PARTNERING WITH PARENTS:

Promoting the Roles & Resources of SCHEV and Value & Benefits of Higher Education to Parents in Virginia
* IMPORTANT NOTE TO READERS

This version contains edits and priorities agreed to by the Outreach Committee / Council Members at the SCHEV meeting on July 17, 2002. This version replaces and supercedes all prior iterations of this document.

This plan is organized around four key themes and messages, with accompanying individual strategies to advance each.

The strategies in each of the four sections are divided into two parts – those Council approved as priorities to pursue during the next 12 months, and those they found to be worthwhile, but decided not to pursue at this time because of limited agency/staff resources for the foreseeable future.

For easier use and reference purposes, those priority strategies that SCHEV will be pursuing are highlighted in a gray box and listed first, with the other strategies still listed for illustrative purposes/possible future uses.
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PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Purpose:

To plan and execute ways that SCHEV can more effectively communicate and partner with parents by informing and/or educating them about – what SCHEV is, the roles we play, and the useful information and free resources we can provide, as well as the value and benefits of higher education.

Goal:

To create awareness and influence perceptions of SCHEV and its activities with parents, and cause them to support higher education by making it a high priority for themselves, their families, and the Commonwealth.

1) Investing in Virginia Higher Education’s Future –

Passage of the $900 million general obligation bond referendum for educational facilities on the statewide ballot November 5, 2002 is essential for Virginia’s future.

2) Education is Opportunity –

College is possible. If you want your child to go to college, they can do it. There are ways you can afford it. SCHEV wants to help make it happen.

3) Information is Power –

Planning for and choosing the college that is right for you or your child requires careful thought and preparation. SCHEV is a reliable source of valuable information you can use. We want to empower you to make more informed decisions.

4) Celebrating Success in Virginia Higher Education –

Virginia’s colleges and universities provide incredible value and benefits to individuals, our communities, and the entire Commonwealth through teaching, research, public service, and so much more. SCHEV wants to showcase educational excellence at our institutions. Celebrating “good news” can build good will and stronger public support for higher education in Virginia.
**Funding:**

In light of the current fiscal constraints under which SCHEV and all of state government are working, the Outreach Committee is asked to prioritize identified strategies and activities indicated in the plan in which they are most interested.

Each strategy is marked with either:

- ✓ = indicates no new resources are required;
- R = indicates that it is a staff resource-intensive activity; or
- $ = indicates new resources will need to be found/raised for this activity.

The cumulative number of check marked strategies agreed to, depending on how many, may result in having to find/raise additional resources. With this information and guidance from the committee, staff will determine as specific a cost for each strategy as possible and a total cost of implementing this plan.

**Research:**

The basis for the plan’s themes, messages, and strategies reflects the wide variety of activities in which SCHEV is involved and the many roles and responsibilities the Council members and agency’s staff work to fulfill. They are the product of Outreach Committee discussions, staff research and analysis, literature reviews, and work with statewide steering and advisory committees. We also drew upon real-world experiences gleaned by SCHEV staff interactions with parents and students at focus groups, Career Days/College Nights, and the Virginia State Fair.

In particular, development of the plan’s themes and messages benefited greatly from a report based upon focus group discussions of SCHEV publications and outreach program conducted by Dominion Marketing Research, Inc. in Richmond, Virginia in spring 2001. Focus groups were held in Abingdon, Danville, Fairfax, Harrisonburg, Norfolk, and Richmond and involved a combination of over 100 parents and students from various schools, varying grade levels, and different socioeconomic backgrounds. One of the main purposes for the focus groups was to generate ideas about the most effective ways to package, distribute, and promote information to the public through SCHEV publications and other activities.

SCHEV also factored into the development of the messages and strategies findings from its website redesign plan. Before relaunching its website in spring 2002, SCHEV analyzed the agency’s web access logs for a six-month period (August 2000 – February 2001) and conducted online surveys (April – May 2001). We identified who is using our site, how they get to us, what they are looking for on our site, and who is looking for what information. More than half of web users of SCHEV’s site are parents and students.
Since this initiative is designed to promote awareness of SCHEV and the value of higher education to parents, it is appropriate to highlight why these issues are important.

**Value and Benefits of Higher Education**

Higher education is an enormous asset – to individuals and families, businesses and communities, society at large, and our personal and future well-being. Its value, however, in an uncertain and rapidly changing world is not always or sufficiently understood.

For people to recognize and more fully appreciate it as an asset worth treasuring and supporting, SCHEV and other advocates must make clear connections. In the words of the Commission for Educational Quality of the Southern Regional Education Board’s report *Higher Education and the Public Good*, we must emphasize the “connection between investment and return, between higher education and economic development, between higher education and progress, between higher education and a responsible citizenry, and between higher education and the future.”

A college education is more valuable today than ever. In the most basic of measures, people with a college bachelor’s degree earn almost twice as much annually as people with just a high school diploma ($27,240 vs. $47,325). But the value of a college education goes far beyond dollars and cents.

