

Multi-State Educational Attainment Academy Michigan Action Plan Overview

At the invitation of SHEEO, the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU – the four-year public university trade association) invited key stakeholders, including a representative of the Governor, to attend the launch of the Attainment Academy in October 2019. Many of the participants had been involved in a prior extensive stakeholder process facilitated by the Michigan College Access Network's Higher Education Attainment Roundtable (MIHEART), resulting in the 2018 Total Talent report. In addition to the seven stakeholders who attended the initial October 2019 workshop, representatives of three other organizations were invited to subsequent planning meetings and provided input in the drafting of this Action Plan – as did a number of additional staff members of participating organizations. Participant list is included in Appendix A.

Current attainment rate: 45.5%

Goal: 60% by 2030

Attainment Priorities

In the process of developing this Action Plan, particularly in light of the COVID disruption, the team decided to focus on three Priorities.

Level I Priorities	Primary Categories of Priority
Increase postsecondary education enrollment and completion among adults	Access/Success
Increase the proportion of students completing and submitting a FAFSA	Equity/Access
Improve postsecondary participation and completion rates for economically disadvantaged students and underrepresented minorities	Equity/Access/Success
Level II Priorities	
Increase the proportion of youth with postsecondary credits/credentials earned prior to high school graduation	Equity/Access/Success
Accelerate entry into and completion of credit-bearing courses for students in need of remediation	Equity/Access/Success
Increase readiness for and enrollment in postsecondary education for students with disabilities	Equity/Access
Streamline the transfer process and increase the success rates of transfer students	Equity/Success
Create state-institutional partnership to implement Complete College America college completion strategies	Equity/Success

Organizational Acronyms:

CCs: Community colleges
CEPI: State of Michigan's Center for Education Performance and Information
DRC: Detroit Regional Chamber via its Detroit Drives Degrees initiative
ESG: Education Strategy Group
Gov. EPO: Governor Gretchen Whitmer's Executive Policy Office
H.E. Associations: (All 3 associations – MCCA, MASU, MICU)
IHEs: Institutions of Higher Education
LEO: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Development
MASU: Michigan Association of State Universities
MCAN: Michigan College Access Network
MCCA: Michigan Community College Association
MCS: Michigan Competitive Scholarship – State financial aid program
MDHHS: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
MICU: Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities
MTG: Michigan Tuition Grant – State merit-based financial aid program for students attending MI non-profit universities
SSG: Michigan office of State Scholarships and Grants, housed within MI Dept. of Treasury
TICAS: The Institute for College Access and Success
TIP: Tuition Incentive Program – State need-based financial aid program
WDA: Michigan's Workforce Development Agency, housed within LEO

Attainment Strategies and Action Steps

Priority #1: Increase postsecondary education enrollment and completion among adults

Target Population: All adults – those with no postsecondary experience and those with some experience, but no degree/certificate

Strategies and Action Steps	Lead	Collaborators	Status	Notes
Expand training on financial aid for adults (MCAN-Michigan Works partnership)	MCAN	H.E. Associations	In progress	
Pilot and scale debt <u>institutional</u> forgiveness for adults returning to college	DRC/Talent Hub	IHEs in metro Detroit area/Rand	In progress Data forthcoming from DRC	Look to scale after reviewing results from early adopting universities.
Increase readiness for credit-bearing courses and mitigate/eliminate Pell spending on non-credit bearing courses	MCCA	CCs	In progress. New/expanding initiative, MCCA benchmarking report completed	Support colleges in scaling effective developmental education policies and practices with a goal of increasing the overall percentage of Michigan community college students who successfully complete college-level English and mathematics within the first year of enrollment. Universities should consider similar policy & practice reform.
Examine & seek to reform state/institutional financial aid policies that are stricter than federal that negatively affect adult students	H.E. Associations	ESG, TICAS, IHEs, LEO, Dept. of Treasury	In progress	Increase flexibility in state programs, and promote institution-specific program improvement. Seek reforms through state Treasury student grants office where possible.
Mine data at institutions to identify students who have stopped out and not completed elsewhere. Direct market to enroll those students on the fastest path to degree.	DRC	IHEs participating in the Detroit Talent Hub, expand to other regional groups	In progress	DRC is including debt forgiveness into this overall marketing program. Plan to include CEPI data. Potential to scale for broader regional/state approach to this.

