

# On Seas of Care

## The Ohio State University at Newark's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan

### **Vision**

Our vision is to become a national model for regional campuses of public universities

### **Mission**

Our mission is to provide affordable, open access to Ohio State for all Ohioans.



**THE OHIO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

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NEWARK

## Letter from the Dean

The founders of The Ohio State University at Newark aspired to establish a local campus in the scenic rolling hills of east central Ohio, one that would expand access to the state's flagship institution to local citizens. The success of that vision is evident. Ohio State Newark has become Ohio State's largest regional campus and provides opportunities for students to complete some degrees entirely in Newark or to transition to the Columbus campus and finish there.

For several decades, the founding vision for the campus also served as the campus's mission. Over the past two decades, the Columbus campus has become more selective in its admissions while Ohio State Newark has remained an open-enrollment campus. Additionally, tuition at the Newark campus has not increased at the same rate as it has at the Columbus campus, and travel time between Columbus and Newark has lessened considerably. Consequently, the campus has become attractive to Ohioans from beyond our region, and our students come from nearly 70 of Ohio's 88 counties. Consequently, the campus's mission has transitioned from one of providing access to the university for people in our geographic region to one of providing access for the entire state.

Recognizing that our new mission presents us with new opportunities and new challenges, we sought to develop a plan that represents a shared and aspirational vision of our common future. Our Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Ohio State Newark Board led us through a dynamic and transparent planning process in which we engaged in deep and critical thinking and consulted broadly with our stakeholders. Members of the community, area businesses and industries, alumni, K-12 representatives, parents, benefactors, campus partners, leaders from the Columbus campus, faculty, students, and staff participated in the planning process. The Ohio State University's mission, vision, and values, our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, President Drake's 2020 Vision served as anchors for our work, and the Time and Change strategic plan and the Regional Campus Vision and Goals document served as our guideposts.

Our planning process started in January of 2016 and ended in the spring of 2018. The result is a bold new vision to become a national model for regional campuses of public universities. To fulfill that vision, we have developed a strategic plan with one central focus: student success. We will measure our progress by the degree to which we increase retention and graduation rates, and by the degree to which we reduce disparities in retention and graduation rates across categories of race and ethnicity. Ohio State Newark is a remarkable campus with inquisitive students, dedicated faculty and staff, and unparalleled community support. We are part of the "seas of care" that Carmen Ohio composer Fred Cornell believed would sustain Ohio State graduates through the darkest of times. We have an exciting plan to energize those seas, and I am confident that we will fulfill our vision.

Sincerely,



William L. MacDonald  
Executive Dean of the Regional Campuses  
Dean and Director of The Ohio State University at Newark

## **Strategic Scan**

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In 2016, we scanned the campus's external and internal environments. We identified opportunities and threats in our external environment, and strengths and weaknesses in our internal environment. We then assessed the opportunities, threats, strengths, and weaknesses in terms of the probability of their occurrence or continuance, and the magnitude and direction of their potential impact on the campus.

### ***The External Environment***

#### ***Opportunities***

##### ***Community support***

Community support is strong, as the success of the Next Generation Challenge scholarship campaign indicates. The campus might draw on that support to generate private funding to fulfill needs for programming and facilities.

##### ***Partnerships within the county and region***

In 2016, The Works: Ohio Center for History, Art and Technology, in downtown Newark, received recognition from Ohio State's Office of Outreach and Engagement for the exceptional STEM partnership that it has developed with the campus. For several years, faculty have served as judges or moderators for STEMfest, an annual event that The Works runs for middle school and high school students. Several faculty and the campus's outreach and engagement staff have participated in Kids' Tech University, a program established through a partnership involving The Works, Denison University, and Ohio State Newark. Currently, Ohio State Newark and The Works entered are partnering to create and operate a Sci-Dome for K-16 students in downtown Newark. Building on our partnerships with The Works could help us be an even greater contributor to Ohio's workforce.