Among the many other benefits of higher education, we:

- Educate people, help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in school, on the job, with their families, and throughout their lives;
- Serve as an engine of economic development, growth and job creation in the 21st century’s knowledge-based economy – where progress is dependent upon the development and application of new technologies;
- Conduct research that expands the base of knowledge, and leads to world-changing discoveries, life-saving new vaccines and drugs, medical advances, and better, healthier lives;
- Prepare a high-skill, high-wage workforce that strengthens our state and national competitiveness;
- Act like magnets in attracting new businesses and new jobs, and make faculty expertise available to entrepreneurs and existing companies who want to grow;
- Prepare, train and support school teachers who, in turn, educate our children; and
- Foster greater individual self-sufficiency, lower crime rates, and greater prosperity; provide leaders in communities, industry, and government; enrich people’s cultural life, and enhance their overall quality of life.
Virginia’s Higher Education System

For more than three centuries, citizens of the Commonwealth have recognized the importance of higher education. The College of William and Mary was founded in 1693. The Commonwealth has devoted public funds to higher education at least since 1819 with the founding of the University of Virginia by Thomas Jefferson, who had this to say about the vital importance of public education:

I think by far the most important bill in our whole code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. No other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom and happiness.... Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance; establish and improve the law for educating the common people. Let our countrymen know that the people alone can protect us against those evils, and that the tax which will be paid for this purpose is not more than the thousandth part of what will be paid ... if we leave the people in ignorance.

More recently, the Commonwealth took another strike forward in 1966 when it created Virginia’s community college system. In short, Virginians throughout our history have shared a strong belief in support of education’s positive and transforming power.

Today, the people of Virginia have access to a highly respected and outstanding system of higher education – a $3.5 billion and most human of enterprises that serves over 370,000 students, not including those enrolled in out-of-state institutions either at physical sites in Virginia or online through distance learning.

The Commonwealth has over 100 colleges and universities – public four-year institutions, a public two-year junior college, community colleges, private non-profit colleges and universities, private for-profit institutions, small liberal arts colleges, large research universities, all-male and all-female institutions, military schools, and more. In addition, there are a variety of vocational and technical schools in Virginia.

These institutions are providing educational and career opportunities for students of all kinds and ages and from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Each student has his or her own individual needs and reasons for going to college or becoming a life-long learner. Yet, it is incumbent upon state government to help ensure that all Virginians have access and an opportunity to benefit from everything Virginia higher education has to offer.

Roles of SCHEV in Virginia Higher Education

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), an agency of the Commonwealth, is Virginia’s coordinating board for its system of colleges and universities.

Like the colleges and universities it coordinates, SCHEV has and serves many constituencies – students, parents, K-12 educators, college administrators and faculty, businesses, government policymakers, and the public at large.
SCHEV’s Mission

To promote the development of an educationally and economically sound, vigorous, progressive, and coordinated system of higher education in Virginia.

Agency’s Vision

To be the recognized source for accurate information, meaningful innovation, and informed leadership in higher education.

In pursuing its mission and promoting its vision for the benefit of those it serves, SCHEV performs a number of important duties and responsibilities. Among the many roles of SCHEV in Virginia higher education, we:

- **Provide coordination for the public and private colleges and universities that make up the system.** SCHEV respects the distinctive missions of each institution, yet works to bring them together to meet common systemwide challenges so higher education can effectively serve the Commonwealth and her citizens.

- **Present policy guidance and recommendations to the Governor, General Assembly, and the institutions.** SCHEV advises on such key areas as systemwide capital and operating budget planning, enrollment projections, and student financial aid. We also review and must approve or disapprove new academic programs or off-campus sites and location proposed by colleges and universities.

- **Serve as a catalyst for change, progress, and systemwide improvements.** SCHEV produces reports, studies, and analysis on timely and emerging issues, such as institutional effectiveness, assessment of student achievement, decentralization, academic research, tuition and fees, administrative “best practices” in institutional management, and systemwide strategic planning.

- **Are a reliable resource for accurate information and expertise.** SCHEV encourages and welcomes requests for information, data, assistance, and speakers. SCHEV also makes it a priority to reach out and partner with the students, parents, the institutions, K-12 educators, business leaders, and others who are direct or indirect beneficiaries of the instruction, research, and community service accomplished by Virginia’s many outstanding public and private colleges and universities.

It is through this last means – being an *information resource* and *advocate* – that SCHEV already does help parents. Now, we seek to do so more broadly and effectively.

By reaching out to parents through execution of this marketing plan, SCHEV believes they will become more aware of us and the useful information and free resources we provide, and more likely to value and support higher education in Virginia.
Why Parents?

SCHEV has decided to concentrate attention upon parents in Virginia because they are children’s – and potential future college students’ – first and most important teachers. Research has demonstrated that children whose parents are involved are more likely than others to have positive educational outcomes. Such outcomes include improved academic performance, better school attendance, higher aspirations, reduced dropout rates, and increased graduation rates.

Parents also are voters and taxpayers. Their views matter to government officials who are elected to represent them. Educating parents about the successes and value of Virginia colleges and universities has the potential to cause them to more readily support higher education. Broader and deeper support also increases prospects for making higher education a high priority in public policy-making.

We see a natural connection between parents as “teachers” and “voters” and SCHEV’s responsibility to provide timely, accurate and useful information. What brings us together as partners is information. Parents have a demand for facts and resources to help them make informed decisions affecting their children’s future. SCHEV has an enormous supply of useful information. What unites us is a shared desire to have and use good information on higher education as a basis for more informed decision-making.

As an advocate, SCHEV believes strongly that education is the key that unlocks and opens wide the doors of opportunity to a brighter future – which leads to better jobs, exposes people to the wonders of the world, and makes them more productive citizens. SCHEV recognizes, however, that many parents need help as they encourage their children to think college is possible for their family. They need assistance in making sure that their children, early on, are preparing academically for post-secondary studies. Parents also need information and financial support to help them pay for their children’s college education.

