

## GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BOARDS: NAVIGATING THE COMPLEX EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

Institutions must ensure an accessible, nondiscriminatory educational experience in compliance with state and federal laws. Governing boards should back the president in publicly reaffirming this commitment and ensure board policies clearly and measurably reflect it. This includes supporting initiatives that expand opportunities for students who have faced reduced access to high-quality education.

### DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Boards should promote data-informed policy and practice by ensuring collection and analysis of metrics, such as demographics, performance, and graduation rates. These data reveal disparities and guide targeted interventions. Persistent gaps require intentional strategies to improve outcomes. Boards should work with leaders to determine what data to track and how to use it effectively.

### AFFIRMATION OF EXCELLENCE

Boards should support the president in affirming the institution's dedication to access and nondiscrimination under the law. Policies must clearly reflect this commitment and be measurable in practice. Boards should champion initiatives that expand opportunities for those who have faced reduced access to quality education.

### COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Boards should assess how shifting conditions affect partnerships with other institutions, community groups, and K-12 schools to expand opportunity for underrepresented students. Strong partnerships create a pipeline of well-prepared students and help institutions build capacity to support their success.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Boards should invest in training for faculty, staff, and themselves to meet the changing landscape of supporting the success of all students. Development should emphasize inclusive classrooms, respectful dialogue, and understanding the legal parameters of race-conscious policies.

### FOCUS ON POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Boards should move beyond viewing diversity as numbers and focus on creating conditions that drive equitable outcomes for all students as a measure of success. This requires reviewing disaggregated student outcome data and addressing disparities across demographic groups.

### POLICY REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE

Boards should help leaders comprehensively review policies on admissions, aid, recruitment, promotion, pay, training, student services, housing, and ceremonies. Reviews should assess alignment with the institution's mission and make changes where needed to support that mission.



## **GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BOARDS: NAVIGATING THE COMPLEX EDUCATION LANDSCAPE**

Institutions must remain committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible and free from discrimination, in accordance with state and federal laws and policies. Governing boards should support the president in publicly reaffirming their institution's dedication to ensuring access and opportunities for all students, faculty, and staff. The Board's policy needs to reflect this commitment in clear and measurable ways. This alignment includes actively supporting initiatives that enhance opportunities for students who, through no fault of their own, have had reduced access to high-quality educational experiences.

### **DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING**

Boards should encourage the use of data-driven decision-making to inform policy and practice. This includes collecting and analyzing data on student demographics, academic performance, graduation rates, and other relevant metrics. Data can help identify areas where disparities exist and guide the development of effective interventions. If your campus' data continues to show disparities across groups, then your commitment to ensuring the success of all students requires intentional interventions to help bring about improved outcomes. Boards should assist institutional leaders with determining what data to collect.

### **AFFIRMATION OF EXCELLENCE**

Boards should support the president in publicly reaffirming their institution's dedication to ensuring access and opportunities for all students, faculty, and staff. Institutions must remain committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible and free from discrimination, in accordance with state and federal laws and policies. The Board's policy needs to reflect this commitment in clear and measurable ways. This alignment includes actively supporting initiatives that enhance opportunities for students who, through no fault of their own, have had reduced access to high-quality educational experiences.

### **COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Boards should examine how broader shifts in impacting collaboration and partnerships with other institutions, community organizations, and K-12 schools determine how to navigate and promote access and opportunity for students from underrepresented backgrounds. These partnerships can help create a pipeline of students who are prepared for success in higher education and help institutions of higher education prepare to support students so that they can be successful.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Boards should support professional development for faculty and staff, as well as the Board's own training around the changing landscape of supporting the success of all students. This training should focus on creating inclusive classrooms, fostering respectful dialogue across differences, and understanding the legal boundaries related to race-conscious policies.

### **FOCUS ON POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

Boards should shift the focus from diversity as a numerical goal to the conditions that facilitate desirable outcomes for all students as a measure of success. This means examining data on student outcomes disaggregated by race and other demographic factors to identify and address any disparities.

### **POLICY REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE**

Boards should assist and support institutional leadership in a thorough review of all policies and procedures related to admissions, financial aid, recruitment, promotion, compensation, training, student support services, housing, graduation ceremonies, and additional areas. Guided by the institution's mission, assess whether the policies are in alignment with that mission.

**OLD DRAFT**