In accordance with Ohio Amended Substitute House Bill 153, the Chancellor of the Board of Regents is to submit to the state Legislature and the Governor a plan, developed in consultation with Central State University, that assures the Central State Supplement will be used to promote the goals of increasing enrollment, improving course completion, and increasing the number of degrees conferred at Central State University.

In an effort to advance progress at Central State, it has been my intention to enhance this obligation by enlisting the university in defining strategies that are innovative and transformative, and by assisting the university in the implementation of the plan. The result of this endeavor was a four-month collaborative planning process between the Board of Regents and Central State’s president, its administration and its Board of Trustees. It involved the participation of a team of eight higher education administrators from across the country who volunteered their time to visit the Central State campus and meet with staff. The result of their participation was a report proposing 10 strategies that would move the university towards greater achievement in retaining and graduating students who will live and work in Ohio.

The Team of Consultants’ report, entitled Accen-
tuating Strengths/Accelerating Progress (AS/AP), is attached as an addendum to this Plan. The AS/ AP report was reviewed by a Planning and Imple-
mentation Advisory Committee, made up of repre-
sentatives from the Board of Regents and Central State, which I established in partnership with Pres-
ident John Garland. I am pleased that the report was received favorably by the university.

In developing a plan for Central State, I have relied heavily upon the recommendations of the Team of Consultants and the advice of the Advisory Com-
mittee, as well as my own observations.

In order to support the university in its endeavor to pursue this Plan, I am providing a loaned executive to assist Central State’s administration through February 2013. The loaned executive will work directly with the university leadership and the Planning and Implementation Advisory Com-
mittee to move the Plan forward. In addition, the Board of Regents Grant Services Department will actively work with Central State to identify and pursue funding opportunities that align with strategies outlined in the Plan.

However, the ultimate success of Central State on reaching these goals and growing its stature rests on the ability of its Board, administration and fac-
culty – through their shared and deliberate efforts – to embrace and implement the strategies outlined in this Plan.

I believe strongly in the importance of retaining Ohio’s Historically Black Public University, and I have confidence in the mission of Central State. In addition to the recommendations outlined in this plan, I encourage the Advisory Committee and those engaged in Plan implementation, to continue to explore additional ideas, University branding and marketing concepts, and new student recruit-
ment initiatives in the months ahead.

The creative and committed engagement of all concerned with this project will result in a lasting, positive future for Central State, and for its past, current and future students.

Jim Petro
Chancellor
Ohio Board of Regents
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Based upon the Accentuating Strengths/Accelerating Progress report, which was prepared by my Team of Consultants, feedback from the Planning and Implementation Advisory Committee and my own observations, I have identified several actions whose implementation should begin at Central State over the next year in order to satisfy the requirements of Ohio Am. Sub. HB 153.

I have divided these actions into three phases of execution:

- Phase I actions should begin immediately and be implemented by the end of the 2011-12 academic year.
- Phase II actions should begin immediately and be implemented by the beginning of Fall Semester in 2012.
- Phase III actions should begin within 2012 with a goal toward implementation by the end of the 2012-13 academic year.

**Phase I Actions**
(to be completed by May 31, 2012)

1. **Define performance metrics for Central State.**
   A joint committee made up of Board of Regents and Central State staff, with consultant assistance as needed, will define metrics for retention and graduation in accordance with the AS/AP recommendations. This will include identifying a “rising achiever” cohort on which performance primarily will be based and reviewing performance of other state universities and comparable HBCUs relative to that cohort.
2. **Affirm a student body of 3,000 students as an appropriate size for Central State over the next three years.**

   With less pressure to dramatically grow enrollment in the short run, the university will be able to commit its energy and resources toward retention and strategic enrollment strategies. During the three-year period, an optimal enrollment size for the university going forward will be determined based on its success.

3. **Examine funding alternatives as part of an analysis of the current state funding formula, with the goal to replace the Central State Supplement.**

   The formula should provide for a base level of consistent funding to the university while incorporating merit-based funding opportunities in accordance with the AS/AP recommendations. A working committee should be established to determine alternatives, including the base allocation and appropriate performance metrics and tiers for merit-based funding. The state should earnestly pursue 1890 Land Grant University status as a revenue strategy for the university as well.

4. **Develop a funding plan for facility improvement at Central State.**

   The plan – developed through negotiation with Central State’s administration and financial consultants, as well as the Board of Regents – should include an infusion of state funds and specific funding commitments from the university. It should be based on revised cost projections for the proposed Student Center and a review of the university’s Facilities Master Plan in light of AS/AP recommendations.

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**Phase II Actions**

(to be completed by September 30, 2012)

1. **Enter into an agreement with another University System of Ohio institution to define a data-driven process for identifying and recruiting “rising achievers.”**

   The Board of Regents will help to facilitate an agreement with an institution that provides the research capacity and technical expertise in data-driven admissions to complement Central State’s ability to create a rising achiever profile and to build the data system needed to incorporate that profile into recruitment and enrollment efforts. The goal will be to implement the system in time for recruitment for Fall 2013.

2. **Hire or appoint a Director of University Retention to coordinate first-year strategies.**

   The Director will have the authority to drive implementation of the first-year retention measures that the university has introduced as well as the enhancements called for in the AS/AP report (see Strategy 2A, pp. 10-11). The Director would be directly accountable for improving retention rates in line with the performance metrics that will be defined for the university.

3. **Identify three degree partnerships in STEM with other institutions.**

   Such partnerships will build program capacity, stature and enrollment at Central State. They will include those currently under negotiation by Central State and new ones that align with the principles underlying the AS/AP recommendations.

4. **Explore with Wright State University opportunities to share administrative operations.**

   The goal of such an exploration will be to create greater efficiency and ease the financial burden on Central State. Such negotiations should involve senior administrators from Wright State University and Central State, with facilitation from the Board of Regents as needed, and lead to a mutually beneficial service partnership agreement that is driven by the contributions of both institutions.
Phase III Actions
(to be completed by May 30, 2013)

1. **Assess the viability of developing a “Success Roadmap” to degree completion, including:**
   - Recognize completion of 30 hours of study (1-year) with the granting of a certificate focused on career readiness.
   - Recognize completion of 60 hours (2-years) of study and a core curricula completion with the granting of an associate degree in the specific art or science discipline selected.
   - The assessment may consider the awarding of associate degrees in partnership with a community college.

2. **Conduct a review of STEM curriculum as part of the university’s Higher Learning Commission self-study process.**
   The review will seek to achieve greater strategic investment and efficiency among the university’s critically important STEM majors in accordance with the AS/AP recommendations. It should also utilize experimentation with Responsibility Centered Management as part of its fiscal analysis.

3. **Pilot elements of “Preferred Pathways” into select community college relationships.**
   As Central State enhances its presence at the state’s community colleges, it will incorporate a more intimate engagement with a cohort of students at one or more colleges as outlined in the AS/AP report. The pilots will be tracked to see if such engagement leads to greater prospects of enrolling transfer students and to retaining those students through graduation.

4. **Devise a comprehensive revenue plan that complements changes in the funding formula.**
   The plan should include projections and strategies for growing private and corporate donations and a business plan to grow revenue at the Dayton campus.

5. **Re-examine Central State’s marketing strategy.**
   The re-examination will address the alignment of the university’s branding campaign with the ultimate goal of degree completion.

### Funding of Action Steps

It is the Board of Regents’ expectation that many of the initiatives outlined above will be executed through the reallocation of resources and support from other institutions within the University System of Ohio rather than through new funding. Central State may need additional funding to move forward on some elements of this Plan.

The Board of Regents’ Grant Services Department has identified about 20 available federal grants that align with various aspects of the Plan. The Board of Regents’ staff and senior administration are available to assist Central State administration in pursuing these grants and in negotiating partnerships with other institutions with the University System of Ohio as needed.
The Team of Consultants’ Accentuating Strengths/Accelerating Progress provides a clear path for Central State to achieve increased enrollment, retention and degree attainment. While all of its specific recommendations are not mandated in the Board of Regents Plan, they serve as the foundation for the action steps outlined in the Plan. The AS/AP report is built on a set of assumptions identified by the Consultants that affirm the value of Central State to the State of Ohio, and emphasizes its potential to increase that value dramatically through improved performance. These assumptions are as follows:

- Given demographic shifts in the state, if Ohio is to increase the number of residents with baccalaureate degrees the state will need to graduate more students from underrepresented groups, including those who are economically disadvantaged and academically underprepared.

- Such students make up a relatively small percentage of the student body at most of the state’s universities. While Central State admits a diversity of students, its Historically mission compels it to be more aggressive at recruiting and admitting these higher risk students than any other university in Ohio.
Central State’s distinct value to the state, then, is in graduating these students at a relatively high rate. The state has every reason to expect Central State to be successful at this objective given the university’s strategic focus and cultural assets aimed at such students.