In response to such needs, SCHEV strives to make widely available timely and useful information about the value of attending college, sound ways to prepare for college, and how to pay for it. SCHEV also works to provide meaningful information on the academic quality, student performance levels, efficiency, and effectiveness of Virginia’s public institutions of higher education. In fact, SCHEV earlier this year completely redesigned its website to better provide information for parents.

Of course, SCHEV’s information and resources do little good if no one knows it is available. That’s why SCHEV is proposing the following marketing plan to help get the word out to parents across Virginia about what roles SCHEV plays and the useful information we offer, and to celebrate the value and benefits of higher education in Virginia.

To be successful, SCHEV members and its staff – along with college campus communities, K-12 schools, policymakers, business and civic leaders, and others – must join, be enlisted, and participate. By teaming up and leveraging resources, SCHEV believes we can make progress toward our goal through the strategies outlined in this plan.
In reaching out to partner with parents in Virginia, SCHEV has identified four broad themes and additional key targeted messages we want to articulate and communicate in a concerted and coordinated manner. The themes and messages are:

1) **Investing in Virginia Higher Education’s Future**

- Passage of the $900 million general obligation bond referendum for educational facilities on the statewide ballot November 5, 2002 is essential for Virginia’s future.
- The bond referendum is supported by parents, students, educators, consumers, business leaders, and citizens in each region of Virginia because a strong economy with good jobs and opportunities is built by a well-educated work force.
- The bond referendum will not raise taxes.
- The bond referendum will provide more research facilities – making it possible for Virginia to compete for high-paying, high-tech jobs, and ensuring state-of-the-art medical and cancer research that will save lives.
- The bond referendum will benefit every public four-year college and university, and expand the community colleges – providing all Virginians the opportunity to learn new job skills, and preparing them for the high-tech jobs of the new economy.
- More Virginia students – 32,000 by 2010 – will be able to attend a public college in Virginia and have greater educational opportunities.

2) **Education is Opportunity**

- College is possible. If you want your child to go to college, they can do it. There are ways you can afford it. SCHEV wants to help make it happen.
- A college education has become an essential part of the American Dream for millions of families.
- Going to college and earning a degree leads to greater opportunity and financial stability, and can mean personal advancement and success.
- You may already know how valuable it is for you or your children to go to college, but you may not know how many different options there are available to help your family afford it.
● The majority of students today receive some form of financial assistance to help pay for college. It’s worth finding out if you – or your child(ren) – are among the many who qualify.

● Many people don’t realize there is $60 billion in grants, scholarships, and low-interest loans available every year throughout the nation to help families afford a college education. In Virginia, the state provides over $124 million in grants and other financial aid to students and families attending public and private colleges and universities.

3) Information is Power

● Planning for and choosing the college or university that’s right for your or your child requires careful thought and preparation. SCHEV is a reliable source of valuable information you can use. We want to empower you to make more informed decisions.

● In selecting an institution to attend, there are many options, from community and technical colleges, to small private colleges and large state universities – each has its own distinct advantages and benefits.

● SCHEV is a central collection and distribution point for information about Virginia’s institutions of higher education. SCHEV’s website – www.schev.edu – makes accessing that information fast and easy. In one convenient place, there also are links to each higher education institution’s website, where many offer virtual campus tours and more.

● Every summer, SCHEV produces online Reports of Institutional Effectiveness that provide facts and figures (like number of males and females, average class sizes, and the percent of first and second year lower division courses taught by a professor), performance measures, and comparisons on each public college and university in Virginia. These resources can help parents learn more, ask better questions, and make more informed decisions about where their child goes to college.

● This summer for the first time, ROIE will include “core competency” results – by institution – spelling out student learning outcomes that can be expected of graduates of each Virginia public college or university. The results of the assessments of the first two competencies to be released are in written communications and technology / information literacy.

● SCHEV also has created on its website a new and searchable Academic Degree Inventory. Now, users of www.schev.edu can search for college degree programs by institution, by broad program category, or by specific program or major. This information can help parents and students learn more about a particular college or university or choose a learning environment that suits them best.
4) Celebrating Success in Virginia Higher Education

- Virginia’s colleges and universities provide incredible value and benefits to people, our communities, and the entire Commonwealth through teaching, research, and public service, and so much more. SCHEV wants to showcase educational excellence at our institutions. Celebrating “good news” can build good will and stronger support for higher education in Virginia.

- The quality of Virginia’s higher education system supports the quality of life in Virginia. It’s that simple.

- There are many great things going on all the time on campuses, and that bodes well in efforts to make Virginia’s colleges and universities leaders in the arts, sciences, and technology.

- Recognizing “good news” and educational excellence at Virginia colleges and universities reinforces and helps parents recognize the connections between investment and return, between higher education and progress, and between an educated citizenry and economic prosperity.

- Celebrating success and the inspiring results of the human spirit at work in higher education throughout Virginia taps into the deep affection and pride that so many have for our colleges and universities.
Summary

For the 2002-2004 biennium, SCHEV recommended $1.3 billion to address systemwide capital outlay needs in Virginia higher education. Of that amount, SCHEV identified $970 million for a capital “catch up” package to: 1) support previously recommended, but unfunded, new construction and renovation projects – based on SCHEV analysis of space needs, current space utilization, and programmatic review; and 2) support newly requested projects needed to help meet anticipated student enrollment growth and academic program changes at community colleges, public four-year colleges, and universities.