Expand guided pathways approaches for adult students.	MCCA	CCs	Pilot in progress. 14 CCs participating w/ national cohort	Pilot: “Degrees When Due/Project Win-Win.” MCCA releasing guide on data mining efforts to reach out to students who have stopped out and not received a degree elsewhere. Includes communications strategy for students. Evaluate pilot for potential to scale.
Leverage employer-sponsored tuition reimbursement programs to engage target populations.	DRC	Business Groups	In progress. Consider scaling statewide.	Employer toolkit located on DRC site, evaluation report to follow. Evaluate results and potential to scale.
Design specific pathways from adult basic education (ABE) into postsecondary education.	LEO	MCCA		Conduct pilot, evaluate and scale.
Promote funding of Michigan Reconnect state tuition assistance program for adults enrolling in credentials of value up to associate degrees.	Gov. EPO LEO	H.E. Associations	In progress. Authorizing legislation passed.	No state funds currently. Seeking funding through future Federal stimulus appropriations.
Implement Futures for Frontliners program. Tuition free 2-year degree for pandemic front line workers.	LEO	H.E. Associations, MCAN, Bus. Groups.	Proposed by Governor, potential to release in September	Aligned with Michigan Reconnect but has no age restriction. Potential September 2020 launch, federal funds identified.
Expand flexible scheduling for adult students, such as 7-week terms, year-round scheduling, expanded online and hybrid delivery.	MCCA	IHEs	Pilot in progress. 5+ CCs and select universities participating	Increased potential to leverage this type of programming for adult students given the COVID pandemic. Assess results and expand opportunities.
Develop state Credential Engine online credential repository	LEO/WDA	Ferris State University	In progress: 2021-22 Completion	Review of existing program in process.
Increase and improve wrap-around services for adult students. Train faculty and staff in their use.	Detroit Talent Hub partners	Community programs in Detroit metro area	In progress. Report forthcoming	DRC surveying students and will share results and best practices with other communities.

Priority #2: Increase the proportion of Michigan students that complete the FAFSA

Target Population: High school students and their parents

Strategies and Action Steps	Lead	Collaborators	Status	Notes
Leverage state Treasury data to identify regions/ communities in most need of FAFSA completion.	MCAN, SSG, TICAS	H.E. Associations	In progress and exploring new CEPI/Treasury partnership.	TICAS working with UM students on data synthesis and will share report. Continued discussions on data sharing between CEPI, Treasury, MCAN and H.E. Associations.
Expand real-time access to filing data for counselors and college access professionals	MCAN, SSG	K-12	In progress	MCAN working with SSG to overcome restrictions on access
Promote FAFSA completion statewide.	MCAN	MCAN, Gov.'s Office, H.E. Associations, K-12, DRC/DCAN	In progress	Gov.'s FAFSA challenge, DCAN/DRC challenge, MCAN College Cash Campaign.
Conduct outreach with states with high school FAFSA completion requirement to learn about advocacy and implementation.	ESG	MI AA Team	Completed. Video conference with MI & LA teams conducted.	MCAN and other stakeholders will identify best practices from other states and implement them as appropriate.
Launch statewide virtual FAFSA advisor.	MCAN	College Board	Completed. Launched in April	Collaborated with College Board virtual chatbot. MCAN hotline launched. Working on different types of advertising and communications strategies for the program.
Pass bill to require FAFSA completion upon high school graduation (with exemptions possible & additional supports).	Gov. EPO	H.E. Associations	Stalled until further changes are made to HS graduation requirements.	Monitor outcomes from other states that have passed similar legislation.

Increase access to FAFSA seminars, workgroups, and other resources.	MCAN		In progress.	Seek to ID new initiatives to connect students/families with resources
Recommence state-wide GetMIdegree.org marketing campaign through state universities.	MASU	Possibly MCCA/MICU/LEO/ Philanthropy	2 year campaign concluded. Seeking additional funding to resume effort in progress.	Website to be continuously updated. Social media marketing will be expanded depending on additional funding.
Evaluate and potentially scale Detroit area FAFSA competition/DRC counselor training, engaging 100 high schools in the region.	DRC	MCAN, LCANS, DCAN Local College Access Networks, Detroit College Access Networks	In progress.	