Central State has made strides in recent years at improving its performance. The focus of the AS/AP report is to identify a core set of strategies that have high potential to produce operational improvements that will lead to even greater, sustainable, measurable outcomes. These strategies are categorized in the report under five areas or “Targets of Opportunity.”

They are, as interpreted by Chancellor Petro:
1. Conduct a more selective recruitment process
2. Promote greater accountability of students during their first year on campus
3. Build up science and technology academic programs
4. Establish a consistent, merit-based state funding formula
5. Improve the university’s physical environment

The Team of Consultants’ offered two strategies to address each of these five Targets of Opportunity. The strategies are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Key Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Conduct a more selective recruitment process</strong></td>
<td>1A: Selectively recruit within the university’s target cohort</td>
<td>• Create a sophisticated student profile for “rising achievers.” • Focus recruitment and admissions efforts on these specific student prospects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1B: Leverage STEM programs to attract high academic achievers</td>
<td>• Establish the STEM fields as an “honors environment” with more selective academic requirements. • Target high achieving students for the STEM program using competitive scholarships and exposure to employers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Promote greater accountability of students during their first year on campus</strong></td>
<td>2A: Enhance and intensify the University College retention effort</td>
<td>• Create an overarching retention strategy headed by a Director for University Retention. • Benchmark academic skills of all incoming students. • Frequently track multiple indicators of student progress. • Add a comprehensive wellness program to distinguish University College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2B: Establish “Preferred Pathway” pilots with urban community colleges</td>
<td>• Develop partnerships where community college students destined for Central State are jointly enrolled and obtain academic support, and other privileges from the university and its alumni network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Build up science and technology academic programs</strong></td>
<td>3A: Focus energy on a narrower set of science majors</td>
<td>• Assess all science majors based using a comprehensive set of criteria. • Eliminate weak programs based on assessment and increase investment in stronger programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3B: Create dual degree and facility use agreements with partner universities</td>
<td>• Broaden faculty capacity by partnering with other institutions to offer dual degrees, with students taking courses on both campuses. • Establish a mutually beneficial faculty development program as part of the partnership. • Share research opportunities and facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Opportunity</td>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>Key Recommendations</td>
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| 4. Establish a consistent, merit-based state funding formula | 4A: Replace “the supplement” with a consistent, merit-based funding formula | • Eliminate the supplement in favor of a modest but necessary guaranteed, base funding allocation.  
• Establish merit increases based on performance.  
• Establish a set of performance metrics that are relevant to the university’s mission and the needs of the state. |
|  | 4B: Advance a range of revenue opportunities beyond state investment | • Grow fundraising revenue as a greater component of the general fund.  
• Establish a version of a Responsibility Centered Management system to stimulate greater efficiencies.  
• Develop a business plan for generating revenue at the Dayton Center through entrepreneurial endeavors.  
• Target tuition discounting to students who best fit the “rising achiever” profile. |
| 5. Improve the university’s physical environment | 5A: Maximize the physical impact of a new student center | • Consider placement of the new facility to improve “curb appeal.”  
• Use the new construction to establish a consistent physical theme that unifies the built environment.  
• Use the new facility to complement other buildings and to address other facility needs. |
|  | 5B: Develop a diverse funding plan for facility improvement | • Obtain additional investment from the State of Ohio for a new student-oriented center and other physical enhancements.  
• Establish a capital campaign and leverage debt to supplement state investment.  
• Renegotiate the cost of the new facility in anticipation savings in the current construction environment.  
• Create a long-term budget model for high priority physical improvements and equipment needs. |

In addition to the strategies outlined above, the Team of Consultants strongly emphasized that the Board of Regents and Central State agree to a set of metrics that are both ambitious and achievable, and that align mutually with the university’s mission and the state’s economic development needs.
By the submission of this Plan summary, the Chancellor has completed the objectives called for by the Ohio General Assembly in H.B. 153.

The Chancellor and his staff look forward to working very closely with Central State University’s President, Board of Trustees and staff to ensure the full implementation and monitoring of the Chancellor’s Plan.
Accentuating Strengths/
Accelerating Progress
(AS/AP)

A Report to the Ohio Board of Regents
and Central State University
from the Chancellor’s Team of Consultants

December 19, 2011
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Introduction

The State of Ohio needs Central State University. For 125 years it has provided an opportunity for Ohioans and others, most of whom had few other options, to obtain a college degree. In the past, the mission was to educate African American students who were denied access into predominantly white institutions of higher education because of race. Central State allowed those students to obtain skills that contributed to the well-being of Ohio and the nation.

Yet just as the African American students who depended on Central State for their education went on to contribute to Ohio’s prosperity in the past, so too are the students who attend Central State today essential to the state’s future. As the University System of Ohio, under the leadership of Chancellor Jim Petro, pursues an aggressive goal of growing the number of Ohioans with baccalaureate degrees, it will require that Central State continues to graduate the distinct profile of students that it seeks to serve.

Data from the College Board show that, in Ohio and throughout the Midwest, the number of high school graduates will decline over the next decade. That means Ohio will need to do a better job of graduating residents who come from underrepresented groups in Ohio. Among them are African American students, who lag behind other groups in terms of college attendance. If that gap is going to close, it will require graduating more students whose modest household incomes and modest academic performance in high school marginalize them as candidates for college – more students like the ones who attend Central State.

Meeting this enormous challenge also will require that Central State and other universities produce outstanding results, particularly in the area of graduation and retention of its enrollees. Every university in Ohio struggles with what to do with this population. However, Central State must be the most successful among them, not only because it has chosen this objective as its core mission, but also because its success is needed as a model for other universities in Ohio.

Yes, Ohio needs Central State. However, it needs a Central State that is excellent at what it does. This report is intended to provide part of the roadmap to achieving the excellence its administration, faculty and staff have sought under the leadership of President John Garland. This report seeks to identify strategies that offer Targets of Opportunity to accentuate the university’s strengths and accelerate its progress toward becoming one of the highest performing public HBCUs in the country.
Targets of Opportunity

This report, Accentuating Strengths/Accelerating Progress (AS/AP), is framed around five distinct “Targets of Opportunity.” These areas emerged after two visits by the Team of Consultants to the Central State University campus. During visits, Central State administrators, faculty, staff and students were hospitable, generous with their time, and candid in their exchange with us. As a group of professional peers striving to improve conditions on our own campuses, our goal was not to create a comprehensive strategic plan or a long wish list of possible actions. Neither did we set out to unveil a magic formula that would promise some miraculous result. We did not attempt to provide an assessment of past practices – positive or negative. Rather, we adopted a forward-looking perspective aimed at Central State’s opportunities in the very near future. Based on the discussions we had with administrators, faculty, staff and students, we concluded that it would be most productive for us to construct a concise list of actions that:

- Represent areas in which the university already has devoted strategic focus, creative thinking and financial resources – areas where there exists a foundation from which to improve.
- Largely address operational issues that are fundamental to continued improvement in the areas of graduation and retention.
- Push the university to move beyond current practices to pursue industry best practices that can accelerate its improvement.
- Can be put into action within the next nine months.

The five Targets of Opportunity on which we focused are:
1. Aggressively pursue more distinct student prospects
2. Deepen the first-year experience
3. Leverage science and technical excellence
4. Balance revenue and performance
5. Create an inviting physical environment

In each of these areas, the report identifies two strategies that fit the criteria outlined above. The report also offers our best assessment of the level of capacity the university demonstrated for executing the strategy, and recommendations for how deficiencies might be overcome. The areas of capacity we highlight are leadership capacity, management capacity, and technical capacity.

Leadership capacity addresses the ability of the university to produce a champion who can generate the vision and rationale to marshal the financial resources, human capital, and political will to implement the strategy. Management capacity refers to whether the right administrative staff is in place to drive implementation to successful completion. Technical capacity speaks to the specific technical expertise, physical infrastructure, or operational structure needed to deploy and sustain the strategy.

As Central State considers the Targets of Opportunity and the associated leadership, management, and technical capacity needed to further align its efforts with the recommended strategies, we presume that decision-making and implementation will be the shared responsibility of the faculty and the administration.
Outcomes

Given the limited public resources available to state governments, the scrutiny of “return on investment” has never been greater. In this climate in particular, it certainly is reasonable – indeed responsible – for the State of Ohio to hold Central State accountable to clear measures of success. Likewise, it is essential that the university embrace such measures, track progress, and continually assess its performance if it is to make wise strategic decisions.