During the 2002 Session, the General Assembly and Governor enacted HB 99, the Commonwealth of Virginia Educational Facilities Bond Act of 2002. It authorizes the issuance of Commonwealth of Virginia General Obligation Bonds (GOB) pursuant to Article X, Section 9 (b) of the Virginia Constitution in an amount not exceeding $900,488,645 subject to approval by a majority of the qualified voters of the Commonwealth voting thereon at the November 5, 2002 general election.

The purpose of the bonds is to pay for 122 capital projects – urgently needed upgrades, renovations, modernizations, and new construction – on Virginia’s public college and university campuses and state museums. Every public college, university, and community college in every region of Virginia will benefit.

More than just bricks and mortar on the outside, this referendum is really about what goes on inside the buildings. It’s about expanding opportunity. It’s about students – who must acquire valuable knowledge, skills, and training that’s facilitated by modern classrooms and laboratories. It’s about faculty – who fire imaginations and inspire students to excel, but need safe and supportive learning environments. And it’s about families throughout Virginia – who stand to benefit from life-saving medical research and other scientific discoveries that take place at Virginia colleges and universities.

By the end of this decade, SCHEV has identified that an additional 32,000 qualified high school graduates are expected to enroll at Virginia’s community colleges, public four-year colleges, and universities, whose existing facilities will not accommodate this enrollment growth. In addition, SCHEV’s recent Condition of Research at Virginia’s Colleges and Universities report found that the Commonwealth is not keeping pace with other states in this critical area, which provides advances in medicine and scientific discovery, contributes to job creation, and enhances our state’s economic competitiveness.
An advocate for Virginia higher education, SCHEV will help educate parents and others about what’s at stake in the GOB referendum through the following strategies:

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<th>Strategies</th>
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<td>✓ Approve a resolution endorsing the educational facilities bond referendum on the November 5, 2002 statewide ballot, and urge Virginians to carefully consider this issue and remember to exercise their civic duty and vote.</td>
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<td>✓ Include information about the GOB referendum on SCHEV’s website.</td>
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<td>✓ Include time on the agenda to discuss/highlight the bond referendum during SCHEV’s 2002 Boards of Visitors Conference on October 11, 2002.</td>
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<td>✓ Volunteer Council members to participate and be scheduled in statewide and/or regional speakers bureaus in support of the bond referendum.</td>
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<td>✓ In collaboration with state / regional steering committees, appear on public affairs programs to discuss the bond issue.</td>
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<td>✓ Write op-ed pieces to newspapers throughout Virginia explaining the GOB’s importance.</td>
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<td>✓ Have Council members and staff contribute to and participate in appropriate committees and activities that involve educating parents through accurate information on the capital needs of Virginia’s public colleges and universities.</td>
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<td>✓ Work with the Department of Education to ensure information about the bond referendum is included in a mailing that goes to every parent at the beginning of the upcoming school year.</td>
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<td>✓ Provide speakers to address PTA / other parent organization meetings in the fall.</td>
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<td>✓ Offer to present on the bond issue at the state PTA meeting in early November.</td>
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<th>Measuring the Results</th>
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<td>✓ The only measure of success that really counts will be whether or not the educational facilities bond referendum is approved by Virginia voters.</td>
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College is possible. If you want your child to go to college, they can do it. There are ways you can afford it. SCHEV wants to help make it happen.

Summary

The active interest and involvement of parents in the education of their son or daughter can make a big difference in how ready a student is for college.

Going to college gives students more options and opportunities for a brighter future. Over their lifetime, college graduates will earn substantially more than individuals whose education stops at a high school diploma or less. Parents need to know these facts and other details, and spend time discussing them with their children.

Solid academic preparation in middle and high school has a major and positive impact on students and their ability to get into and succeed in college. One very important way that parents can help their children get this preparation is by being informed about what classes students should take while in middle and high school.

Success in college depends on students being prepared, working hard and their families making informed decisions while in high school and even middle school.

It also is never too early to start thinking about how to pay for college. Many parents are intimidated by the application process and array of financial aid options. Getting familiar with the types and sources of financial aid now, by a student’s junior year in high school, can make the going much easier when it comes time for students to apply to college.

In addition, if parents know that there are many ways to help pay for their son’s or daughter’s education, then they often are more likely to encourage and support the idea of their child attending college.

As families wrestle with these serious issues, parents need good information to help them make good decisions and provide the guidance their children need and deserve.

To help parents and others meet these important responsibilities, SCHEV can serve as a comprehensive, trusted, and reliable source for information about preparing for, succeeding in, and paying for college.
College costs less than many parents think it does. Aid is available. There are many choices. To help parents and students plan and pay for a college education, SCHEV will pursue the following strategies:

**Strategies**

- Distribute copies of SCHEV’s new video – “Financial Aid 101: All You Need to Know About Finding Grants, Scholarships, and Loans for College” – to every middle and high school in Virginia as well as local libraries.

- Send out the remaining 200,000 bookmarks that highlight SCHEV’s website and its available resources to high schools and middle schools across Virginia. Perhaps begin in regions of the state with significant underserved populations, such as Southwest Virginia and the Southern Piedmont.