Another example of a strong partnership within the county and region is the campus's LeFevre Fellows program, which connects students to local school districts and community organizations. The campus has great connections with The United Way of Licking County and many students and faculty have engaged the community through Pay-It-Forward grants from the Ohio Campus Compact. The potential to build on these activities and further engage students in community building is strong.

##### ***The Newark Earthworks***

The cities of Newark and Heath are home to the ancient Newark Earthworks, created by American Indians 2,000 years ago. Recognized as one of the most important ancient sites in North America, the earthworks are currently in process to become the next U.S. World Heritage Site. If the site receives World Heritage status from UNESCO, it will provide opportunities for Ohio State faculty to create courses, internships, as well as outreach and service-learning activities that would connect students and faculty with local businesses, organizations, and American Indian communities. Even without World Heritage status, the Newark Earthworks has been a vehicle for students and faculty to interact with the Ohio History Connection, the National Park Service, and American Indians. The campus is thus in a position to enhance students' understanding of Ohio's American Indian history and contemporary tribal governments.

### ***Demographics and population growth***

Ohio State Newark enrolls the majority of its students from five Ohio counties, including Licking, Delaware, Franklin, Knox and Fairfield. The Ohio Development Services Agency has projected that persons in the 15-24-year-old age category will increase in each of these counties (by 18.4%, 5.0%, 2.4%, and .004%, respectively) over the period from 2015-2020. This growth should help the campus maintain or grow its enrollment.

Demographic forecasts indicate that Ohio's population will become increasingly diverse. Projections from the U.S. Bureau of the Census project that from 2015 to 2020, the population of whites will remain virtually unchanged while some minority populations will grow considerably. For example, the number of African Americans will grow by 5.2%, the number of Hispanics will grow by 12.8%, and the number of Asians and Pacific Islanders will grow by 12.0%. Thus, our student population, which is already far more diverse than the population of Licking County, could become even more diverse, and add to the richness of the student experience.

### ***Workforce needs***

Reports from economists and national think tanks address the issue of the future economy and note that it will demand a highly educated population to meet economic development and workforce needs. Data from the Bureau of Labor Market Information and The Ohio State Regional Campus Market Research report (2013) provided projections in job growth from 2008 to 2018 and supported the conclusion that strong growth will occur in central Ohio in healthcare jobs and jobs related to information technology (e.g., computer software engineers for computer applications and for systems software, network and computer-systems administrators, computer-systems analysts, and network-systems and data-communications analysts, etc.). Within Licking County, jobs in the tourism sector are likely to increase if the Newark Earthworks becomes a World Heritage site.

### ***Competitive admissions policy at the Columbus campus***

Ohio State's highly competitive admissions policy has encouraged prospective students from outside the region to apply to the regional campuses for their first year of studies at Ohio State.

### ***Threats***

#### ***Students' inadequate academic preparation and limited financial resources***

Only 14.8% of Licking County residents have a bachelor's degree, compared to 23.4% of Franklin Country residents and 32.5% of the nation as a whole. The median household income in Licking County is \$55,114 with 8.7% of families living below the poverty level. Approximately 40% of Ohio State Newark students receive federal Pell grants, a key indicator of low-income family demographics. In 2013-14, 54% of Newark students received some kind of aid, whether federal, state/local, or institutional (including both grants and loans) with the average amount of institutional aid of \$2,981. Many of our students work long hours at part-time jobs as they pursue their studies. This factor must be taken into account as we schedule classes and events that are designed to engage students and support retention and graduation success.

A recent analysis of federal data by the Education Advisory Board reports that the percentage of Pell-eligible students at regional public universities across the nation increased from 33% in 2007 to 43% in 2012. This significant indicator suggests the students we serve will have even greater financial need in the future.

In addition, open access institutions such as Ohio State Newark serve students who are underprepared academically, which requires a significant increase in resources to provide remediation and strong student support programs to retain students through to graduation.