However, such metrics must be set with considerable forethought. While it is tempting to rely on broad, standardized outcomes, they may not accurately align with the unique contribution that Central State makes to Ohio and track what truly matters to the state. The limited time the Team of Consultants had in assembling this report was not adequate for us to define and recommend a specific set of preferred outcomes. We do offer, however, our best thinking on the parameters that ought to shape an ultimate set of metrics:

- At least one metric must address graduation rates and one must address retention. These outcomes are such fundamental factors in measuring university success that to avoid them jeopardizes the credibility of all other metrics. However, such measurements should track a more specific cohort of students than is currently captured through common definitions of race, academic profile, and even economic status. (We visit this issue in Strategy 1A.) Whatever the profile of the cohort that is defined, the goal for Central State should be to be in the top tier of performance among all Ohio universities in regard to graduation of that unique and specific cohort.

- Unfortunately, graduation rates do not fully measure whether students are prepared to make a positive economic or social contribution, which is the ultimate return on investment to the state. An innovative metric would look at placement in jobs or enrollment in graduate programs in fields that align with students’ areas of study. This metric also provides an incentive for the university to focus its energy on those areas where employment opportunities are most plentiful, another benefit to the state and an incentive for recruitment.

- Another metric should address the state’s emphasis on increasing the number of Ohioans with college degrees. The tendency here would be to focus on the percentage of enrollment of Ohio students at Central State. However, given Central State’s rather astounding propensity to attract students from out of state, a more meaningful metric might be the percentage of the school’s graduates who stay in Ohio to work after graduation, a phenomenon the university can impact through coop and internships programs and other partnerships with Ohio employers. This would address the level to which Central State’s ability to draw students to Ohio is, in fact, be a benefit to the state.

It is critically important that the Ohio Board of Regents and Central State agree on a set of metrics that are both appropriate for the institution and aspirational, to which the university will be held accountable and on which it will base strategic decisions and investments. We suggest such a task be conducted as first step toward implementation of the proposed strategies.
Target Opportunity #1: Aggressively pursue distinct student prospects

There is an adage in enrollment management circles: Whom you graduate is based on whom you bring in. In other words, outputs are shaped by inputs. If Central State is going to dramatically improve its ability to retain and graduate students, it must pay more attention to the type of students it recruits. The conventional response to this charge would be simply to recruit more students with a “higher academic profile,” the expectation being that this will reap a higher graduation rate. While that may be true, such a knee-jerk response does not sufficiently address the university’s core mission – and it does not necessarily bring benefit to the state.

Embedded deeply in Central State’s mission is the passionate commitment to assisting students who, in fact, don’t fit the profile of a typical high achieving student. According to data from the Ohio Board of Regents, 70% of first-time undergraduates from Ohio who enrolled at Central State in 2007 went there directly from high schools that were from “major urban, very high poverty” or “urban, low median income, high poverty” school districts. Only 19.4% of the Ohio high school students who entered all the other Ohio public universities in 2007 fit that profile. About 56% of those Central State enrollees had ACT scores of 17 or less. Only 10% of enrollees at other Ohio campuses had scores at that level.

On the surface, it is obvious that if Central State competed better for the more traditional pool of students with higher test scores and more economic means, it could improve its graduation rate. But it would be better for the State of Ohio if Central State graduated more of the students it takes in since no other institution is enrolling those students at the same rate. Quite frankly, more students like the ones who attend Central State will need to graduate if the state is to make dramatic gains in increasing the number of Ohioans with college degrees.

Currently, Central State’s success in graduating the students who fit this profile ranks it near the bottom among Ohio’s 13 public universities (excluding NEOMED). (See Appendix B.) To be fair, the challenge is more difficult in a setting where such students make up the majority. Still, if Central State builds its reputation and mission on taking on this challenge – and if the state is going to invest in that mission – then it is reasonable to expect the university to excel at it and exceed the success of most other campuses.

This will require more focused and strategic enrollment practices. In many ways, the state’s Speed to Scale imperative that the university rapidly grow enrollment may have diverted attention from – and in some ways contradicted – such practices. The following strategies are aimed at elevating the university’s emphasis on and competency at these efforts.

Strategy 1A: Selectively recruit within the core cohort

Holding firm to its commitment to students with a modest academic profile and economic status does not mean Central State should not be more selective in recruitment. Rather, the university must identify a highly sophisticated profile of students within this cohort that is most inclined to succeed at Central State. It must then deliberately recruit and admit students who demonstrate the behaviors and characteristics that have proven, through rigorous analysis, to most likely lead to success at Central State.
In other words, if 100 students who fit the broad academic and economic profile of a typical Central State student were sitting in a room and the university could only admit 50 of them, which 50 would it choose to admit? How would it know which students had the best chance to succeed? Most universities probably would not be able to differentiate among that group; Central State must know this population so well that it could do so.

It is our belief that such knowledge exists in-house among the recruiters and others who interact with first-year students. Staff speaks passionately about “seeing something” in students that the students do not see in themselves. These students might be “high-risk” at other institutions, but at Central State, they are seen as “rising achievers.” This intuitive recognition of a rising achiever, however, needs to be quantified through analysis, translated into data and used as a deliberate tool for recruitment. The “art” of identifying talent must be more of a science if it is to be used strategically.

The first place to build a more robust recruitment profile is by mining the insights of those students who do graduate. What common set of characteristics are exhibited by those students who make it all four years? Such indicators might include leadership capacity, a self-assuredness, discipline and focus, willingness to learn from others, and so on. The heart of Central State’s recruitment efforts must focus on identifying those characteristics during the junior or senior year in high school. What can be gleaned from a student's activities – at school, at home and in the community – or from people who know the student or from personal interaction? Can insights be gained through essays or interviews? Does a student’s high school curriculum or class rank – even if standardized test scores are modest – offer clues into preparedness and determination?

While Central State’s admissions personnel seem to be strong at relationship-building on the ground, the university will need assistance developing a student analysis and recruitment operation with the precision described above. The university should enter into a shared service agreement with a large university, such as Ohio State University, to create such an operation. The agreement should allow the partner university to coordinate research and provide the data management tools necessary to identify, recruit, and enroll a more selective group of “rising achievers.” Upon creation of the system, unless there is a critical upgrade in the Central State’s technical capacity, it will be beneficial for the institution to contract with the partner university to continue to manage its recruitment operation.

If Central State is to be the state’s premier institution at graduating rising achievers, it cannot admit a random pool of students and hope some of them make it. If admission to Central State is not dependent on ACT scores and GPA, then the university must know more precisely the specific profile of students who will make it and earnestly seek them out.

**Strategy 1B: Leverage STEM programs to attract high academic achievers**

While institutions with relatively few students with academically and economically challenged students have an advantage over Central State, the reason for that advantage should not be lost. High achieving students create a climate of success that affects the performance of all students. While Central State may be focused on “rising achievers,” admitting more overtly high achieving students is necessary for everyone’s success.
The admissions data seem to suggest that an adequate number of such students apply to Central State each year but the university is not their first or second choice so the university does not enroll enough of them. For that to happen, Central State must promote a high-profile academic opportunity that attracts their attention and creates an environment of academic excellence.

Currently, Central State boasts a traditional “honors program.” However, that is a tough sell in an environment dominated by rising achievers. A more promising strategy is to carve out a narrower academic area that can truly be distinguished as an honors environment. The university’s programs in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) provide such an opportunity, enhanced all the more by Central State’s unique position as one of a handful of HBCUs not located in the South.

This means that in the science fields, Central State should specifically and aggressively pursue a different profile mix, with more selective academic requirements, more competitive and lucrative scholarships, and greater exposure to employers through campus visits, internships, coops, and summer research experiences. Just as importantly, the science fields need to be pitched directly to high achieving students. The vibrant community of African American scientists in Ohio, who actively participate in statewide associations and corporate affinity groups at Procter & Gamble and other technology-based companies and research centers, should be enlisted as ambassadors to promote and advise the program.

Essentially, Central State must position itself as the place in Ohio for African Americans and students from other underrepresented groups to go and develop their skills to be equipped for the growing number of STEM jobs in the state. (We speak more specifically about improving science excellence at Central State in Target Opportunity #3.)

**Capacity analysis**

**Leadership capacity:**
Central State has senior leadership dedicated to admissions, largely through practices of promotion and marketing. Its expertise is rooted in student development, which contributes to the university’s strength in interpersonal engagement with prospective students. We did not see evidence of the programmatic capacity or infrastructure necessary to build the kind of highly sophisticated, data-driven operation in enrollment management that we recommend here.

**Management capacity:**
Central State has improved its marketing and promotion staff capacity. While these efforts are important, the ability to attract large numbers of applicants is not the university’s most urgent challenge. Rather, a more beneficial staff investment would be to expand the number and quality of front-line recruiters who can identify and nurture targeted candidates, and build strong relationships with parents, high school representatives, partner institutions and other community representatives.

