

Chapter 665, 2015 Acts of Assembly (Item 1, Paragraph R):

R. 1. The Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees shall each appoint four members from their respective committees to a Joint Subcommittee on the Future Competitiveness of Virginia Higher Education to (a) review ways to maintain and improve the quality of higher education, while providing for broad access and affordability; (b) examine the impact of financial, demographic, and competitive changes on the sustainability of individual institutions and the system as a whole; (c) identify best practices to make the system more efficient, including shared services, institutional flexibility, and easily accessible academic pathways; (d) evaluate the use of distance education and online instruction across the Commonwealth and appropriate business models for such programs; (e) review current need-based financial aid programs and alternative models to best provide for student affordability and completion; (f) review the recommendations of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission on the study of the cost efficiency of higher education institutions and make recommendations to their respective committees on the implementation of those recommendations; (g) study the effectiveness and value of transfer students; (h) evaluate the effectiveness of dual enrollment in reducing the cost of higher education; and (i) study the effectiveness of preparing teachers to enter the K-12 system.

2. As the Joint Subcommittee conducts its analysis, it shall consider the mission, vision, goals and strategies outlined in the statewide strategic plan for higher education developed and approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, and endorsed by the General Assembly in House Joint Resolution 555 of the 2015 Session of the General Assembly.

3. The Joint Subcommittee may seek support and technical assistance from the staff of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees, the public institutions of higher education, the staff of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, and the staff of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Other state agency or higher education representatives shall provide support upon request. At its discretion, the Joint Subcommittee may contract for consulting services.

4. The members of the Joint Subcommittee shall develop a two-year work plan for the review and assessment detailed above, and provide an interim report to their respective committees by November 1, 2016 and a final report by November 1, 2017.