Priority #3: Improve postsecondary participation and completion rates for economically disadvantaged students and underrepresented minorities

Target Population: low-income, first-generation and underrepresented minorities

Strategies and Action Steps	Lead	Collaborators	Status	Notes
Enhance student financial programs to ensure maximum participation among those who are entitled to them (especially TIP)	TICAS/MCAN	H.E. Associations, Gov. EPO / SSG	In progress.	Additional focus on how to leverage programs to move from a participation focus to student success and retention.
Adjust state and institutional student financial aid programs to be more flexible given the current state of emergency.	TICAS/MCAN	H.E. Associations, Gov. EPO / SSG	In progress. Coalition letter sent in May to higher ed appropriations subcommittees	Extension of TIP eligibility timeframe achieved. Effort now on MCS/MTG and other programs, including use of HSGPA in place of state exam.
Identify and promote proven, replicable campus-based programs that have boosted retention and completion of target populations.	MASU/MCCA	4-year members, MICU	In Progress. MASU Student Success Innovations Exchange website launched in January (w/MCAN Support)	
Launch initiatives to reduce “summer melt” among target populations.	Promise zones/ ISDs/IHEs/ School districts	H.E. Associations	Kalamazoo Promise launched efforts in 2016, Detroit in 2019. Detroit initiative expanded in summer 2020 to include 3 county ISDs.	Continue to expand efforts statewide. Monitor 2020 summer melt and promote intervention strategies for 2021. Review the Kresge-funded policy white paper from Education Commission of the States on the postsecondary transition needs of the Class of 2021.

<p>Reduce non-academic barriers to student success by increasing awareness and participation in a number of basic needs programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LEO/WDA/DHHS: Students in work study program and eligibility for SNAP benefits. - Eligibility for Healthy MI program: Student status may allow a waiver to participate. - Expand use of online portal to apply for public benefits, CCs to be access points and referral. 	<p>MCCA</p>	<p>IHEs, United Way, MDHHS, LEO, WDA, DHHS</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>DHHS announced CCs student eligibility for SNAP, and student status for Healthy MI Program.</p> <p>Food security council to be established by Gov/Administration. MCCA soliciting recommendations for participants.</p>
<p>Identify funding to continue Detroit Promise Path success coaches: current cost \$2m, estimated to grow \$500k per year. Funded by grant, goal for it to be self-sustaining once designation is achieved.</p>	<p>DRC/Talent Hub</p>	<p>Detroit area CCs and Universities accepting Detroit Promise students</p>	<p>In progress with scaling intended following evaluation of program.</p>	<p>Funding impact of COVID may impact sustainability. Detroit area CCs are implementing success coach program, adapted form CUNY ASAP model, evaluation in progress.</p>
<p>Include transfer students in 4-yr Detroit Promise Programs. Evaluate for potential scaling statewide.</p>	<p>DRC</p>	<p>Universities that accept Promise students</p>	<p>4-yr renewal of Detroit Promise MOUs now includes transferability between 2-/ 4-yr institutions.</p>	

Level II Priorities

These priorities were discussed by the team in meetings from October, 2019 – February, 2020. They were identified as lower priority, and thus less time was devoted to strategy development. They warrant additional focus as COVID recovery strategies are implemented.

1. Increase the proportion of youth with postsecondary credits/credentials earned prior to high school graduation

- A subcommittee of MIHEART should consider leading a cross-sector stakeholder discussions of policy barriers, analyze data to determine where access and equity gaps are greatest, and address K12 concerns about expansion.

2. Accelerate entry into and completion of credit-bearing courses for students in need of remediation

- MDE and Detroit Drives Degrees should lead in expanding successful high school programming such as transition courses that reduce the need for remediation.
- MCCA's Center for Student Success should continue to provide technical assistance to community colleges in scaling up the implementation of credit-bearing course placement policies that utilize multiple-measures and accelerated remedial course designs (such as co-requisite).
- MASU and MICU should benchmark 4-year university policies regarding placement and remedial course design, and share best practices.
- The MI Partnership for Academic Transitions (MCAN/MCCA) will provide funding for six partnerships of high schools and colleges to significantly accelerate this work.

3. Increase readiness for and enrollment in postsecondary education for students with disabilities

- In partnership with the MI Transition Association and employers, MDE and schools should expand transition services for students with disabilities.
- Best practices among K12 schools should be identified, documented, and shared across the state.
- An innovation grant program or other funding mechanism should be established to enhance services provided across the state.