### ***Public support and state funding for higher education***

Following the last two recessions (2000 and 2008), state support for higher education across the nation has decreased and new formulae based on performance funding for higher education funding have been implemented by legislatures across the country. In Ohio, state share of instruction (SSI) is now based on performance funding that focuses on retention, course completion, and graduation.

- In addition, the state of Ohio has implemented a tuition freeze during the current state budget biennium, and the Governor has established an Efficiency Task Force that has resulted in mandates to cut costs and redirect savings to students.
- The high cost of higher education and student debt is also a concern of students and their families. Elected officials at the state and national levels are increasingly calling for more accountability and efficiency among the nation's public higher education institutions.
- Tuition and fees at Ohio State Newark make up approximately 55% of the campus's revenue; therefore, a tuition freeze has a significant impact on the campus's resources.

### ***Competition for students by other educational providers***

Increasingly, in the interest of saving money, students and their families are exploring higher-education options at Ohio's community colleges, other state schools, online courses, and high school equivalency. Thus, competition for students has increased. As the production of high-school graduates declines in other areas of the state, the competition is likely to become even more intense.

Higher education researchers have found that students are increasingly pursuing "stackable credentials" that include community college two-year degrees, regional campuses' associate's degrees, four year degrees, and various certificates, with the goal of increasing their value to potential employers, as well as lowering the current costs of their education and any future debt. Ohio State Newark provides associate's degrees to students who may or may not continue toward their four-year baccalaureate degrees which assists students with their credentials while seeking employment or additional educational opportunities.

The Newark campus is also impacted by the expansion of the state's "College Credit Plus" program for high school students who take many of their college courses at their high schools rather than at the university campus.

## ***The Internal Environment***

### ***Strengths***

#### ***The Ohio State University brand***

The Newark campus benefits from the brand name of The Ohio State University and its reputation for quality faculty, academic programs, and research while it also is known as a more affordable option for students in the region.

#### ***Affordability***

The cost of attendance at Ohio State Newark is significantly lower than the cost of attendance at the Columbus campus, and the Newark campus offers institutional financial aid including scholarships and grants. In 2015, Ohio State Newark awarded \$550,000 in merit and need-based scholarships, which constitute critical financial support for our students, approximately 40% of whom are Pell-eligible (an indicator of low-income family). In 2016, the campus implemented Senior Completion Grants as part of a national pilot program of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), and approximately 1,000 returning students will receive \$1,000 grants as part of The Ohio State University's President's new Affordability Grants initiative that now includes the regional campuses.

#### ***Land-grant mission and the role of regional campuses***

Increasingly, President Drake is highlighting the land-grant mission of The Ohio State University, and affordable access to an Ohio State degree through the regional campuses has been identified as a critical factor in the land-grant mission of the university. About 30% of all first-year students at Ohio State enter through one of the university's regional campuses, illustrating the critical role that the regional campuses play in Ohio State's long-term recruitment and success initiatives.

#### ***Access to Ohio State Faculty and smaller classes***

Students who attend Ohio State Newark have access to tenure-track or tenured faculty who are members of their departments that are headquartered at the Columbus campus. Due to the smaller class sizes at Ohio State Newark, students receive more individual attention from their faculty, and have more access to faculty. Students also have plentiful opportunities to engage in undergraduate research and other high-impact educational practices with faculty, all of which increase student engagement with the university, which, in turn, helps students persist in completing their degrees.

#### ***Student diversity***

Ohio State Newark enrolls a diverse student body. Approximately 25% of our students are racial or ethnic minorities, and our students represent approximately 30 different countries of origin. Ohio State Newark is committed to closing the educational achievement gap among students of underrepresented ethnic and racial groups, as well as low-income students.

This year the campus developed a new Diversity and Inclusion Plan, working closely with all campus constituents, including the institution's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council. One of the priorities of the Plan is to continue to increase the diversity of our students and increase efforts to recruit a diverse faculty to Ohio State Newark.