**Technical capacity:**
Central State lacks the programmatic and infrastructure resources to build a sustained data-driven approach to enrollment management. Initiatives that have been launched, which could have been evaluated through data analysis, either have not been sustained or have not been evaluated due to
the lack of programs and infrastructure required to conduct ROI enrollment analysis. The university would do well to partner with a large university, such as Ohio State, in a shared services agreement that allows the partner university to coordinate research and provide the data management tools necessary to identify, recruit, and enroll a more selective group of “rising achievers” who are more likely to be successful.

For example, faculty and graduate students in the Higher Education and Student Affairs department at Ohio State’s School of Educational Policy and Leadership might welcome such a research collaboration with Central State. Following the development of this mechanism, the university should consider an ongoing agreement with a partner university that allows it to oversee the data management components of the enrollment management operation. This would free up Central State to devote its resources to building its front-line recruitment staff. In addition, the university should enlist support from the associations of African Americans from around the state to assist with promotion and development of its STEM program.
Target Opportunity #2: Deepen the first-year experience

There is no single task more important to Central State’s ongoing success and improvement than getting its first-year students to return for their second year. Currently, half of them do not return. By the time Central State students move into their junior year, they have fallen in love with the place. If Central State were able to get the number of students to stick around long enough to generate this level of commitment, it would pay dividends in every aspect of the university’s success: increased revenues, higher graduation rate, a more positive public reputation. Therefore, every academic strategy, financial decision, and organizational policy should in some way be focused on this critical objective.

Currently, however, there does not exist a fervent, all-holds barred campaign to dramatically improve first-year retention. Certainly retention is a priority; several initiatives have been launched to address the challenge, including the University College. Yet these efforts do not appear to carry with them the grand sense of urgency the situation demands. Consequently, the full force of the university’s creative energy and commitment, which are necessary for success, has yet to be fully deployed.

The following strategies seek to infuse the university’s promising ventures with a deeper level of innovation, risk-taking and intensity, which will be required to overcome this critical challenge.

Strategy 2A: Enhance and intensify the University College retention effort

The University College initiative that Central State launched in fall 2011 is clearly the university’s signature effort to increase retention between the first and second years. It is a major step in the right direction. Built on the president’s insistence, the provost’s experience, and a committed team, the effort employs proven techniques gleaned from best practices to track progress and intervene with first-year students. Yet in our estimation the effort lacks four important elements needed to ensure its success:

- An overall, all-encompassing retention strategy that provides context for the University College initiative and definitive administrative accountability for success.
- A benchmarking assessment of all incoming students’ academic skills to inform the development of individualized plans that address gaps in academic and study skills preparation.
- More frequent and precise tracking of indicators of student progress based on insights gleaned from successful Central State students.
- A signature feature or area of focus that gives it distinction and, therefore, greater appeal among first-year students and prospective students, as well as potential for attracting foundation support.

Establishing a strategic context for the University College is critical if it is to enjoy the level of broad campus support – from faculty, students, staff at all levels, and administrators – required for its success. For that to happen, the university must declare a campaign around retention with clear goals, frequently communicated progress toward those goals and – most importantly – one individual who is accountable for retention: a Director of University Retention.
College in itself is a tactic that supports a broader strategic imperative. The Director of University Retention should articulate and drive that imperative.

Beyond creating a climate of shared commitment, however, the university must launch a comprehensive system for tracking every first-year student around activities that have proven to be reliable indicators of whether students are struggling. Some of these are being tracked, such as fifth-week grades and attendance after two weeks. But many of these updates occur too late in the semester. Meanwhile, other less overt signs of trouble are likely going undetected.

To create a more comprehensive, in depth list of indicators, the University College team should interview faculty and older students to identify the signals that typically precede withdrawal from school. These might include responding to a crisis at home, unexpected financial hardships, dissension with classmates, and so on. Once identified, the university should create processes for such red flags to be reported by anyone who sees them: faculty, roommates, fellow students, cafeteria workers. Then, for the most reliable and persistent indicators, specific interventions should be in place for deployment when they arise, such as a visit from a senior on campus, a call from financial aid, an invitation to study sessions. Keeping the campus motivated to track these signs, arranging the appropriate interventions, and holding staff accountable for following through should be the primary responsibility of the Director of University Retention.

Finally, University College needs a compelling hook, something that students can look forward to. Many universities have their own version of University College, so what will make Central State’s unique and relevant? Perhaps more importantly, what will make it feel like something other than a penalty for poor performance? In other words, what will motivate all first-year students to embrace it, thus making those students who receive special intervention feel less like they are being singled out?

Our wholehearted belief is that the “comprehensive wellness” theme offers the university a tremendous opportunity to set itself apart within Ohio and nationally. The case is simple: Attend Central State and be part of the healthiest campus in Ohio. Physical, emotional and financial wellness is also a theme relevant to residents of economically distressed urban communities, where health and economic disparities generally are concentrated. The theme also fits the overall premise that Central State is a nurturing home away from home. Moreover, the potential to attract funding and gain valuable notoriety for such an endeavor is enormous.

**Strategy 2B: Establish “Preferred Pathway” pilots with urban community colleges**

The traditional view of students going away to college is that it is a defining mark of independence. Young adults embrace the opportunity to go and fend for themselves, and their parents are eager to usher them into adulthood. That scenario certainly is true for many Central State students. However, Central State’s admissions staff has learned that idealistic reality is not always true for its first-year students. Many have never been away from home, let alone outside of an urban environment for an extended period of time, and they struggle. And parents and caregivers are not always so eager to see them go. Many families are dependent upon the students to care for younger siblings or other relatives, or to bring income into the home. One reason many first-year Central State students end up leaving school is because a crisis breaks out at home that requires them to return.
Central State has begun to address this phenomenon by working with families to ease the transition to college. Holding student orientation in the hometowns where a critical mass of students live is one example. We believe it is worth building on this approach to more effectively take advantage of the attachment to home communities and to leverage the built-in support networks there to help ease the transition to campus and make the first year more successful.

One way is to actively and intimately embrace students who attend community college in the state’s urban centers by enrolling them jointly at Central State. The relationship would go beyond simply recruiting community college students to transfer. While attending the community college, these students would have provisional Central State IDs, form a learning community facilitated by a local Central State coordinator, and be bolstered by a support network directly tied to Central State staff and alumni. As part of Central State’s Preferred Pathway:

- Students would study as a cohort under the supervision of the local staff coordinator and receive academic advising from Central State counselors to make sure their coursework adequately prepares them for transfer.

- Students would take part in occasional lectures or programs webcast from the Wilberforce campus.

- Each student would be partnered with a Central State alumnus from his or her hometown. These alumni would not only have the responsibility of knowing the students and serving as a mentor, but also of interacting with the students’ families to provide them guidance and support to ease their eventual transition.

- Students and their families and network of supporters would be actively engaged in Central State events and activities, and kept informed about the university, thus enhancing their investment in the students’ matriculation into the university.

- Central State students would make contact with the Preferred Pathway students when visiting home for breaks and holidays to embrace them as members of the Central State family.

The program would be modeled after the Preferred Pathway agreement between Ohio State University and Columbus State Community College. It would be a closely coordinated partnership between the community colleges and Central State. In collaboration with the Board of Regents, the program would take full advantage of the state’s course transfer policies and to consider how the success of such could be counted toward Central State’s retention and graduation rates. In addition, the program would seek to not penalize the community college if a transfer is made prior to degree completion.

Through the Preferred Pathways program, Central State would inherit a more mature student who has gained the confidence that comes from having built a college academic track record. The intimate investment in these cohorts not only would help ensure their academic success and preparedness, it would orient them to Central State and give the university a competitive
advantage over other colleges and universities in the state who increasingly are recruiting the rapidly growing population of community college students and graduates.

The program also would provide an alternative pathway to Central State for those students and families that need time to transition to college – the very students who withdraw after a semester or two because of pressures back home.

**Capacity analysis**

**Leadership capacity:**
Retention is a high priority among Central State leadership. Efforts such as University College were developed quickly to make sure those students who enroll at the university stay at the university. Still, the university would benefit from a senior leader dedicated solely to the issue of retention – a Director of University Retention. This person would be accountable for making sure every facet of the university is intensely focused on this singular goal. Moreover, her or his success should be tied to clear metrics – both short-term indicators and long-term goals – that are frequently and publicly reported.

**Management capacity:**
A team of passionate staff members is engaged in the university’s retention efforts. However, there simply are not enough people on the ground to drive success. A very high-touch campaign is needed to change the climate. While it would be ideal to employ more staff devoted solely to this task, much could be accomplished by assigning an existing staff member from the various university functions to be responsible for retention efforts in their areas. Under this arrangement, a representative from the faculty, a representative from the dining staff, a representative from residence life, and so on, would work with the Director of University Retention to mobilize their colleagues to engage fully in the retention strategy.