- Regularly update and add to SCHEV’s website useful information for parents:
  a. Place a full or partial stream of SCHEV’s financial aid video online;
  b. Post pdf copies of all SCHEV publications online for downloading by parents, students, guidance counselors, and others; and
  c. Excerpt key points from reports or large studies most likely of interest to parents (like tuition & fees for each public colleges and university this year) and reformat them in user-friendly ways on the “parents” webpage.

- Better leverage resources with the Department of Education, Virginia Colleges Savings Plan, the Education Credit Management Corporation, and other established education-related groups to have them include references to SCHEV’s information resources and website in their various promotional activities and materials.

- Contact local school board, schools and school division’s public information officers and inform them of SCHEV’s efforts and explore with them possible ways to collaborate to reach out to these communities and see how we could work together to promote the value of SCHEV’s website and other resources.

- Contact pages for the 2003 General Assembly Session this fall and provide them with information and materials about SCHEV and Virginia higher education so they might share with their peers.

- Work with minority organizations and media to ensure the message(s) are reaching diverse audiences.

- Engage student leaders at the colleges – or perhaps even high schools – to find ways to involve them in getting the word out about SCHEV and the useful information and resources we offer. Create a Student Advisory Committee or use the one created by the Department of Education.
Create a “SCHEV Screensaver” – or displays and brochures – that could be used by middle schools and high schools as well as local libraries to promote SCHEV’s website, using images or catch phrase to emphasize key points/messages.

Seek out / take advantage of opportunities for free public service announcements to direct people to SCHEV’s website -
  - On local radio and TV and in local and statewide newspapers/magazines;
  - On screens in movie theatres; and
  - On billboards.

Ask state middle schools and high schools to place on their websites a link to SCHEV’s website and publicize our resources –
  - In letters to parents
  - At the library
  - In the guidance counselor offices.

Make college affordability information available at locations where parents, students and families are likely to be during various seasons of the year (e.g., in summer – at theme parks, movie theatres, and shopping malls).

Develop a budget initiative for the Governor and General Assembly to consider that provides support for the powerful information and publication tools that were identified as so greatly needed through SCHEV’s focus groups.

Explore working with grocery stores to put college affordability information on grocery bags, on movie screens, etc.

Build upon existing GEAR UP organization partnerships to see if there are further ways to provide affordability and other information to parents and students.

Encourage and partner with the appropriate leaders at public and private colleges and universities to promote SCHEV’s financial aid video and the other useful information available on SCHEV’s website in various promotional materials.

Identify and approach local, state or regional organizations (perhaps starting with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce and/or the Virginia Business Higher Education Council) about how SCHEV and they might partner in distributing information on college preparation, affordability, the value and benefits of higher education, etc.

Create a speaker’s bureau (Council members, staff, and/or others beyond SCHEV) to go into local schools and communities to speak. For their use:
  a. Create a brochure or other document describing info/services we provide.
  b. Produce a “stock” presentation that can be used by the volunteers.
R Use and/or reconstitute existing Student Success Programs Advisory Committee. Group is currently designed to create innovative and effective ways of sharing information designed to help students prepare for college. An emphasis is placed on reaching underserved populations with low high school graduation rates and low college entrance rates. The group previously has served as a publication advisory committee to SCHEV.

R Make presentations or mail information about SCHEV and its available resources to local business and service organizations, such as the Chambers of Commerce, Ruritans, Kiwanis, etc. across Virginia.

R Participate in Career Days / College Fair Nights, the Virginia State Fair, and other events that parents frequently attend, where possible.

R Attend annual Boys State and Girls State events and talk about the importance of college and where to go to get more information.

R Contact the state or local Parent Teachers Associations to explore ways that we might work to get out more information about college to parents and students.

S Create a fundraising panel among selected Council members to secure funds to assist in additional agency outreach efforts to parents and students for –
  a. Print materials
  b. Videos
  c. CD-ROMs
  d. Other items

Measuring the Results

- Conduct surveys (through mail, website, other means) to determine if the plan’s messages and strategies are penetrating and resonating with parents.

- Conduct focus groups to learn if plan’s messages and strategies are creating greater awareness and influencing perceptions of SCHEV and its activities in support of Virginia higher education.

- Monitor the number of requests for additional information, materials, or speakers from SCHEV once the plan is implemented.

- Monitor the number of individuals accessing certain sections of the agency’s website. Perhaps a percentage increase could be proposed.
Planning for and choosing the college or university that’s right for your child requires careful thought and preparation. SCHEV is a reliable source of valuable information you can use. We want to empower you to make more informed decisions.

Summary

In making informed decisions about which institution(s) may be right for their son or daughter, parents need the right information at the right time to help them make a good decision.

Parents and students often are looking for information about what the college is like, the quality of instruction, and the kinds of academic learning environments provided to students by Virginia’s institutions of higher education.

They also would benefit from knowing as much as possible about what minimal levels of knowledge and skills are expected of students at a particular public college or university in Virginia.

SCHEV provides such information and more through such means as:

- **Reports of Institutional Effectiveness (ROIE)** – Through these online documents, parents and others can learn about an institution’s performance. Items of particular interest to parents and students might include:
  -- student body demographics;
  -- first-year retention rates;
  -- graduation rates;
  -- average time to degree for undergraduate students;
  -- average or typical class sizes; and
  -- percent of lower division courses taught by professors instead of teaching assistants

- **Core Competencies** – Included in ROIE for the first time this year, parents and students can find out what specific level of performance each Virginia public college or university expects of its students in written communications and technology / information literacy. Other assessments in mathematical / quantitative reasoning, scientific reasoning, oral communications, and critical thinking will be phased in over the next several years.