### ***Alumni engagement***

Many Ohio State Newark alumni are business and community leaders in the region and are passionate about the campus and are willing to support students through their involvement in targeted initiatives. Many support the campus through scholarships, service on the campus's Board, and activities through which they provide mentoring for students.

### ***Partnership with Central Ohio Technical College (COTC)***

Ohio State Newark realizes cost saving by sharing facilities, services, and employees with COTC. This partnership serves as a model of efficiency for the state and nation, particularly during a time when the state legislature in Ohio is in the process of developing a model for efficiency at the state's seven co-located regional campuses and two-year colleges.

### ***Institutional finances***

Ohio State Newark's forward-thinking budgeting process is critical in this period of uncertainty regarding State funding, tuition freezes, emphasis on affordability, and mandates to identify efficiencies and savings. The campus's revenue streams and endowments are positive, and its conservative budgeting and low debt should keep it on a sustainable fiscal path.

### ***Campus facilities and parking***

The physical plant of The Ohio State Newark is well-maintained and the grounds are meticulously maintained with expansive green space and overall positive aesthetic environment. Parking is available at no cost to students and visitors to the campus.

### ***Housing options and student life***

The campus's new residence hall will increase on-campus housing opportunities for an additional 120 students in the fall of 2017 for a total of 300 beds. The new residence hall will include event space for up to 300 students, which will increase the capacity for student life events on campus and enrich the student residence and student life experience.

The renovation of Adena Hall will enhance our recreation and fitness facility and provide both residential and commuter students better wellness and fitness support.

### ***Student success initiatives***

Initiatives involving learning communities, faculty-mentoring, first-year programming and more, have succeeded in increasing retention and graduation rates. Data show that over the last three years, we retained first-generation students who participated in our Buckeye Generation Learning Community (BGLC) at a higher rate than we retained first-generation students who did not participate in the BGLC. Furthermore, BGLC students also had higher grade point averages than did their other first-generation peers. The campus also established an Engineering Learning Community two years ago, and participation is strong.

- In 2015, the campus hired an additional professional staff member and began participating in a national initiative to improve graduation rates among low-income students through a pilot program known as the Senior Completion Grant Program (an initiative of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities) that involves the development of policies and practices related to financial aid, advising and other initiatives to reduce financial stress for low-income senior students and to support them so that they complete their degrees in their final year of studies.
- Ohio State Newark is also engaged in a retention/advising project with the larger university as part of a national initiative to increase student retention through the use of

predictive analytics. Newark advising staff will be working with mentors at other universities at the national level to learn about and apply best practices that have been identified to increase student retention and graduation success.

- Another initiative designed to address student retention through faculty engagement is a pilot Faculty Mentoring program that was initiated this year as part of the university's first year student experience curriculum.
- In order to address the state's call for greater efficiencies and savings, the Newark campus, as well as all university units, will establish an Efficiencies and Savings Committee with the goal of identifying savings that may be reinvested in programs and services that support student success. It is anticipated that Ohio State Newark will be required by the university to identify approximately \$1.3 million in efficiencies and savings over the next four-to-five years.

### ***Teaching and Learning Institute***

The University Teaching and Learning Institute is now firmly established and includes representation from the Newark campus.

### ***Respect from regional employers***

A 2012 market analysis found that employers in the region see the campus as an asset to the community. Employers cited the campus's quality, cost-effectiveness, location, facilities, accessibility, and partnership with Central Ohio Technical College as strengths.

### ***Graduates' satisfaction with their experience at Ohio State***

Approximately 85% of students who graduated from Ohio State in 2015-16 and who started at the Newark campus indicated that they were "Satisfied" or "Somewhat satisfied" with their overall experience as a student at Ohio State. Likewise, 67% agreed strongly or somewhat that the benefits they received from attending Ohio State were worth the financial costs to them and their families.

