



Our Work

The Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) is Kentucky's higher education coordinating body. We are committed to strengthening the workforce, economy and quality of life through the continuous improvement and efficient operation of a high-quality, diverse and accessible system of postsecondary education.

Our Work Matters to Kentucky

Kentucky higher education matters to the futures of our citizens. College graduates earn more money, have lower rates of unemployment, enjoy better health, live longer and are more active citizens and volunteers.

Kentucky higher education matters also to our economic future. States with high levels of educational attainment generate higher tax revenues, create more jobs and spend fewer resources on public assistance, disease and incarceration.

There is no better investment in Kentucky's future, workforce and economy than higher education: For every dollar the state invests in a student seeking a bachelor's degree, the return to the state's economy over the student's lifetime is \$1.7 million - 42 times the initial investment.

Our Progress Raising Educational Attainment

CPE's Big Goal is 60% of Kentuckians with a postsecondary education by 2030 and we're making considerable progress:

- [Educational attainment of Kentuckians has increased](#) four percentage points since 2017. We have made significant progress with a current rate of 54.3%.
- [Kentucky's growth in short-term certificates in high-demand workforce areas leads the nation](#), with undergraduate credential attainment at 16%. These certificates position students to move into the job market and also into pathways for higher level degrees and credentials.
- [CPE's work in closing opportunity gaps](#) has resulted in underrepresented minority and low-income students exceeding statewide averages on a number of key performance indicators.
- [Kentucky's growth in completion rates and year-to-year improvement for six-year graduation rates](#) is one of the highest in the nation. Also, Kentucky is one of the first states in the country to recover enrollment from the COVID-19 pandemic with record enrollment gains at several of our institutions.

Our Progress Innovating Kentucky's System of Higher Education

CPE is leading efforts to make Kentucky a national higher education leader:

- [The Commonwealth Education Continuum](#) is recognized as a national model for state P20 councils dedicated to strengthening the education pipeline.
- [The Kentucky Student Success Collaborative](#) is the first statewide center in the country to assist two- and four-year institutions accelerate progress on student success while linking to the business community and state policy makers.
- [The Students' Right to Know dashboard](#), Kentucky's groundbreaking online college planning tool, offers extensive data to create greater transparency about affordability and return on investment at Kentucky's public colleges and universities.
- [Kentucky's Innovation Scholarship Pilot Program](#), funded by the 2022-24 budget, sets the state apart for its investment in financial assistance and wrap-around supports for displaced populations.

Our Progress Strengthening Kentucky's Workforce

CPE's priority of workforce alignment and increased employment outcomes fuels several initiatives:

- [Our Kentucky Graduate Profile](#) aligns programmatic curriculum with essential (employability) skills acquisition for better career outcomes.
- [Our academic program approval review process](#) ensures new degree program at our campuses meet regional workforce needs and overall market demand.
- [Our Cultural Competency Certification process](#) provides a framework for campuses to integrate training to prepare graduates for working with diverse coworkers.
- [Our new Workforce Initiatives Unit](#) has made significant progress in strengthening programs that develop and expand the talent pipeline in critical workforce areas, such as healthcare.

Our Progress Making College More Affordable

CPE and Kentucky's campuses are committed to making college affordable:

- [Kentucky's campuses allocate one out of five tuition dollars](#) toward institutional grants to assist students with costs.
- [Our tuition caps have kept increases under 3.0%](#) in each of the last five years (3.5%, on average, since 2009-10).
- [Our efforts around dual credit course and scholarship awareness helped result in an 85% increase](#) in the number of students taking the courses through Kentucky's public institutions since 2015.



CPE Budget Request

CPE requests additional appropriations to support positions and services, and provide incentives to meet statutorily required mandates to increase Kentucky's postsecondary education return on investment and improve economic opportunity and social mobility for all citizens.

Higher Education Coordination and Management

Over the past decade and a half, CPE's responsibilities and expectations have grown significantly, while state-supported staffing levels, programs and services have declined.

CPE has been fortunate to secure philanthropic and one-time federal funds to support some of this new work. However, these funds are time-limited and do not provide the sustained commitment needed to fulfill the agency's obligations.

Incentive Grants

Administered by CPE, this fund would provide incentive grants to campuses to increase educational attainment, strengthen the workforce alignment, foster collaboration, improve efficiencies and build a more streamlined pipeline along the P-20 educational continuum.

Examples may include (but are not limited to) funds that would:

- **Address workforce needs:** Strengthen and expand the behavioral health workforce pipeline and other high demand workforce priority areas in healthcare, education (K-12 teacher corps), technology and manufacturing.
- **Upskill adults in the workforce:** Relaunch Project Graduate, a nationally recognized program to encourage adults with some college to come back to finish their degrees. Also, expand transfer, competency-based learning and other credit-for-prior learning strategies and programs to ensure students earn credit that is due to them from prior academic or work experiences.
- **Improve graduate employability outcomes:** Incorporate Kentucky Graduate Profile, which is built on the 10 essential workplace skills (such as civic education, financial literacy and critical thinking) in all General Education programs.
- **Strengthen the K12-college-career pipeline:** Improving and expanding college readiness initiatives such as summer bridge programs and dual credit/dual enrollment opportunities.



CPE Budget Request Overview

2024-25

2025-26

CPE Agency Budget

Base for agency operations, cancer and spinal cord research, the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Network and the Kentucky Virtual Library	\$14.9M	\$14.9M
Continue KSU oversight, SREB dues increase, SREB Doctoral Scholars Program expansion	\$0.8M	\$0.9M
Expansion Request: Higher education coordination and management of programs to strengthen postsecondary-workforce initiatives	\$3M	\$3M
Expansion Request: Fund for Higher Education and Economic Development for incentive grants focused on increasing educational attainment	\$20M	\$20M

Postsecondary Operations

Support for institutional operations (base funding)	\$1.003B	\$1.001B
Offset for postsecondary operations inflationary and other cost increases	\$81.9M	\$109.2M
Federal match for KSU land-grant program	\$1.5M	\$1.5M
<i>*Current year appropriation (2023-24) needed to offset KSU land-grant program shortages</i>	<i>*\$2.1M</i>	
Performance funding incentives to increase student success	\$22.7M	\$22.7M

Asset Preservation

Offset for postsecondary construction costs increases: Debt service for \$162.4M in bond funds	\$6.4M	\$13.1M
Asset preservation and renovation costs: Debt service to support \$700M in bond funds	\$14.1M	\$42.2M

Questions? Contact Us



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