan for Higher Education: Annual Report 2018

The Virginia Plan for Higher Education provides a framework for making the Commonwealth the best-educated state by 2030 through goals, initiatives and progress measures. The summary below highlights 2018's strengths and areas for improvement, as well as 2019 recommendations. More details are available in the full report.

[www.schev.edu/2018AnnualReport](http://www.schev.edu/2018AnnualReport)

| STRENGTHS   | AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT   |
|---|---|
| <b>Educational Attainment</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Virginia ranks 6th among states in educational attainment (those with a workforce credential or degree, ages 25-64).</li> <li>✓ Virginia ranked 1st as the “best state for higher education” and 4th as the “best states for business.”</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Virginia’s overall ranking for the working age population (ages 25-64) could decline over time.</li> <li>✗ Gaps in attainment remain by region and by race/ethnicity.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Access and Affordability</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Student borrowing, debt and default rates remain steady.</li> <li>✓ Affordable pathway options, including those related to transfer, continue to grow and improve.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ The projected number of high school graduates between 2018 and 2030 is expected to remain flat and will become more diverse.</li> <li>✗ Affordability remains a concern.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Student Success</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Graduation rates increased at public four-year institutions and remediation rates improved.</li> <li>✓ Institutions continue to grow programs that support high-demand occupations and quality in education.</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Low-income, minority race/ethnicity, adults ages 25 and older and those from areas of the state with low educational attainment rates (underrepresented students) continue to complete at a lower rate than others.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Innovation and Investment</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Recent state investments and institutional efficiencies over the last two years have kept tuition and fee growth lower.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ While growth is lower in recent years, rising costs and tuition at institutions remain a concern.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Economic and Cultural Prosperity</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Graduate earnings increased slightly.</li> <li>✓ Business partnerships with higher education to support research, internships and jobs present an opportunity for students and employers to engage.</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Virginia’s ranking in annual research expenditures compared to other states remains flat.</li> </ul>   |

## Recommendations for 2019

### **Policymakers and policy influencers**

- ✓ Support funding and initiatives for higher education that make college more affordable and predictable, increase talent in high-demand areas and support institutional quality and excellence.
- ✓ Review state financial aid funding to ensure that money is aligned with the Commonwealth's goals.
- ✓ Adopt strategies that further align funding with the needs of the Commonwealth through recommendations of the strategic finance plan.
- ✓ Grow affordable pathway programs, including transfer and dual enrollment, that are proven to increase educational attainment.
- ✓ Invest in the technology talent pipeline and other high-demand areas in cooperation with institutions and business.
- ✓ Have agencies and regions set shared goals for educational attainment.
- ✓ Increase information and resources available for the new college and career graduation and accreditation requirements in secondary education.

### **Institutions**

- ✓ Review recruitment and retention strategies to ensure that all students have an opportunity to enroll and succeed.
- ✓ Implement strategies to increase rates of transfer and completion of students from associate to bachelor's degree.
- ✓ Grow programs and initiatives that support the technology talent pipeline and other high-demand areas.
- ✓ Continue to identify promising practices and opportunities for efficiencies while maintaining excellence in education.
- ✓ Support a study of graduate outcomes.
- ✓ Align and prioritize strategies with the state needs in the six-year plan process.

### **Business and community organizations**

- ✓ Increase internships and work-based learning opportunities.
- ✓ Invest in research and commercialization.
- ✓ Support educational opportunities for employees and their communities.