### ***Weaknesses***

#### ***Housing options***

Although the campus will open a new residence hall in the fall of 2017 that will increase our campus housing capacity to 300 students from 180 students currently housed, the demand from students who desire a residential campus experience continues to increase.

#### ***Engagement of commuter students***

There are challenges in engaging commuter students who hold jobs and have other commitments away from campus. We know from the data that engaged students are more likely to be retained and to complete their degrees.

#### ***Dining/food services options***

Dining and food options on campus are limited because of a lack of customer volume.

#### ***Access to the campus's wireless network***

Access to the campus's wireless network is not reliable and the network is not integrated into the university's network.

### ***Classroom and laboratory space***

The campus has a master plan to address deferred maintenance and has received state capital funding for critical deferred maintenance projects, but there is a strong need for more classroom space as well as laboratory space for STEM teaching and research. Much-needed renovations to the campus' oldest building, Founders Hall, face challenges due to lack of swing space.

### ***Curricular offerings and degree programs***

Ohio State Newark is limited in the number of degree programs that may be completed here, as well as in course offerings toward the four-year degree. These limitations force many place-bound (and other) students who might prefer to remain on the Newark campus to change to the Columbus campus to complete their degrees.

Demand for STEM courses is increasing, and the campus is having difficulty offering enough of them to allow students to complete their degrees in a timely manner. Additionally, although the state's demand for engineers, especially in computer-related fields, is increasing, the College of Engineering has not been able to accommodate all students on the Columbus campus who are interested and qualified for its programs.

### ***Regional campus as “second choice”—a perception held by some students and families***

The dean/director of the Newark campus is working closely with the university's senior leadership in the areas of marketing and communications to integrate the regional campuses into the overall university's recruitment strategy in a positive and pro-active way in order to communicate the strengths of attending Ohio State at one of the regional campuses.

### ***Student success—retention and graduation***

The overall four-year graduation rate for Ohio State Newark's 2013 cohort of first-year full-time students was 16.9%, and the overall, first-to-second-year retention rate for the 2016 cohort of full-time first-year students was 68%. The graduation rate was lower for African American students (5.7%) and Hispanic/Latino students (19%).

### ***Faculty training in teaching methods***

Many faculty have little training in teaching, and are unaware of techniques that neutralize cultural biases in their pedagogies. Fortunately, most, if not all, of the faculty are interested in continually improving their teaching skills.

### ***Graduates' debt***

Approximately 38% of 2015-16 Ohio State graduates who started at the Newark campus reported that they would have more than \$30,000 of debt that they will be personally responsible for paying upon their graduation. That percentage is similar to the percentages for the Lima and Mansfield campuses (39%, and 38%, respectively), and is much higher than the percentage for the Columbus and Marion campuses (25% and 23%, respectively).

## Guideposts

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Our guideposts, the *Time and Change* plan and the *Regional Campus Vision and Goals* document, pointed us very strongly to a singular strategic focus: student success. With that focus in mind, we looked to the results of our environmental scan to help us identify strategic initiatives to help us increase retention and graduation rates for all students and reduce disparities in retention and graduation rates across categories of race and ethnicity. Our initiatives fall into three areas: the student experience, academic programming, and access and affordability.

### ***The Time and Change Plan***

Three of the *Time and Change* plan's five pillars are highly relevant to the mission of the regional campuses. Pillars I, II, and V address the following:

#### **I: Teaching and Learning**

Ohio State will be an exemplar of the best teaching, demonstrating leadership by adopting innovative, at-scale approaches to teaching and learning to improve student outcomes.

#### **II: Access, Affordability, and Excellence**

Ohio State will further our position as a leading public university offering an excellent, affordable education and promoting economic diversity.

#### **V: Operational Excellence and Resource Stewardship**

Ohio State will be an exemplar of best practices in resource stewardship, operational effectiveness, and efficiency and innovation.