**Technical capacity:**
Central State has the technical skills to run a focused, high-touch retention effort. It needs to build its capacity to better mobilize and track progress, perhaps looking to a consultant to create such tracking system. The Preferred Pathways initiative will require significant partnerships with the community colleges in the pilot cities and assistance from the Ohio Board of Regents to ensure transfer agreements that are not cumbersome to students and the institutions. The university also should enlist one of Ohio’s large health organizations as a corporate sponsor and advisor to its comprehensive wellness program.
Target Opportunity #3: Leverage science and technology excellence

The State of Ohio needs more graduates proficient in math and science. Businesses looking for these skilled graduates are desperate to hire more employees of color. Central State can make a major contribution to this pressing need, one that will not only raise its profile and stature as a contributor to the state’s economic future, but also distinguish the university among its peers. The goal is simple: Produce more students of color proficient in science and technology than any other state institution.

Central State is well positioned to achieve this objective. Its provost, a chemist, provides knowledgeable leadership in this area. The university has made significant capital investment in its science infrastructure and has reorganized its academic offerings to highlight science and engineering. Programs such as Manufacturing Engineering have achieved a measure of acclaim and success. Consequently, Central State is attracting an increasing number of African American students to the science and technology fields.

Still, Central State does not currently have the physical or academic capacity to reach the level of overall excellence required to make the sciences a showcase undertaking for attracting high-achieving students and delivering significant evidence of its contribution to Ohio’s economic prosperity. Although Central State’s STEM faculty includes dedicated and highly qualified teachers and researchers, the institution’s ability to support the depth of staffing and laboratories needed for pre-requisite and major courses across the current program breadth is lacking. To maximize this opportunity, the university must focus on a more defined set of scientific fields and create strategic partnerships with other institutions.

Strategy 3A: Focus energy on a narrower set of science majors

Currently, the College of Science and Engineering offers 10 degree programs and minors in a handful of others. This is simply too many for the institution to support effectively. Several majors have one faculty member. In others, enrollment is low. While a variety of majors may seem necessary to stay competitive with other universities and to appeal to the broadest set of students as possible, the breadth of offering prevents the institution from making investments significant enough to truly distinguish any one of them. Cutting programs is one of the most difficult tasks a university can undertake, but it would pay tremendous dividends at Central State. One way to minimize the fallout is to devise a decision-making process as transparent and objective as possible.

To accomplish this, the university should partner with Board of Regents staff to conduct a thorough analysis of its science programs. The relative strength or weakness of the programs should be assessed by a panel from outside the university based on the following factors:

- Quality of existing faculty, both in terms of scholastic stature and capacity.
- Financial cost per student.
- Student demand.
- Business demand in Ohio for graduates.
- Track record of employment or graduate study of past graduates.
- Distinctiveness of the program among peer institutions.
- Program accreditation.
All majors in the college, regardless of the department in which they are located, should be assessed equally. Majors that perform relatively poorly in this analysis should be eliminated, with resources reallocated to support the stronger programs. The department structure should then be reorganized accordingly.

**Strategy 3B: Create dual degree and facility use agreements with partner universities**

The most effective way to build academic programs is by growing the bench strength of the faculty. This is difficult to do when there are budget constraints. It is even more difficult to do in the STEM fields, where qualified professors are scarcer and more expensive to hire. It is daunting to attract such faculty to a rural campus that is still building a reputation for science excellence. Providing adequate equipment and facilities to attract faculty is another challenge.

Central State, therefore, at least in the short run, must look to institutional partners to build its capacity. One way to accomplish this is by developing dual degree partnerships with other four-year universities that have greater academic capacity in specified science areas. Under these arrangements, a Central State student majoring in a science field would spend her or his first two years on the Wilberforce campus, completing basic requirements and preliminary science courses. The student would then spend some portion of junior year and senior years taking advanced classes at another institution, such as Wright State University or the University of Cincinnati. The student might then graduate with dual undergraduate degrees from the partner institutions. Other arrangements might lead to B.S./M.S. attainment through five-year joint programs. Central State might also want to explore such dual degree arrangements with urban institutions in other states, such as Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).

Central State would benefit from the partnership by not having to hire faculty to teach advanced courses. The partner institution benefits because it will graduate more students of color. As part of the arrangement, Central State should insist on a shared faculty development program, where Central State faculty gain experience in teaching advanced courses and the partner institutions’ faculty gain cultural insights that help them in successfully teaching students of color. This might include co-teaching classes or conducting research with faculty from the partner school, or participating in institutional exchange programs. These arrangements also should include the use of other facilities by both Central State students and faculty.

Ultimately, the goal would be for Central State to develop the necessary environment, student demand and faculty capacity that will allow it to grow its own science programs so that the university eventually will not be dependent on the partner university. Meanwhile, the partner will have built its competence at attracting and educating students of color and making a greater contribution to the tremendous need in this area.
Capacity analysis

Leadership capacity:
The leadership exists at Central State for innovation in the science fields. Some partnerships have been developed with other institutions, such as Northeast Ohio Medical University and Wright State. Narrowing focus and expanding partnerships will require not only innovative thinking but also humility. Leaders will need to resist the old notions within the academy that suggests bigger is better and that prominence requires independence. Rather, Central State’s senior leadership must seek excellence in a few things and reach out to sister institutions that can help them get there.

Management capacity:
While the Provost can set the tone for College reorganization, it is the dean and department chairs who must navigate the difficult terrain, particularly when the possibility of eliminating programs is raised. It will be critical that the faculty leadership positions are occupied by forward-looking innovators who can embrace university-wide objectives beyond the narrow interests of their particular programs.

Technical capacity:
Central State must look to institutional partners to build science excellence. Fortunately, several are nearby. Wright State University, the University of Cincinnati, Miami University, and the University of Dayton all have engineering programs, for instance. Central State should be selective and seek out those institutions where the collaboration would be respectful and truly beneficial – that is, a partner that values the assets and expertise that Central State brings to the arrangement and does not see itself simply as providing assistance.
**Target Opportunity #4: Balance revenue and performance**

The ongoing saga of state funding for Central State continues to create a climate of mistrust between the institution and the state. On the one hand, the university’s leadership feels as though it constantly has to justify its need to exist in order to qualify for a level of state funding that is essential to its existence. This ongoing scrutiny is demoralizing to Central State’s leadership, stifles risk-taking, and creates a posture of defensiveness. On the other hand, state officials are frustrated that Central State seems resistant to producing tangible evidence of success, particularly as it relates to graduation and retention rates, and that the funding threat provides their only lever to demand results.

Central State leaders believe they are not acknowledged for their accomplishments and that their challenging mission is underappreciated. State leaders believe that Central State seeks to skirt accountability. This tension is exacerbated by the ever-present discussion of “the supplement,” a special funding arrangement which, according to the enacting legislation, is to be used by Central State “to keep undergraduate fees below the statewide average, consistent with its mission of service to many first-generation college students from groups historically underrepresented in higher education and from families with limited incomes.”

Our understanding in meeting with leaders from the state and the university is that both sides have valid points – and that both sides ultimately want the same thing: an outstanding university of which the people of Ohio can be proud. However, the battle over funding clouds an honest meeting of the minds. If Central State is truly committed to pursuing and achieving excellence, which we believe it is, and if the Board of Regents genuinely believes that a high-performing HBCU is an asset to the University System of Ohio, which we believe it does, then the funding conversation must be repositioned from one of contention to one of collaboration.

**Strategy 4A: Replace “the supplement” with a consistent, merit-based funding formula**

In reality, the supplement is not really a supplement. The term implies that the $12 million that the State provides Central State in addition to the approximately $6 million it receives through the regular funding formula is optional. It is not; it is core to the university’s operations. So the first question the state must answer is this: Does it want Central State to exist? If the answer is yes (and it is our assumption that it is) then the state should replace the so-called supplement with a regular, ongoing investment in the future of Central State.

The fact is the funding formula for the state does not work for Central State because of its size. While the state’s Speed to Scale imperative sought, in part, to compel the university to grow its student body to the point where the standard formula would apply, the growth demand worked against efforts at graduation and retention. The state should concede this reality and eliminate the notion of a supplement that can be yanked away at the discretion of one public official.

