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Leading the Way:

*Access. Success. Impact.*

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

*1018 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Suite 700*

*Charleston, West Virginia 25301*

*www.hepc.wvnet.edu*

November 22, 2013

The Honorable Robert H. Plymale  
Co-Chair, Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability  
Senate Education Committee  
Room 417-M, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

The Honorable Mary M. Poling  
Co-Chair, Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability  
House Education Committee  
Room 434-M, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Senator Plymale and Delegate Poling:

West Virginia Code §18B-3-4(d) requires each governing board to focus resources and attention on improving its graduation rate for full-time undergraduate students as a specific institutional priority. This statute also directs the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to monitor and report annually on each institution's progress toward meeting the goals on or before December 1.

The data provided comes directly from federal government figures and include summer graduates and allows for federal exclusions from the cohort such as those entering military service. In 2011, seven institutions were below their peer median goal while four (Concord University, Fairmont University, Shepherd University, and West Liberty University) exceeded or met their prescribed goals. Three institutions saw an increase from 2010-11: Bluefield State College, Concord University, and Fairmont State University. Progress for each institution towards statutorily defined goals is provided on the following pages.

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DIVISION OF POLICY AND PLANNING

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**Bluefield State College**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>Bluefield State College</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>30%</b>
St Mary's College of Maryland	81%	79%
SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill	48%	35%
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	47%	53%
Elizabeth City State University	43%	44%
University of South Carolina-Aiken	43%	41%
The University of Montana-Western	42%	31%
The University of Virginia's College at Wise	42%	39%
Valley City State University	41%	42%
Ohio State University-Lima Campus	38%	45%
University of Maine at Presque Isle	37%	30%
Dickinson State University	35%	26%
Georgia Southwestern State University	29%	30%
Oklahoma Panhandle State University	28%	30%
Langston University	27%	19%
Lewis-Clark State College	26%	28%
Indiana University-East	25%	19%
Montana State University-Northern	23%	19%
University of Arkansas at Monticello	23%	23%
Indiana University-Kokomo	22%	20%
Purdue University-North Central Campus	18%	17%

The six-year graduation rate at Bluefield State College for 2011-12 was 25 percent. This figure increased 3 percentage points from 2010-11 but remained 11 percentage points below the median of their peers (36%). Fifteen of the institution's twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. Bluefield State College has identified several initiatives aimed at continuing to increase their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Utilizing technology such as DegreeWorks and emphasizing a more robust tutoring effort
- Developing an advisor training program, including the effective use of DegreeWorks
- Developing academic departmental retention programs within each discipline and facilitating stronger inter-departmental communication
- Assessing the possibility of putting all BSN programmatic courses online to provide more flexibility for students

**Concord University**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>Concord University</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>35%</b>
University of Maine at Farmington	58%	59%
University of North Carolina at Asheville	55%	61%
Mansfield University of Pennsylvania	48%	53%
SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill	48%	35%
Elizabeth City State University	43%	44%
University of South Carolina-Aiken	43%	41%
Dakota State University	42%	34%
The University of Virginia's College at Wise	42%	39%
University of South Carolina-Upstate	38%	39%
Black Hills State University	37%	28%
SUNY College at Old Westbury	35%	35%
University of Wisconsin-Superior	35%	44%
Missouri Southern State University	33%	33%
Missouri Western State University	30%	27%
Fort Valley State University	29%	33%
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	28%	23%
Lewis-Clark State College	26%	28%
Indiana University-Kokomo	22%	20%
Mississippi Valley State University	22%	24%
Athens State University	N/A	N/A

The six-year graduation rate at Concord University for 2011-12 was 38 percent. This figure increased 4 percentage points from 2010-11, which put it 1 percentage point above the median of their peers (37%). Only eight of the institution's twenty peer institutions had a higher six-year graduation rate. Concord University has identified several initiatives aimed at continuing to increase their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Hiring an academic advisor to assist adult learners
- Eliminating math placement testing at time of registration and instead relying on ACT/SAT scores for proper mathematics placement
- Becoming a College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) test center, which allows students an accelerated route to completing General Studies requirements
- Improving academic advising through eight semester plans of study, with the goal of timely degree completion
- An emphasis on student and advisor monitoring of degree progression

