

CHAPTER 192**(SJR 132)**

A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Council on Postsecondary Education to conduct a feasibility study on transforming the Hazard Community and Technical College into a four-year, residential university.

WHEREAS, during the 2023 Regular Session, Senate Joint Resolution 98 was passed by the General Assembly to direct the Council on Postsecondary Education to study the impact and feasibility of establishing a regional, residential, four-year public university in southeastern Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, the Council on Postsecondary Education conducted a study and reported its findings to the Legislative Research Commission; and

WHEREAS, in that report, the Council reported an option for consideration that would expand the Hazard Community and Technical College into a stand-alone, four-year, residential university offering limited technical and baccalaureate programs; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly requires detailed information for a potential transformation of the Hazard Community and Technical College into a four-year, residential university;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. The Council on Postsecondary Education shall conduct a feasibility study on transforming the Hazard Community and Technical College into a four-year, residential university that offers specific technical and baccalaureate programs. The Council shall consult with the college and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System as necessary to gather information and conduct analysis in support of the study. The Council shall study the following, and develop specific recommendations for the General Assembly to consider for action during the 2025 Regular Session:

(1) A potential annual budget for the transition and initial establishment of the university's operation that identifies:

(a) One-time costs associated with the transformation including construction of new facilities required for the institution to function, including but not limited to facilities for student housing and food service;

(b) The various revenues that the institution could expect to generate based on both conservative and moderate growth scenarios;

(c) The projected recurring costs, including retirement and health care for employees;

(d) Anticipated tuition and fee charges, and projected gross and net tuition and fee revenue;

(e) Federal funds that the institution would access or seek; and

(f) Private funds that the institution would solicit or seek;

(2) A governance plan for the institution based on the statutes and administrative regulations that currently govern other comprehensive universities as defined in KRS 164.001;

(3) How the college's current satellite campuses can be best utilized, including but not limited to incorporating them into the new institution or maintaining them in the Kentucky Community and Technical College system;

(4) Demand for the institution's academic programs and services within the projected service area by soliciting input from potential students and area employers;

(5) The curricular offerings of the institution that addresses:

(a) Whether any of the current college's programs would be discontinued and which programs the new institution would offer, including specific baccalaureate programs to be offered; and

(b) How the institution could continue to utilize the University Center of the Mountains and other joint consortiums with other postsecondary institutions to supplement the institution's in-person, remote, and online programs;

(6) How student financial aid would be offered, and the tuition and fee rates that may be charged to best ensure accessibility for the residents of the region;

(7) How the state postsecondary education budget would need to be adjusted to account for the transformation;

(8) What extracurricular and interscholastic programs should initially be offered to students, including athletics programs, and the potential costs and revenues the institution may incur from those offerings; and

(9) A proposed implementation timeline for the transition and establishment of the institution that incorporates the study items in subsections (1) to (8) of this section.

➔Section 2. The results of the study and recommendations required by Section 1 of this Joint Resolution shall be submitted to the Legislative Research Commission by December 1, 2024, for referral to the Interim Joint Committee on Education and the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue.

Signed by Governor April 16, 2024.