That said, the issue of accountability is a valid one. If the state is to look to Central State as its premier model for educating “rising achievers” who otherwise would be passed over by other institutions, and if it is to be among the top tier of public HBCUs in the country, then it must perform at a higher level. The Board of Regents is fully justified to expect Central State to do so.
In order to satisfy the need for both consistent, dependable funding and accountability, we propose that the supplement be replaced with a merit based system. Under this formula, a minimum, base figure would be declared part of Central State’s annual funding from Ohio. However, the funding could be increased incrementally if certain metrics are met or exceeded on a biennial basis. The base figure should be an amount necessary for general operations – along with reasonable expectations of the university’s contribution to its general fund – that is provided without the threat of repeal. However, the relatively modest allocation should give the university ample incentive to pursue any merit increases that are available. Such funds would provide resources for the university to invest in the strategic goals and initiatives that fuel its success – the types of strategies identified in this report.

Of course, the key is in defining the metrics on which such funding will be based. They must be both achievable and aspirational. They must be compatible with both the mission of the university and the needs of the state. And they must be recognizable and have credibility with the public sector and within the academic community. Our work did not allow us enough time to identify specific metrics that meet these criteria. However, reiterating points made in the introduction of this document, three types of metrics seem most appropriate:

- Graduation and retention of a comprehensive student demographic that is defined as the university’s unique, target audience. Central State should be expected to perform at the top tier among all Ohio institutions with similar numbers of students from this specific cohort.
- Post-graduate placement of graduates in both employment opportunities and graduate programs.
- Percentage of enrollees from Ohio or percentage of graduates who stay in Ohio to work after graduation.

A joint commission should be established immediately to determine these metrics with guidance from an outside consultant.

**Strategy 4B: Advance a range of revenue opportunities beyond state investment**

Aside from state funding, it is important that Central State more vigorously diversify its revenue sources. Four areas provide immediate opportunities: more aggressive fundraising; tighter financial accountability for university programming; exploration of entrepreneurial opportunities through the Dayton campus; and more strategic use of tuition discounting.

First, while the university’s fundraising efforts are consistent, they seem to be viewed as having minimal impact on the university’s bottom line. External support needs to be viewed as more essential to ongoing operations with higher expectations for results.

Second, although Central State justifiably prides itself on its ability to balance its budget every year, the university has scant specific data to quantify the true cost of academic programs and some other university programming. This makes it impossible to maximize efficiencies. We are
not advocating a full-blown decentralized budgeting system. However, a version of a Responsibility Centered Management (RCM) system would give the Chief Financial Officer and other senior administrators critical insight into which programs at the university drive revenue and which drain it. It also would push financial accountability down to the middle management level, stimulating both greater efficiency and innovation.

Third, Central State has established several entrepreneurial opportunities recently to grow revenue, such as a summer academic program that promised free housing and was very successful in 2011. The Dayton campus, with its available space, favorable location and mix of organizational tenants, shows tremendous promise for the creation of other entrepreneurial, revenue-generating programs. While the focus there has been on academic programming, a business plan aimed at generating revenue ought to be developed.

Such a plan could involve contracts with organizations that could use Central State’s administrative or academic expertise to meet their goals. One demonstration of this would be introducing STEM-related programs in Dayton that have the potential to produce revenue. By partnering with the Dayton Development Coalition and regional industries, the university might be able to create any number of advanced certificate programs that may not be available in the region. The university’s budding partnership in aquaculture involving the City of Dayton is a step in the right direction. Another promising area could focus on minority entrepreneurship, an area that could be of interest to the Dayton Development Coalition., which is funded by the Ohio Third Frontier to generate and support new businesses. A fee-based contract between DDC and Central State’s College of Business that is focused on promoting entrepreneurship among African American and the city’s growing immigrant population could be mutually beneficial.

Finally, tuition discounting should be skewed to reflect the focus on a more precise recruitment effort as outlined in Strategy 1A. Investment should be made in those students who most closely fit the rising achiever profile, with less discount going to students who are not as closely aligned.

**Capacity analysis**

**Leadership capacity:**
The funding of Central State has been for decades the focal point of a rather contentious relationship between the university and the state. Moving beyond it means a willingness by both the university’s and the State’s leadership to dramatically change the conversation from funding to investment. From the State, there must be a wholehearted commitment to making the investment; from the university there must be a full commitment to maximize the state’s return. This message must be enthusiastically embraced by the university’s Board of Trustees and its president and well as by the Chancellor of the Board of Regents and the State Legislature.

**Management capacity:**
Central State seems to have shown tremendous competence at managing its resources. The financial team is in place to develop in good faith with the state a consistent funding structure that has an appropriate measure of accountability and incentives for high performance. However, in these times of diminishing public funding, the university’s advancement team must take on greater responsibility for identifying revenues that ease the university’s dependence on state funding.
**Technical capacity:**
For the sake of credibility and objectivity, the Board of Regents and Central State should create a joint board to explore metrics that will be the basis of a merit-based funding feature, and hire a consultant to investigate possibilities and make recommendations. In addition, the university should reach out to Dayton Development Coalition to explore a set of STEM-related entrepreneurial opportunities for its Dayton campus.
Target Opportunity #5: Create an inviting physical environment

All of the rich assets at Central State that exist through the passion and commitment of its people are overshadowed by a physical environment that is at best underwhelming and at worst dismal. Despite its 125-year tenure, Central State does not have the historic architecture to show for it largely due to the destruction caused by the devastating Xenia tornado of 1974. In the decades since, relatively modest investment has been made in developing the physical plant. The university has done well just to keep up with maintenance of its buildings, many of which were hastily constructed after the tornado and are well past their reasonable life expectancy.

In recent years, Central State has developed a facilities plan; at its heart is the construction of a student center, which is woefully needed. The absence of an adequate central place for student gathering and fundamental student-focused activities is quite conspicuous on campus and no doubt makes it difficult to recruit students, particularly those who have an option to attend other better-equipped campuses, including several nearby.

Some $14 million in state funding have been committed to the construction of the student center, but that sum is not nearly enough to complete it. In the meantime, a site has been cleared for its construction, presumably waiting for the day when the state eventually fills the funding gap – from an ever-tightening pool of state funds. Fortunately, the lull in activity has created an opportunity for a fresh look at both construction and funding to produce a plan that could reap even greater benefit for the university than what has been conceived.

Strategy 5A: Maximize the physical impact of a new student center

There is no question regarding the functional need for a student center. However, there is also tremendous need for a physical upgrade of the Wilberforce campus. Few elements can have more impact on physical environment than the construction of a new building, so where it is located and what it looks like should be considered in the broader context of addressing the university’s overall physical needs as well. The point is that even though Central State has been determined to build something called a “student center” on a specific site on campus, it is worth stepping back to reconsider these four questions:

- What kind of facility could be built that would meet the most glaring physical needs?
- Where might such a center be sited to make the most positive impact on the physical environment?
- What other physical development elements should be part of the construction to most effectively improve the physical environment of the campus.
- What other high priority needs and strategies – such as insufficient library space or the opportunity for a campus-wide emphasis on wellness – might be enhanced by a new facility.

Consider, first, that Central State lacks “curb appeal.” It is possible to drive by the university along either US 42 or Brush Row Road and not even know a university exists there. The clear sense of place that immediately signified to a prospective student, or one arriving back to school, that “this is where I want to be” is missing. The Team did not review the university’s $500,000 Master Plan, which addresses physical changes along US 42 that would enhance the institution’s visibility. However, any significant capital investment should seek, in part, to address this issue.
Placement of a new student center in a location that is visible to passersby or people arriving on campus would accomplish this.

Second, Central State lacks a consistent physical theme – in the way of signage or pathways or architectural features – to unite its built environment and to fuel a sense of unity and security. A physical development plan that addresses such issues should be developed before any new building is constructed, and the new facility should anchor that theme and establish its precedence.

Finally, to achieve greatest efficiency, the new facility should link to other buildings and usages on campus as much as possible. For example, the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, while striking, appears to be underutilized. It might make sense to link that facility to a new student center in order to generate greater use. Another possibility would be to see what functions that traditionally have been part of a library might be satisfied with the student center. Spaces where students can collaborate with laptops and view materials on a flat screen monitor might be accomplished in the student gathering spaces of the student center, easing the load on the overburdened library.

Ohio has an abundance of public campuses whose physical environments serve as assets to their institutions. Central State should partner with one of these institutions, such as Ohio University or Miami University, to consider its facilities plans in light of the factors identified above.

**Strategy 5B: Develop a diverse funding plan for facility improvement**

The State of Ohio should make an investment beyond the $14 million it has already made available for a new student-centered facility and broader physical development plan for Central State. The fundamental need is urgent and critical enough to warrant such funding. Though the lack of a student center is not the only factor preventing the university from making greater gains in retention and graduation, it undoubtedly impedes its efforts. The governor, Legislature, and chancellor should consider this a high budgetary priority.