**Fairmont State University**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>Fairmont State University</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>35%</b>
University of Maine at Farmington	58%	59%
University of North Carolina at Asheville	55%	61%
Bemidji State University	44%	42%
Frostburg State University	44%	45%
Elizabeth City State University	43%	44%
University of South Carolina-Aiken	43%	41%
University of Hawaii at Hilo	39%	36%
Texas A & M International University	39%	42%
University of South Carolina-Upstate	38%	39%
SUNY College at Old Westbury	35%	35%
Missouri Southern State University	33%	33%
Delaware State University	33%	35%
Missouri Western State University	30%	27%
Colorado Mesa University	29%	25%
Eastern New Mexico University-Main Campus	29%	24%
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	28%	23%
Langston University	27%	19%
Lewis-Clark State College	26%	28%
Indiana University-Kokomo	22%	20%
Purdue University-North Central Campus	18%	17%

The six-year graduation rate at Fairmont University for 2011-12 was 34 percent. This figure increased 1 percentage point from 2010-11, equaling the median of their peers (34%). Ten of the institution's twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. Fairmont University has identified several initiatives aimed at continuing to increase their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- An additional graduation audit counselor has been added to the Enrollment Services area in order to complete audits in a timely manner so that students can make adjustments in schedules in order to ensure degree completion
- Degree completion initiatives have forced individual programs to redesign hours toward major hours, elective hours, and general education hours so that students have the opportunity to efficiently maximize total hours toward degree completion
- Providing additional training opportunities for academic advisors
- The software package TaskStream has been implemented in order to record, assist with reporting, and foster a dialog of improvement, adjustment and feedback on programs and on the assessment of student learning outcomes

**Glenville State College**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>Glenville State College</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>41.5%</b>	<b>37.5%</b>
St Mary's College of Maryland	81%	79%
University of Minnesota-Morris	60%	60%
SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill	48%	35%
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	47%	53%
University of Minnesota-Crookston	47%	46%
Ohio State University-Marion Campus	44%	37%
University of South Carolina-Aiken	43%	41%
The University of Montana-Western	42%	31%
The University of Virginia's College at Wise	42%	39%
Dakota State University	42%	34%
University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma	41%	39%
Valley City State University	41%	42%
Mayville State University	39%	25%
University of Maine at Fort Kent	38%	33%
University of Maine at Presque Isle	37%	30%
Western State Colorado University	37%	39%
Lyndon State College	30%	31%
University of Maine at Machias	29%	38%
Oklahoma Panhandle State University	28%	30%
Indiana University-East	25%	19%

The six-year graduation rate at Glenville State College for 2011-12 was 30 percent. This figure decreased 1 percentage point from 2010-11, and remained below the median of their peers (41.5%). Sixteen of the institution’s twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. Glenville State College has identified several initiatives aimed at increasing their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Developing “Intent to Plan” documents for proposed four-year degree programs in Communication Arts and Exercise Science to facilitate retention and graduation of students interested in these fields of study
- Conducting a review of the College’s programs in the sciences to identify ways to increase the number of students entering and graduating from degree programs in the sciences
- Completing a review of current financial aid policies to better address the needs of students whose financial situation changes during their college career
- Filing an ‘Intent to Plan’ for a four-year program in nursing to replace the current two/two program done in collaboration with West Virginia University

**Marshall University**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>Marshall University</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48.5%</b>
West Chester University of Pennsylvania	69%	68%
University of Arkansas	60%	59%
East Carolina University	58%	59%
University of Mississippi	58%	60%
University of Idaho	56%	51%
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	54%	53%
University of Wyoming	54%	53%
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	52%	52%
University of North Dakota	52%	54%
Western Carolina University	48%	50%
Eastern Washington University	46%	46%
Southeast Missouri State University	46%	46%
University of South Dakota	45%	47%
University of Missouri-Kansas City	44%	41%
Morehead State University	43%	40%
Oakland University	43%	40%
East Tennessee State University	41%	44%
Wright State University-Main Campus	40%	40%
University of South Alabama	37%	39%
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	19%	21%

The six-year graduation rate at Marshall University for 2011-12 was 44 percent. This figure remained steady from 2010-11 and remained below the median of their peers (47%). Thirteen of the institution's twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. Marshall University has identified several initiatives aimed at increasing their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- The development of a new core general education curriculum
- The development of four-year plans of study
- An emphasis on communicating more directly with students
- Focusing on several retention efforts with an end goal of increasing the six-year graduation rate