- **Academic Degree Inventory** – Through this online and searchable database, parents and students can locate which institutions in Virginia offer the programs or majors in which they are most interested.
To help parents make informed decisions based using its information resources, SCHEV will pursue the following strategies:

**Strategies**

- Host special previews and demonstrations of ROIE / Core Competencies, etc. for the media and others so they can better understand their usefulness and accurately communicate key messages, findings, etc. to parents statewide.
- Pitch ROIE and competency related stories to newspapers and magazines and encourage reporters and editors to focus on their value to parents.
- Regularly update and add to SCHEV's website useful information for parents.
  - Here especially, excerpt key points from ROIE / Core Competencies most likely of interest to parents and present them in more user-friendly ways on the “parents” and/or maybe “students” webpages.
- Create a Web-Advising / Mentoring Partnership between SCHEV, the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia (CICV), and XAP, Inc. to substantially improve our ability to meet the increasing on-line information needs of middle-school and high-school students, in a popular, appealing, and interactive format that they prefer. Through such a partnership, SCHEV can reach out and provide more Virginia families with help in selecting the junior high and high school coursework that is so essential for success at college. The partnership also will help parents and students by providing other useful information to guide them successfully through the college selection process.
- Write and submit Op-Eds on how SCHEV’s information and resources can help parents and the public make more informed decisions.
- Send copies of modified ROIE brochures to every high school and local libraries

**Note:** Perhaps additional strategies highlighted in the “Education is Opportunity” section of this plan could be added here, or maybe include information about ROIE / Core Competencies along with other relevant sections of SCHEV’s website in materials shared with others.

**Measuring the Results**

Several ways to measure success in this are:

- Monitor the number of hits on SCHEV’s website, specifically for ROIE
- Monitor the number of requests from parents of SCHEV for additional information and/or materials once this plan is implemented
- Conduct surveys (through mail, website, others) to determine if the plan’s messages and strategies in this area are penetrating & resonating with parents.
- Conduct focus groups.
Celebrating Success in Virginia Higher Education

Virginia’s colleges and university provide incredible value and benefits to people, our communities, and the entire Commonwealth through teaching, research, public service, and so much more. SCHEV wants to showcase educational excellence at our institutions. Celebrating “good news” can build good will and stronger support for higher education in Virginia.

Summary

Virginia higher education is one of the most outstanding and highly respected systems anywhere, and rightfully so.

Many of our public and private institutions of higher education routinely are rated at or near the top as “Best Colleges” or “Best Values.” These achievements – and many more equally deserving ones that don’t always make headlines – underscore how our colleges, faculty, and students truly excel and contribute to make Virginia higher education the envy of so many.

The institutions regularly give back to the Commonwealth’s communities in countless ways large and small. Individuals, too, receive direct benefits from our colleges and universities – whether they ever step foot on a campus or not. Such contributions include – benefiting from life-saving medical procedures and scientific breakthrough performed at our research universities; attending a cultural event sponsored by a local college; or sending a child to an academic or sports camp at an institution where they fire the imaginations and help people realize their fullest potential.

Many positive developments also come out of the higher education system as a whole. From Virginia winning a $10.4 million federally funded GEAR UP grant to help low income students prepare for college to a recent report on research by SCHEV that garnered widespread attention for its contributions to public discourse in this vital area, there always seems to be something exciting and newsworthy going on in Virginia higher education. Already, SCHEV regularly promotes such “good news” as the winners of Virginia’s Outstanding College Faculty Awards, and recipients of the Eisenhower K-12 Teacher Development Awards, among others.

SCHEV believes it is valuable and essential for parents and the public to become more aware of these and so many other accomplishments. Through such real-life examples, we can personalize – and make real – the value and benefits that people receive from Virginia higher education. What they know and value, people tend to support.
To help the public recognize the many contributions our colleges and universities make to the educational, economic, and social well being of Virginia, SCHEV will pursue the following strategies:

### Strategies

- Solicit from and/or send to the institution’s PR offices “good news” stories that warrant greater public attention.
- Solicit from and/or share “good news” items with members of SCHEV’s advisory panels (GPAC, IPAC, FAC, etc.).
- Share examples of “good news” with Council members and SCHEV staff so they can talk it up / spread the word.
- Add a standing agenda item at every SCHEV meeting to highlight “good news” and institutional success(es).
- Create & feature “good news” items on SCHEV’s website under “Featured Links.”
- Create a “good news” section in future editions of SCHEV’s quarterly newsletter.
- Raise $3,000 - $5,000 for SCHEV to host another successful Outstanding Faculty Awards ceremony in January 2003, including the traditional luncheon in honor of the recipients at the Governor’s Mansion.
- Have the Chairman, other Council members, and the Executive Director make a concerted effort to always include “good news” items any speeches they deliver.
- Develop a “State of Higher Education” Report – a year in review of key successes to share with all public and private middle and high schools, and community organizations.
- Explore the possibility of creating a special event with legislative and executive branch leaders around a major announcement of a higher education success story.

### Measuring the Results

- Monitor number of hits on SCHEV’s website, specifically on “good news” webpage.
- Monitor amount of feedback Council members and SCHEV staff hear from stakeholder groups.

