

<b>Policy Name:</b>	Effectiveness of Student Retention Plan
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<b>Functional Area:</b>	Academic Affairs

## Effectiveness of Student Retention Plan

### Intro/Purpose

Student retention rates are a factor that indicates how an institution is meeting the needs of its students. Tennessee College of Applied Technology-Dickson (TCAT Dickson) follows its student completion rates and reports this to the Tennessee Board of Regents, the Council on Occupational Education, IPEDS, and other parties with a vested interest. TCAT Dickson recognizes that students do not complete their programs of study for a variety of personal reasons including financial, academic preparedness, motivation, or personal issues; students also indicate that institutional experiences are a factor including, engagement with the faculty, academic challenges, and the overall campus climate. By assessing the reasons students do not progress to completion, TCAT Dickson can implement strategies to meet student needs, improve its own performance in an effort to increase student attainment. Although student retention is an ongoing assessment, TCAT Dickson will share its findings annually with faculty and staff.

### Mission

The Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology continue to serve as the premier providers for workforce development throughout the State of Tennessee. The colleges fulfill the mission by:

- Providing competency-based training through superior quality, traditional and distance learning instruction methods that qualify completers for employment and job advancement;
- Contributing to the economic and community development of the communities served by training and retraining employed workers;
- Ensuring that programs and services are economical and accessible to all residents of Tennessee; and
- Building relationships of trust with community, business, and industry leaders to supply highly skilled workers in areas of need.

Revised: August 21, 2013 Directors' Meeting; September 20, 2013 TBR Quarterly Board Meeting

### Strategic Plan

In the fall of 2021, the 2015-25 TBR Strategic Plan is grounded in Tennessee's statewide educational attainment goal to achieve 55 percent of adult Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential by 2025. To meet this goal, TBR is committed to a mission of Student Success and Workforce Development. TBR's Strategic Plan establishes three key policy pillars, fulfilled by sustained emphasis on four cross-cutting themes. Together, these seven elements are the

foundation of the Strategic Plan and provide a framework for how TBR pursues its mission, as well as a roadmap for its colleges to build their institution-specific Strategic Plans.

As a result, TCAT Dickson is developing a 2021-2025 Strategic Plan based on these pillars. The college strategic plan will utilize the following themes as they apply to our campus retention data.

### **Open Access**

TBR is an open-access community and technical college system that serves students of all backgrounds, demographics, income levels, readiness or circumstances and is committed to meeting student, workforce and community needs for education and training. Dual enrollment, Strategic Enrollment Management, and education in the local prison will all be factors of our efforts.

### **Completion**

TBR values completion and is committed to helping students address and confront any existing barriers to completing their programs, whether students are pursuing a transfer degree, a diploma, a short-term certificate or other credential. TCAT will utilize Achieving the Dream to improve many aspects of student performance based on review of

### **Community and Workforce Development**

TBR is committed to improving the condition of individuals, families, and communities across the state, which manifests itself in tangible ways such as economic vitality and mobility, but also by improving and enriching the communities it serves.

### **Current Retention Performance**

In 2016 and 2017, TCAT demonstrated the following performances related to completion, placement, and licensure:

<b>Institutional Outcomes</b>	<b>COE Minimum Report Requirements</b>	<b>TCAT Dickson 2017 Report Performance</b>	<b>TCAT Dickson 2016 Report Performance</b>
Completion	60%	84%	83%
Placement	70%	86%	86%
Licensure	70%	99%	95%

Initial review of 2017-2018 self-reported student withdraw and termination data demonstrated a variety of reasons for exiting their program of study.

### **2017 – 2018 (Initial collection year)**

1. Unknown	.85%
2. Not for me	.57%
3. Obtained job	.47%
4. Grades, Medical	.38%
5. Course issues, Attendance	.28%
6. Military, Work conflict, Moving	.19%
7. Transportation, Court	.09%

### **2018-2019**

1. Financial	2.05%
2. Personal	1.66%
3. Obtained job	1.17%
4. Medical	.78%
5. Not for me	.68%
6. Attendance, Unknown	.58%
7. Transportation	.49%

### **2019-2020**

### **2020-2021**

### **Retention Goals**

Retention goals were facilitated through a variety of faculty, student, administration, and staff engagement. Consideration was given to factors such as academics, personal, programmatic, and related student services that can improve student completion and ultimately placement in their field of study.

Based on the input, the following goals were developed:

1. Academics
  1. Increase academic counseling.
2. Personal
  1. Increase personal referrals.
  2. Increase student attendance.
3. Programmatic
  1. Increase opportunities for real world learning.
  2. Increase opportunities for articulation.
  3. Increase prior learning credit awarding.
  4. Increase faculty engagement in student retention.
4. Services
  1. Increase dissemination of institutional and programmatic information to students and stakeholders.
  2. Increase communication with students.
  3. Monitor special populations to increase success rates.

4. Increase opportunities for students to interact through extracurricular activities.

### **Strategies for Impacting Change with Action Plan with Incorporated Activities**

In 2020, TCAT joined Achieving the Dream, which positively impacts each of the following areas.

- 1.A. New faculty mentors: assist new faculty with engagement skills to encourage students
  - A. Developed a Mentor Check List for new faculty development
- 1.B. Program supervisors: assist all faculty with understanding grading/suspension policies and how they impact students.
  - A. Monthly departmental meetings.
  - B. Updated grading policies per board policies.
- 2.A. Student Services: Increase awareness of community agencies to assist faculty and staff with student assistance.
  - A. Improved information on website.
  - B. Training for Student Services Staff
  - C. Community resource guide utilized
  - D. Became a VETS Campus.
- 2.B. Faculty and Student Services: Continue to encourage students to have good attendance.
  - A. Recognize perfect attendance at commencement.
- 3.A. Faculty: Increase the amount of live work activities, and co-ops.
- 3.B. Student Services: Increase awareness of prior learning credit and articulation for furthering their education.
  - A. Developed an improved Prior Learning Credit form.
  - B. Promote articulations on website.
- 4.A. Administration: Improve communication with students and stakeholders.
  - A. Develop a robust website, Facebook presence, and Twitter
  - B. Hired a Social Media manager.
  - C. Hired a Press Writer
- 4.B. Perkins Monitor: Monitor special populations for adequate success rates.
  - A. Annual review of Consolidated Annual Report.
- 4.C. Administration: Increase extracurricular activities related to programs of study.

A. Promoting SkillsUSA, SGA, and Student Veterans Association.

**Evaluation**

Evaluation of the retention goals and their corresponding strategies will be evaluated annually each year after the year end reports have been received. Data will be shared with faculty and staff to review and discuss the level of success of the strategies, which will be revised as needed to increase student credential attainment.