**Potomac State College of WVU**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Total Graduation (2011-12)</b>	<b>Total Graduation (2010-11)</b>
<b>Potomac State College of WVU</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Dawson Community College	54%	56%
Western Texas College	54%	48%
Colby Community College	48%	51%
Southwestern Community College	43%	45%
Williston State College	35%	40%
Lamar Community College	32%	41%
Pratt Community College	32%	37%
North Central Missouri College	31%	35%
Brunswick Community College	30%	13%
Columbia-Greene Community College	27%	26%
Feather River Community College District	27%	23%
Garrett College	23%	17%
University of South Carolina-Beaufort	23%	21%
Frank Phillips College	22%	23%
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College	20%	24%
Arkansas Northeastern College	18%	24%
East Arkansas Community College	18%	20%
Community College of Beaver County	16%	17%
Labette Community College	16%	14%
Bladen Community College	11%	20%

\*Graduation rates reported are for all degree completers within 150% time. Because Potomac State University of WVU has a large number of two-year degree programs, its institutional characteristics align more with two-year public institutions. As such, many of their peers are two-year public institutions and six-year graduation rates are not available.

The total 150 percent graduation rate for Potomac State College of WVU was 24 percent. This figure was 3 percentage points less than the median of their peers (24%). Eleven of their twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. As a campus of West Virginia University, many of the initiatives to increase graduation at Potomac State College stem from the main campus. These initiatives can be found on page 11 of this report.

**Shepherd University**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>Shepherd University</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>35%</b>
University of Mary Washington	76%	71%
Longwood University	61%	60%
University of Maine at Farmington	58%	59%
University of North Carolina at Asheville	55%	61%
SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill	48%	35%
University of South Carolina-Aiken	43%	41%
University of Hawaii at Hilo	39%	36%
Fort Lewis College	38%	37%
Western State Colorado University	37%	39%
California State University-Monterey Bay	37%	38%
SUNY College at Old Westbury	35%	35%
Eastern Oregon University	32%	32%
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	31%	31%
Southeastern Oklahoma State University	30%	29%
Langston University	27%	19%
Lewis-Clark State College	26%	28%
Indiana University-East	25%	19%
University of Arkansas at Monticello	23%	23%
Mississippi Valley State University	22%	24%
Shawnee State University	20%	22%

The six-year graduation rate at Shepherd University for 2011-12 was 43 percent. Despite a 3 percentage point decline from 2010-11, the university's six-year graduation rate remained well above the median of their peers (36%). Only five of the institution's twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. Shepherd University has identified several initiatives aimed at continuing to increase their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Building and maintaining an electronic transfer articulation process to ease the integration of transfer students and their credits into their chosen programs
- Building and maintaining a robust and responsive degree evaluation tool, readily available to advisors and students from the point of matriculation through graduation
- Improving advisement across campus through regular programming and services offered through the Advising Assistance Center and Assistant Dean for Teaching and Learning.
- Increasing retention efforts across campus that will positively impact graduation rate

**West Liberty University**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>West Liberty University</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>35%</b>
University of Maine at Farmington	58%	59%
SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill	48%	35%
University of Minnesota-Crookston	47%	46%
Elizabeth City State University	43%	44%
University of South Carolina-Aiken	43%	41%
The University of Virginia's College at Wise	42%	39%
Lander University	40%	37%
Lake Superior State University	39%	35%
University of South Carolina-Upstate	38%	39%
Black Hills State University	37%	28%
Western State Colorado University	37%	39%
Dickinson State University	35%	26%
Northwestern Oklahoma State University	31%	37%
Clayton State University	28%	27%
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	28%	23%
Langston University	27%	19%
Lewis-Clark State College	26%	28%
Mississippi Valley State University	22%	24%
Shawnee State University	20%	22%
Athens State University	N/A	N/A

The six-year graduation rate at West Liberty University for 2011-12 was 41 percent. Despite a 5 percentage point decline from 2010-11, the university's six-year graduation rate remained well above the median of their peers (37%). Only five of the institution's twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. West Liberty University has identified several initiatives aimed at continuing to increase their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Examining the current system of monitoring student progress for the purpose of early intervention
- Implementing a plan to incorporate support services to the student's curriculum
- Increasing merit-based aid to students
- Use of the Academic Alert program which enables faculty to issue alerts for students at risk of failing their courses at any time during the semester
- Implementing the West Liberty Risk Assessment Program (WRAP) in fall of 2013, which will allow the Retention Specialist and other Learning and Student Development Staff to identify and serve students at-risk