**NOTE:** Since SCHEV’s use of a news clip service was discontinued because of agency budget reductions, tracking media placements of “good news” features is difficult to do in a comprehensive and systematic way.
Prioritization and Funding

No matter how worthy a goal or great an idea, there are never unlimited amounts of resources, staff, or time to be expended in achieving them. This reality is especially true at this time in Virginia’s challenging economic and state budget environment.

Unfortunately, the current situation is even more acute for the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). This year and next, we are making 7% and 8% reductions in our budget, while operating with a professional staff of 39 members. By comparison, SCHEV had a staff of 58 in 1995, and 62 in 1989.

Themes, messages, and strategies are but words on paper unless put into action. However, action requires resources, people, and time – all of which are in short supply at SCHEV now and for the foreseeable future.

During these tough times throughout Virginia state government, it is essential to be creative. We must find efficient and effective ways to get the word out about what SCHEV is, what we can offer parents in Virginia, and what Virginia higher education can and does provide them. This plan seeks to advance SCHEV outreach activities and overcome the current set of hurdles.

As it stands, it is not possible to accomplish everything proposed and/or laid out in this marketing plan. It is incumbent upon the Council and its staff, therefore, to organize and prioritize those strategies that can be done as inexpensively as possible, and are the most likely to produce the greatest benefits and results. We must explore ways to partner with others doing good work in support of higher education. We must make hard decisions about where to target the agency’s scarce resources. And, if we determine we have strategies worth pursuing that cannot be met with current resources, then we must decide whether or not we ought to seek state general funds and/or raise nongeneral funds to support those efforts. We also must identify who will be responsible for leading the initiatives.

The challenges are great, but the opportunities to advance Virginia through higher education using this plan are even greater. SCHEV is eager to move forward.
APPENDICES

A. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
   Agency Responsibility
   Outreach Committee Responsibility
   Outreach Committee Members

B. Pre-Collegiate Advisory Committee

C. Information Available on SCHEV’s Website

D. Institutional Public Affairs Vice Presidents & Chief Information Officers

E. 2002 General Obligation Bond Regional Chairs

F. SCHEV’s Marketing Partners

G. Virginia K-12 Information and Data

H. Virginia Higher Education Information and Data

I. General Virginia Demographic Information
Appendix A: State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Agency Responsibilities:

While SCHEV no longer has any statutory requirement to provide information about college preparation and financial aid to students and parents, the agency believes it is intrinsic in its role as the state’s higher education coordinating body. Accordingly, the Council, through its Outreach Committee, has directed staff to develop a plan to reach Virginia’s parents.

Outreach Committee Responsibilities:

The Outreach Committee routinely addresses issues concerning Council relations with external organizations and constituencies, including parents.

The Outreach Committee’s responsibilities include: strengthening SCHEV communications with legislative and the executive branches, institutions, the media, and the public; overseeing the development of the Reports of Institutional Effectiveness; coordinating the continuous improvement of the agency’s website; organizing annual Boards of Visitors conferences; and leading the Commonwealth in celebrating Virginia higher education through the Outstanding Faculty Awards Ceremony.

Other areas of responsibility include:

1. Publicity and public relations;
2. Awards and recognition;
3. Advisory services to non-public institutions, Private College Advisory Board;
4. Coordinate institutional advisory committees;
5. Cooperation with Board of Education;
6. Cooperation with the Virginia Community College System
7. Visits to college campuses;
8. Authorization to contract.

Current Committee Members:

Delceno Miles (Chair)
Harold Jordan
Robin Miner
Bittle Portfield
Cheri Yecke

Staff Liaison: G. Paul Nardo
Secretary: Kathy Robinson
Acting to partner with and take advantage of the expertise of others (namely those that work daily with middle school and high school students and parents), and to assist and encourage additional “good will” ambassador presentations to appropriate groups, SCHEV has coordinated a committee known as the Student Success Programs Committee (members are listed below). Through its marketing plan, SCHEV envisions working even more closely with this committee and using higher education to expand efforts to get the word out about SCHEV, and its services and information.

2002 STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Institution</th>
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### SCHEV's Marketing Plan for Parents

#### July 29, 2002

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APPENDIX C:
INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON SCHEV’S WEBSITE

In February 2002, SCHEV launched its redesigned website - www.schev.edu -- an integral part of the agency’s outreach activities. The reconceived website makes better use of advanced technologies, and presents and communicates a far greater variety of resources online that highlight, inform, and educate users about Virginia's widely acclaimed system of higher education – all in a more appealing, convenient, and effective manner. By acting on its agency-wide commitment to reach out and partner with people, SCHEV seeks to better enable them to make more informed decisions based upon their needs and expectations of Virginia higher education.

The new website has seven (7) primary navigational tabs on the homepage around which SCHEV's entire website is organized. For the purposes of this marketing plan, SCHEV is focusing on the most frequent visitors to the site (parents and students).

