BACKGROUND

Pursuant to § 173.020, RSMo, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education is responsible for:

"(1) Conducting studies of population and enrollment trends affecting institutions of higher education in the state;

"(2) Identifying higher education needs in the state in terms of requirements and potential of the young people and in terms of labor force requirements for the development of commerce and industry, and of professional and pubic services;

"(3) Developing arrangements for more effective and more economical specialization among institution in types of education programs offered and students served, and for more effective coordination of mutual support and public services; and

"(4) Designing a coordinated plan for higher education in the state (hereafter referred to as the coordinated plan) and for subregions of the state, which shall be based on the studies indicated above and on such other matters may be deemed relevant by the coordinating board.

In December 2021, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education approved the department's strategic plan: *Building Missouri's Future: A strategic plan to provide pathways and reduce barriers to educational attainment and workforce participation*. The plan included the department mission statement, guiding principles, new big goals, targets, indicators, and initiatives. The plan includes an intentional focus on equitable growth, specifically focused on Black, Hispanic, and rural populations in Missouri.

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education was presented an update on the Strategic Plan Big Goals and Indicators at the December 7, 2022 meeting for the most recent year's data. At that time, limited new data was available for the Big Goal of 60 percent educational attainment for the working aged population by 2030. The data is now available and this in an update of that Big Goal.

CURRENT STATUS

Missouri's educational attainment for the working aged population (25-64) was 50.5 percent in 2021, an increase of 3.5 percentage points from the last available data in 2019, according to the Lumina Foundation's *A Stronger Nation* research. Educational attainment in the Lumina Foundation methodology counts educational attainment as the following credentials: graduate or professional degrees, bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, certificates, and industry-recognized certifications. An estimation methodology is used to measure the number of certificate and industry-recognized certification holders. The U.S. educational attainment rate was 53.7 percent.

As part of the strategic plan, Missouri educational attainment is compared to 13 other Midwestern states that were identified through the state of Missouri's Best in Midwest and Talent for Tomorrow initiatives that contributed to the creation of the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development. Missouri ranked 11th in education attainment among those states, unchanged from 2019. Minnesota had the highest rate at 60.2 percent and Kentucky had lowest at 46.6 percent.

Although Missouri's rank compared to other states did not improve, the state did have the third largest percentage point increase among the 14 states, which helps Missouri close the gap with other states and the nation. Nationally, educational attainment increased by 1.8 points, compared to a 3.5 point increase in Missouri.

Data is also provided for a subset of the total working aged population for those aged 25-34. In Missouri, the educational attainment rate for that subset was 53.5 percent in 2021, an increase from 50.8 percent in 2019. The national average for this age group is 55.9. Missouri ranked 8th among the comparison states in educational attainment for the 25-34 aged cohort.

NEXT STEPS

The department's strategic plan provides a snapshot of the current environment for educational attainment and labor force participation. The strategic plan data update in anticipated to occur in December 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

This is an information item only.