However, the sole investment should not come from the state. Funding of a facility and complementary physical features should involve a mix of funding that includes private resources raised by the university and university debt. Central State, which achieves consistent results from its advancement efforts, has avoided running a capital campaign, an obligation of nearly every university. Beyond alumni and individual gifts, the university should pursue corporate gifts, particularly targeted at specific features of a new facility. The university also boasts one of the lowest debt loads among Ohio’s public universities. While this is to be lauded as an example of fiscal responsibility, it means the university has room to leverage debt – given the favorable terms that currently are available – to achieve necessary investments in the future.

The university and state also would be wise to revisit the total cost for the student center facility. The $31 million figure that the university administration quotes as needed was developed before the current economic collapse. The university very likely could negotiate more favorable architectural and construction rates now given the lack of construction activity in the market. Indeed, it may be possible to implement a broader physical development plan with the same resources it might have taken just a few years ago.
Finally, the university should take advantage of this time to create a long-term budget model for facility and other infrastructure needs that align with its highest priority strategies, such as maintenance and replacement of science equipment. More than a wish list, the model should embrace a broad range of revenue sources and the strategies for bringing them to fruition over the next decade.

**Capacity analysis**

**Leadership capacity:**
Central State’s senior administration has for several years diligently advanced its plan for a new student center with limited support from the state. It is to be applauded for its persistence. However, such stubborn determination might also make leaders reluctant to rethink their plan. It should not. A fresh consideration of ways to maximize the physical and functional impact of a new facility, and to supplement public funds with those generated by the university, should serve as leverage to finally secure the state funds for which the university has been waiting.

**Management capacity:**
To effectively drive a physical plant development that has the potential to transform the campus, Central State needs highly skilled leadership devoted to the physical plan. Currently, the university’s facilities managers are skilled at maintenance and keeping order, but seemingly less so at plan development and implementation on a campus-wide scale. A shared services partnership with Ohio University, a university that has been highly successful at physical development, would provide the ongoing oversight needed to execute a successful plan.

**Technical capacity:**
Central State should secure the services of a financial services firm to assist in structuring a diverse funding package for a new student-oriented facility and complementary physical features. The firm should have experience in working with universities and other public institutions, and at fostering public-private partnerships around capital projects.
Conclusion

Central State University has served the State of Ohio well over its 125 year history. It has improved continually over the past several years. Its potential to accelerate its progress going forward is very promising. Indeed, the university has the potential to be considered among the elite public HBCUs in the country. Achieving this, however, will require the university and the state to engage and collaborate in new, constructive ways.

Fundamentally, this will require a commitment from the state that is based on its unequivocal confidence that Central State is a unique asset within the University System of Ohio. The ultimate evidence of such commitment is an unwavering support for the essential funding that the university needs to exist and improve.

At the same time, success will require the university to willingly hold itself accountable for a superior level of performance in carrying out its core mission to educate a unique and important population of students – rising achievers – so that they contribute to the state’s growing pool of college graduates. The ultimate evidence of such commitment is the wholehearted pursuit and achievement of a set of aspirational yet obtainable metrics.

It is our belief that the strategies outlined in this AS/AP report provide a set of opportunities that have the potential to propel Central State forward in its pursuit of excellence. It is our sincere hope that both the university and the state embrace these initiatives and see them through to implementation.
### Appendix A: Synopsis of Recommendations

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<th>Target Opportunity</th>
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<th>Capacity needs</th>
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| 1. Aggressively pursue distinct student prospects | 1A: Selectively recruit within the core cohort | ▪ Create a sophisticated student profile for “rising achievers.”  
▪ Focus recruitment and admissions efforts on these specific student prospects. | ▪ Programmatic and infrastructure resources to build a sustained data-driven approach to enrollment management.  
▪ Shared service agreement with a large university, such as Ohio State, for data management and research support.  
▪ A greater number of talented, front-line recruiters. | ▪ Reallocation of resources from mass marketing efforts to recruitment staff. |
| 1B: Leverage STEM programs to attract high academic achievers |   | ▪ Establish the STEM fields as an “honors environment” with more selective academic requirements.  
▪ Target high achieving students for the STEM program using competitive scholarships and exposure to employers. | ▪ Enlist the state’s African-American science community to promote and advise the program. | ▪ Federal funds for research and program in the STEM fields, including programs specifically aimed at HBCUs. |
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<th>Capacity needs</th>
<th>Potential funding</th>
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</table>
| 2. Deepen the first-year experience | 2A: Enhance and intensify the University College retention effort. | ▪ Create an overarching retention strategy headed by a Director for University Retention.  
▪ Benchmark academic skills of all incoming students.  
▪ Frequently track multiple indicators of student progress.  
▪ Add a comprehensive wellness program to distinguish University College. | ▪ A Director of University Retention.  
▪ Assigned representative from each area to be responsible for coordinating retention efforts.  
▪ A comprehensive student tracking system. | ▪ Corporate sponsorship of the comprehensive wellness initiative.  
▪ Federal funds for health and wellness, particularly among underprivileged populations. |
| 2B: Establish “Preferred Pathway” pilots with urban community colleges. | ▪ Develop partnerships where community college students destined for Central State are jointly enrolled and obtain academic support, and other privileges from the university and its alumni network. | ▪ Unique transfer collaborative agreements with select community colleges.  
▪ Policy support from the Board of Regents. | ▪ Targeted alumni fundraising campaign. |
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<tr>
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<th>Key recommendations</th>
<th>Capacity needs</th>
<th>Potential funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3. Leverage science and technology excellence | 3A: Focus energy on a narrower set of science majors. | ▪ Assess all science majors based using a comprehensive set of criteria.  
▪ Eliminate weak programs based on assessment and increase investment in stronger programs. | ▪ Board of Regents assistance to evaluate programs.  
▪ An outside review panel to help in program assessment. | ▪ Federal funds for research and program in the STEM fields, including programs specifically aimed at HBCUs.  
▪ Expenses reallocated from weak science programs. |
| 3B: Create dual degree and facility use agreements with partner universities | ▪ Broaden faculty capacity by partnering with other institutions to offer dual degrees, with students taking courses on both campuses.  
▪ Establish a mutually beneficial faculty development program as part of the partnership.  
▪ Share research opportunities and facilities. | ▪ Partnerships with regional universities that have strong academic infrastructure in science and technology. | ▪ Cost-sharing by the partner institution based on its benefit from the partnership. |
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<th>Capacity needs</th>
<th>Potential funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4. Balance revenue and performance | 4A: Replace “the supplement” with a consistent, merit-based funding formula | ▪ Eliminate the supplement in favor of a modest but necessary guaranteed, base funding allocation.  
▪ Establish merit increases based on performance.  
▪ Establish a set of performance metrics that are relevant to the university’s mission and the needs of the state. | ▪ Joint Central State-Board of Regents commission to determine performance metrics.  
▪ Outside consultant to work with the commission. | ▪ Ohio Board of Regents |
| | | | | |
| 4B: Advance a range of revenue opportunities beyond state investment. | ▪ Grow fundraising revenue as a greater component of the general fund.  
▪ Establish a version of a Responsibility Centered Management system to stimulate greater efficiencies.  
▪ Develop a business plan for generating revenue at the Dayton Center through entrepreneurial endeavors.  
▪ Target tuition discounting to students who best fit the “rising achiever” profile. | ▪ Partnerships with businesses and industry-oriented non-profits, such as the Dayton Regional Coalition, to establish fee-based programming in science and entrepreneurship. | ▪ Fees from local industries and business development nonprofits. |
<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Create an inviting physical environment</td>
<td>5A: Maximize the physical impact of a new student center.</td>
<td>▪ Consider placement of the new facility to improve “curb appeal”</td>
<td>▪ Create a facilities plan with consultation from Ohio University or Miami University, where a physical development is strong university asset.</td>
<td>▪ In-kind assistant from a sister institution.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>▪ Use the new construction to establish a consistent physical theme that unifies the built environment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Use the new facility to complement other buildings and to address other facility needs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5B: Develop a diverse funding plan for facility improvement.</td>
<td>▪ Obtain additional investment from the State of Ohio for a new student-oriented center and other physical enhancements.</td>
<td>▪ Financial services firm to assist in structuring a diverse funding package for a new student-oriented facility.</td>
<td>▪ State capital funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Establish a capital campaign and leverage debt to supplement state investment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Corporate and private gifts.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>▪ Renegotiate the cost of the new facility in anticipation savings in the current construction environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Leveraged debt.</td>
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<td>▪ Create a long-term budget model for high priority physical improvements and equipment needs.</td>
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# Appendix B: Six-Year Graduation Rates of Targeted Cohort at University Main Campuses

Fall 2004 Cohort of Full-Time, First-Time, Bachelor’s Degree-Seeking Students with ACT Scores Below 18 and from Districts Classified as Major Urban - Very High Poverty or Urban - Low Income, High Poverty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number in Cohort</th>
<th>Bachelor's Degree Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central State University</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami University</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Green State University</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent State University</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio University</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Cincinnati</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngstown State University</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright State University</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Toledo</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawnee State University</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Akron</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland State University</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total - All Institutions</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,434</strong></td>
<td><strong>317</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ohio Board of Regents
Appendix C: Team of Consultants

Nancy Franklin  
Director of Outreach Sustainability Initiatives  
Assistant Director, Penn State Institutes of Energy and the Environment  
Pennsylvania State University  

Dr. Nancy Franklin provides leadership for the integration of outreach (credit and non-credit; distance, hybrid, and face-to-face) and public engagement programs with Penn State’s multi-disciplinary and cross-college research and education programs in the areas of sustainability, energy, and environment. Previously, she co-led an $80 million engagement initiative for Virginia Tech to improve the long-term economic and social environment of Virginia’s south central Piedmont. She has a background in distance education and private sector information technology marketing. Dr. Franklin has published and presented on university-regional engagement, sustainability, and distance education topics. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Bucknell University, a master’s degree from Virginia Tech, and a doctorate in higher education from the University of Pennsylvania.