Key information for each of these constituencies is listed below:

PARENTS:
1. Paying for a college – financial aid process and options
2. Key dates to remember
3. Ways to help youth focus on time management and study skills
4. How to help students prepare academically for college
5. How to select a college
6. SCHEV publications for middle and high school students
7. Meeting the academic challenge of college
8. Degree programs available at Virginia Colleges and Universities
9. List and links to all colleges and universities in Virginia

MIDDLE, HIGH, AND COLLEGE STUDENTS AND ADULT LEARNERS:
1. How to prepare academically for college
2. How to select a college
3. Paying for a college – financial aid process and options
4. SCHEV publications for middle and high school students
5. Meeting the academic challenge of college
6. Degree programs available at Virginia Colleges and Universities
7. List and links to all colleges and universities in Virginia
APPENDIX D:
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APPENDIX E:
G.O.B. REFERENDUM REGIONAL CHAIRS

REGION 1 - NORTHERN VIRGINIA
Helen Ackerman
George Mason University

REGION 2 - CENTRAL VALLEY
Louise Dudley
University of Virginia

REGION 3 - SOUTHWEST
Larry Hincker
Virginia Tech

REGION 4 - SOUTHSIDE
Brenda Atkins
Longwood University

REGION 5 - GREATER RICHMOND
Jackie Fraser
Virginia State University

REGION 6 - SOUTH HAMPTON ROADS
John Broderick
Old Dominion University

REGION 7 - NORTH HAMPTON ROADS
Margaret Yancey
Christopher Newport University
APPENDIX F:
SCHEV’S PARTNERS

The following organizations, agencies, and institutions are those that SCHEV has worked with in the past and might serve as valuable partners in the agency’s effort to reach Virginia’s parents.

Virginia’s 15 Public Four-Year, 23 Community Colleges, and 1 Two-year Junior College

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Virginia Alliance

Commission on Access and Diversity in Higher Education

GEAR UP Partners, including Local Public Schools Divisions

Office of the Governor of Virginia

Office of Virginia’s Secretary of Education

Roanoke Higher Education Center

Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center

Southern Virginia Higher Education Center

Tidewater Higher Education Consortium

Virginia Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

Virginia Association of Private Career Schools

Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

Virginia Board of Education

Virginia Business-Education Partnership

Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers

Virginia Department of Education

Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges

Virginia College Savings Plan

Virginia One to One: The Mentoring Partnership
GENERAL K-12 ENROLLMENT DATA

- 132 public school districts
- 1,792 public schools
- 1,100,000 million K-12 enrollment

2001-2002 NUMBER OF PK-12 SCHOOLS IN VIRGINIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/Center Type - Local</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Center</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative School</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and Technical Center</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter School</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined School</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>1,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed. Center</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed. School</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Schools</td>
<td>1,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Centers</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,929</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SREB K –12 Education Data (From 2001 Featured Facts)**

- From 2001 to 2010, the numbers of public high school graduates in Virginia is expected to increase by 6,500 students, a 10% increase.

- In 1997, (almost 278,000) 17% of Virginia’s children lived in poverty, below the national average of 21%.

- Virginia is one of only four SREB states that have high school attainment levels above the national average of 84%. Virginia’s rate in 2000 was 87%.

**Virginia:**  
**Public Elementary and Secondary School Membership,**  
**School Year 1997-1998**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of membership free lunch eligible</th>
<th>Percentage of membership Individualized Education Program</th>
<th>American Indian/Alaskan Native</th>
<th>Asian/Pacific Islander</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Black - Non Hispanic</th>
<th>White - Non Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX H:
VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION INFORMATION & DATA

Virginia has the 11th largest higher education system in the U.S.

2002 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OPERATING IN VIRGINIA:

- 15 public four-year institutions
- 24 public two-year institutions
  - 23 community colleges on 40 campuses
  - 1 junior/transfer-oriented college
- 29 private not-for-profit in-state institutions
- 13 private for-profit in-state institutions
- 28 out-of-state institutions

2002 STUDENTS IN VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:

- 379,000 students
- 327,000 in public institutions
- 46,000 in private not-for-profit institutions
- 5,500 in other institutions
- About 87% of the students at public institutions are from Virginia
  - At the four-years, it’s about 79%
  - At the community colleges, it’s about 94%
- About 57% are full-time students
- At the four-years, it’s about 75%
- At the community colleges, its about 27%
- About 85% are undergraduates
- At the four-years, it’s about 73%
DegrEES aWeArED AT VirGI NIa PuBlIc COlLeGeS:

- 9,400 Associate’s degrees
- 32,500 Bachelor’s degrees
- 21,000 Master’s degrees
- 1,100 Doctoral degrees
- 2,100 Professional degrees

SReB hIGHER EduCATION data (fRom 2001 Featured facts):

- Virginia is one of only two states that have college attainment levels above the national average.
- Virginia, with a 31% college-going rate, is above the SREB average of 29%, but below the national average of 32%.
## APPENDIX I: GENERAL VIRGINIA DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age distribution:</th>
<th>State:</th>
<th>Nation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 14</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 44</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 64</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and older</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial and ethnic distribution:</th>
<th>State:</th>
<th>Nation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other single race</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one race</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic (may be any race)</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational attainment of adults (highest level):</th>
<th>State:</th>
<th>Nation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th grade or less</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school, no diploma</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-school diploma</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate degree</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or professional degree</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State:</td>
<td>Nation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per-capita personal income:</td>
<td>$31,162</td>
<td>$29,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty rate:</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New high-school graduates in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2 (estimate)</td>
<td>73,856</td>
<td>2,876,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12 (estimate)</td>
<td>80,717</td>
<td>3,045,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New GED diploma recipients:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,386</td>
<td>486,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-school dropout rate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Information from the 2001 Almanac of the Chronicle of Higher Education*