**West Virginia State University**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>West Virginia State University</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>33%</b>
SUNY at Purchase College	59%	56%
University of North Carolina at Asheville	55%	61%
University of Wisconsin-Platteville	52%	52%
Mansfield University of Pennsylvania	48%	53%
Lock Haven University	47%	46%
Virginia State University	44%	40%
Elizabeth City State University	43%	44%
Lake Superior State University	39%	35%
Delaware State University	33%	35%
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	31%	31%
Alcorn State University	31%	33%
Missouri Western State University	30%	27%
University of Wisconsin-Parkside	30%	28%
Fort Valley State University	29%	33%
Eastern New Mexico University-Main Campus	29%	24%
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	28%	23%
Langston University	27%	19%
Lewis-Clark State College	26%	28%
Lincoln University	24%	20%
Kentucky State University	14%	21%

The six-year graduation rate at West Virginia State University for 2011-12 was 21 percent. This figure decreased 4 percentage points from 2010-11 and remained below the median of their peers (31%). Nineteen out of their twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. West Virginia State University has identified several initiatives aimed at increasing their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Continuing several retention initiatives with an end goal of increasing graduating rates
- Continuing the pursuit of an on-line academic audit system so that students and advisors can assess accurate and timely information on student progress toward graduation

**West Virginia University**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>West Virginia University</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>70%</b>
University of Florida	85%	84%
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	83%	82%
University of Connecticut	82%	83%
University of Maryland-College Park	82%	82%
University of Georgia	81%	82%
Texas A & M University-College Station	80%	81%
University of Vermont	76%	72%
North Carolina State University at Raleigh	71%	72%
University of Missouri-Columbia	71%	69%
University at Buffalo	70%	71%
University of Iowa	70%	71%
University of Massachusetts Amherst	70%	67%
The University of Tennessee	66%	63%
University of Utah	59%	55%
University of Kentucky	58%	59%
University of Hawaii at Manoa	56%	55%
Virginia Commonwealth University	56%	53%
University of Nevada-Reno	54%	51%
University of Louisville	52%	51%
University of New Mexico-Main Campus	45%	44%

The six-year graduation rate at West Virginia University for 2011-12 was 56 percent. This figure decreased 1 percentage point from 2010-11 and remained below the median of their peers (70%). Fifteen of the institution's twenty peers had a higher six-year graduation rate. West Virginia University has identified several initiatives aimed at increasing their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Establishing the Retention to Graduation Council to address issues in this area and to create a culture where graduation is an expected outcome
- Creating an Early Alert System
- Establishing a blueprint for Student Success
- Creating the First Year Academy
- Utilizing First-Year Seminars (WVUe 191)
- Revising the Resident Faculty Leader program
- Establishing the Mountaineer Success Academy

**West Virginia University Institute of Technology**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2011-12)</b>	<b>Six-Year Graduation Rate (2010-11)</b>
<b>West Virginia University Institute of Technology</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Peer Median</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Virginia Military Institute	71%	69%
University of New Hampshire at Manchester	62%	55%
University of Minnesota-Morris	60%	60%
University of Minnesota-Crookston	47%	46%
University of South Carolina-Aiken	43%	41%
The University of Virginia's College at Wise	42%	39%
University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma	41%	39%
University of Maine at Fort Kent	38%	33%
Dickinson State University	35%	26%
Northwestern Oklahoma State University	31%	37%
Texas A & M University-Galveston	30%	29%
Fort Valley State University	29%	33%
Central State University	27%	24%
Langston University	27%	19%
Indiana University-East	25%	19%
Cheyney University of Pennsylvania	23%	24%
Montana State University-Northern	23%	19%
Indiana University-Kokomo	22%	20%
Kentucky State University	14%	21%
Athens State University	N/A	N/A

The six-year graduation rate at West Virginia Institute of Technology for 2011-12 was 24 percent. This figure decreased 5 percentage points from 2010-11 and remained below the median of their peers (31%). West Virginia Institute of Technology has identified several initiatives aimed at increasing retention and thus their six-year graduation rate. These initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Use of an Early Alert system that allows course instructors to indicate which students are having academic difficulty
- Distribution of Early Alert and mid-term grade results to academic advisors, residence hall directors, and coaches. The faculty and staff then contact the at-risk students in an attempt to provide assistance. Such assistance might include modification of course load, referral to tutoring, referral to Financial Aid, etc.
- Revamping the WVUE 191 Freshman Seminar course to provide a more structured course that provides academic skills development and career exploration, as well as institutional information

January 8, 2014

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If you have questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Paul L. Hill  
Chancellor