Marybeth Gasman  
Professor, Graduate School of Education  
University of Pennsylvania  

Dr. Marybeth Gasman is an historian of higher education. Her work explores issues pertaining to philanthropy and historically black colleges, black leadership, contemporary fundraising issues at black colleges, and African-American giving. Dr. Gasman’s most recent book is Envisioning Black Colleges: A History of the United Negro College Fund (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007). She has written and edited several others books and published many peer-reviewed articles, including Understanding Minority Serving Institutions (SUNY Press, 2008), which she edited with Benjamin Baez and Caroline Sotello Turner, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Triumphs, Troubles, and Taboos (Palgrave Press, 2009) with Christopher Tudico. Her research on Historically Black Colleges has been cited in various media venues, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, the Chronicle of Higher Education, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, National Public Radio, Inside Higher Education, U.S. News and World Report, and CNN. In addition to her research, Dr. Gasman has worked with several institutions interested in reaching out to their African American alumni. These colleges and universities include Howard University, Bennett College, Cheney University, Philander Smith College, Stanford University, Prairie View A & M University, Georgia State University, and the University of Pennsylvania. She received her Ph.D. in higher education from Indiana University.
**Steve Immerman**  
President  
Montserrat College of Art

Dr. Steve Immerman became president of Montserrat College of Art in November of 2009, following a career where he served in many capacities including fundraising, fiscal management, construction, student life and alumni affairs through Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT) Resource Development, Academics and Student Affairs Divisions. He is also chair of the State University of New York (SUNY) at Potsdam Foundation Board of Directors where he helped to lead a successful $12 million fundraising campaign for his undergraduate alma mater. Dr. Immerman holds a Doctor of Education Degree from the University of Pennsylvania, Certificates in Leadership from MIT and in Management from the Sloan School of Management at MIT, a Master of Science and Education from the SUNY Albany and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the SUNY Potsdam.

**Paul Marthers**  
Vice President for Enrollment and Dean, Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Dr. Paul Marthers, who has more than 25 years of experience in higher and secondary education and administration, was most recently the dean of admissions at Reed College in Portland, Ore. Dr. Marthers is widely recognized for his work with the admissions process as well as his scholarly publications. In 2007, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* selected him as one of “10 admission deans who are shaping their field.” Dr. Marthers earned an Ed.D. degree in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education.

**Marc Nivet**  
Chief Diversity Officer  
Association of American Medical Colleges

Dr. Marc Nivet provides strategic vision for all AAMC diversity and inclusion activities through his leadership of the association's Diversity Policy and Programs department, which focuses on initiatives designed to increase diversity in medical education and advance health care equity. Dr. Nivet and his staff are responsible for analyzing policy and regulatory activities related to diversity and inclusion, assisting medical schools and teaching hospitals with their diversity goals, and serving as liaison for diversity initiatives to membership organizations, government entities, and other health organizations. Dr. Nivet served most recently as chief operating officer at the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, where he oversaw the day-to-day operations of the foundation, and as special assistant to the senior vice president of health at New York University. Previously, Dr. Nivet was president of the National Association of Medical Minority Educators, Inc., and adjunct professor in the School of Education, Health, and Human Services of Hofstra University. Dr. Nivet holds an Ed.D. degree in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education.
Charles O’Duor
Vice President for Audit and Compliance
Florida A&M University

Until November 2011, Dr. Charles O’Duor was Vice President for Audit and Compliance at Florida A&M University (FAMU). Prior to going to FAMU in 2007, Dr. O’Duor served as Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs and Chief Financial Officer at North Carolina Central University. He served in similar roles as Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and CFO at Bethune-Cookman University, and Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration and CFO at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. He also served as Assistant Vice President for Academic and Fiscal Affairs at Florida A&M University. In addition, Dr. O’Duor served as Coordinator of Budgets, Finance and Academic Programs for the Board of Regents, now Board of Governors, for the State University System of Florida, and he has served on the accreditation review for the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). He served on the on-site review committee to determine institutional compliance with SACS accreditation standards. Before joining higher education, Dr. O’Duor was an auditor with Deloitte and Touche, Certified Public Accountants, in Houston, Texas; Fresno, California; Dayton, Ohio; Austin, Texas; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He earned a doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania and received a certificate in higher education management from the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Traki Taylor-Webb
Dean of the College of Education
Bowie State University

Dr. Traki Taylor-Webb is the dean and a professor at Bowie State University’s College of Education. Dr. Taylor-Webb recently returned to Maryland after serving as associate dean of the School of Education and Human Services at the University of Michigan-Flint. Her research focus is on the history of African-American women’s education, specifically African-American women school founders. More recently, her focus is turning to women of color in academe, and teacher training and efficacy. Dr. Taylor-Webb has served as a P-12 teacher, university professor and administrator. She also has served as a diversity trainer, facilitating workshops for public school personnel and has been trained under the Leader program. Dr. Taylor-Webb serves on the board of directors for the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education and Diploma Plus Inc. Dr. Taylor-Webb is a native of Providence, R.I. She earned her Bachelor of Science in special education from Coppin State College (Md.) and her Master of Arts and doctorate in educational policy studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
Mike Williams
Vice President of University Advancement
Harding University

Dr. Mike Williams currently serves as Vice President for University Advancement at Harding University in Arkansas. As the chief fundraising executive, he leads the Office of Advancement, the Office of Alumni & Parent Relations, and the Center for Charitable Estate Planning. As a member of the President’s Cabinet, he is involved with the chief governing body of the institution. His past and current roles have thrust him into strategic planning, institutional marketing, student services, and institutional finance. During his 16-year tenure in enrollment management, Harding enjoyed a 58% growth in enrollment. Williams is a native of Ohio and was reared in Zanesville. Prior to coming to Harding, Williams served as Director of Admissions for Ohio Valley University and as a staff accountant with Martin Marietta Aerospace. In 2008, he earned an Ed.D in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania.
Acknowledgements

As we respectfully submit the report Accentuating Strengths/Accelerating Progress (AS/AP), we are grateful for this unique opportunity to serve. As members of the academy, this project represents the very best of higher education. Policy makers, university leaders, and a team of seasoned professionals came together for this noble effort. It is our desire that this report serves as a catalyst for positive change that benefits Central State University, the students that she serves, and ultimately, the state of Ohio.

We are thankful for the confidence that the Ohio Board of Regents and Chancellor Jim Petro placed in our team. We applaud him for instigating this novel approach. The creative latitude given to the team signifies his desire for Central State to reach its full potential.

We would like to thank Central State President John Garland, his administrative cabinet, faculty, and staff. Their hospitality was unbelievable. Given the complexity of the challenge before us, the deep emotional ties to this institution, and the pressing need to produce a plan in a timely manner, we found the team at Central State to be candid, transparent, and extremely gracious. We complete this project with a great appreciation for the mission of this school. Our appreciation for her heritage is only outweighed by our hopeful expectations for her future.

We would be remiss if we did not thank our friend and colleague, Dr. Byron White, Vice Chancellor for Economic Advancement. We were certainly drawn to this project with altruistic motives to contribute to the advancement of higher education for students from diverse backgrounds. Yet, in reality, we accepted this challenge because Byron asked us to do it. It is our opinion that Dr. White has provided a tremendous service to Central State University and to the Ohio Board of Regents. His leadership and work was invaluable as we attempted to gather information and insight. His diplomacy made a potentially volatile situation an effort of collegiality and shared goals.

Go Marauders!

The Chancellor’s Team of Consultants