4. Streamline the transfer process and increase the success rates of transfer students

- Continue the implementation of the MiTransfer Pathways, statewide multi-sector articulation agreements, including the 12 adopted in the first two phases. Continue and expand faculty work groups to grow the number of transfer pathways.
- Leverage existing partnerships to increase broad transfer agreements beyond the pathways.
- Invest in marketing transfer programs and pathways to high school students, CC students, and adult learners
- Market and expand Credit for Prior Learning programs at all IHEs to increase the number of students benefiting.

5. Create state-institutional partnership to implement Complete College America college completion strategies

- To dramatically increase institutional implementation of Complete College America and other research-based college completion strategies, the State or Philanthropy should establish an incentive fund to reward institutions for success.

Stakeholder & Community Engagement

Early in 2000, the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity began developing a Sixty by 30 Alliance and engaging in outreach with stakeholders around the state. This was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as state priorities shifted toward emergency shutdown and planning for subsequent reopening of education facilities. Each of the participating entities has engaged stakeholders within their own communities and will continue to do so on an ongoing basis through regular interaction of participating entities. A communications strategy and plan for engaging a broader set of stakeholders will be developed for implementation once the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided. Regional and statewide strategies will be developed.

Attainment Agenda Sustainability

Progress toward the action steps identified in this Action Plan will be tracked and accounted for by the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU), and will be a regular and consistent discussion item for the Michigan Higher Education Attainment Roundtable (MIHEART), which serves as a voluntary convening body facilitated by the Michigan College Access Network. The establishment of a “Sixty by 30 Office” housed within the state’s Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity has been temporarily postponed in light of the state’s focus on contending with the COVID-19 pandemic. At the point in time that the office is established, strong coordination will occur between it, the MIHEART activities, and other key stakeholders.

Metrics and Progress Tracking

Progress on the attainment goals can be tracked specifically with each underlying action. MICU and MASU staff developed an Excel project management tool that will be used for tracking progress. Further, the MCAN’s recently launched “Impact Map” will serve as one visual representation for tracking progress on a number of college access and attainment metrics statewide and for communities around the state (<https://micollegeaccess.org/news/impact-map>). The Center for Educational Performance and Information (<https://www.michigan.gov/cepi/>) has likewise begun discussions on expanding the ways it publicly reports metrics on public higher education institutions. Discussions will continue among the stakeholders on additional ways that Michigan stakeholders can monitor and report on attainment progress in a visually appealing and user-friendly manner.

Appendix A – Michigan Attainment Strategy Team

Individual	Sector	Title	Entity
Daniel Hurley*	Higher ed—4-year Sector— Public	Chief Executive Officer	Michigan Association of State Universities
Robert LeFevre*	Higher ed—4-year Sector— Private	President	Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities
Mike Hansen*	Higher ed—2-year Sector	President	Michigan Community College Association
Scott Koenigsknecht*	K-12 Sector	Deputy Superintendent, P-20 System and Student Transitions	Michigan Department of Education
Brandy Johnson*	Governor’s Executive Policy Office	Advisor, Postsecondary Education & Workforce Dev	Governor's Executive Policy Office
Michelle Richard*	State Workforce Development Agency	Deputy to the Senior Advisor for Michigan Prosperity	MI Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity
Melanie D’Evelyn*	Business & Industry	Director, Education and Talent Initiatives (Detroit Drives Degrees)	Detroit Regional Chamber
Ryan Fewins-Bliss	Nonprofit sector	Executive Director	Michigan College Access Network
Catherine Brown	Nonprofit sector	Senior Advisor, Michigan	The Institute for College Access & Success
Caroline Altman Smith	Philanthropy	Deputy Director of Education	Kresge Foundation

* Seven participants in the original SHEEO convening in New Orleans. Representatives of three additional organizations were invited to participate in subsequent meetings and strategy development. In addition, the team was supported by additional staff from some of the participating organizations:

- Colby Cesaro, Vice President, Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities
- Will Emerson, Director of Student Success Initiatives, Michigan Association of State Universities (subsequently left position)
- Bob Murphy, Director of University Relations and Policy, Michigan Association of State Universities
- Greg Handel, Senior Director, Workforce Development, Detroit Regional Chamber
- Jamie Jacobs, Deputy Director, Michigan College Access Network
- Erin Schor, Vice President, Michigan Community College Association
- Erica Lee Orians, Executive Director, Michigan Center for Student Success, Michigan Community College Association