The strategies and initiatives we developed through our strategic planning process align with these three pillars. The campus will continue to engage in a broad range of activities, including research, innovation, creative expression, community outreach, and community engagement, but the strategies and initiatives in this document will be our top priorities. Below, the strategies and initiatives appear in the context of pillars I, II, and V of the *Time and Change* plan.

### ***Regional Campus Vision and Goals Document***

Pillars I, II, and V of the *Time and Change* strategic plan link with the *Regional Campus Vision and Goals* document's recommendation that the regional campuses strive for inclusive excellence by improving graduation and retention rates and bringing underrepresented groups' rates into line with those of whites.

# **Strategic Focus: Improving Student Success**

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## ***Enhance the Student Experience***

The Ohio State University at Newark offers students an opportunity to experience Ohio State on a small campus with an incredibly diverse student population. We plan to leverage our diversity and the personalized nature of our learning environment to enhance student success and further distinguish the student experience. Our goal is to develop an experience that is extremely attractive to all Ohioans because of its outstanding reputation for excellent faculty and staff who are dedicated to preparing students to be engaged citizens in a global society. Through internships and service-learning experiences, students support the community that helped develop the campus and become engaged citizens.

### ***Elevate the quality of campus life***

- Construct a science building
- Increase the capacity of our residence halls
- Assess the quality of the residential experience of students living on campus
- Renovate Founders Hall
- Better serve the diverse culinary tastes and dietary needs of our students
- Improve the degree to which art on campus reflects human diversity
- Implement osuwireless wi-fi

### ***Increase faculty diversity***

- Create a mentoring plan for retaining faculty who are women or underrepresented minorities
- Provide implicit-bias training for all members of faculty search committees

### ***Enhance teaching quality***

- Increase resources for pedagogical development
- Build a tight alliance with the university's Teaching and Learning Institute

### ***Enhance student support***

- Implement new, proactive advising and study-session events
- Expand our learning communities
- Increase peer mentoring and supplemental instruction
- Offer more intercultural, extracurricular activities
- Build community support for student diversity
- Increase diversity-training for faculty and staff
- Increase staffing in career services
- Obtain external funding to support student success
- Improve transportation options within Newark and between Newark and Columbus
- Improve access to healthcare services for students living on campus

## ***Expand Academic Programming***

Ohio State Newark offers rigorous academic programming devoted to excellence and designed to meet Ohio's educational needs. We plan to increase the flexibility of our course schedule and

add courses that make it easier for students to pursue degrees in STEM fields. We also plan to broaden the range of enriched learning opportunities.

#### ***Expand availability of courses***

- Make better use of enrollment projections to schedule lower-level math and English courses
- Add more second-year courses in the sciences and in engineering to help students get into their intended majors after they change to the Columbus campus

#### ***Add degree-completion programs***

- Work with the College of Engineering to develop a degree program in applied engineering
- Explore extending degree programs that address Ohio's workforce needs

#### ***Add enriching learning opportunities***

- Offer more education-abroad opportunities
- Develop courses that involve the Newark Earthworks
- Offer freshman research seminars
- Continue and perhaps repurpose the Newark Earthworks Center
- Increase internship opportunities

### ***Improve Access and Affordability***

In accordance with Ohio State's land-grant mission, and with the State's expectations for Ohio's regional campuses, we will continue our commitment to providing an Ohio State experience at an affordable cost. Our cost-shared relationship with our co-located institution has been a model for the state and a foundation for efforts to keep costs low while maintaining quality programming. We will pursue efficiency initiatives across all departments on our campus, work to keep tuition low, and generate new opportunities for scholarships and tuition grants.

#### ***Reduce cost of attendance***

- Increase use of high-quality, open, educational resources (OERs)
- Provide full-tuition coverage for Pell students who have unmet financial need

#### ***Improve operational efficiency***

- Explore greater intercampus collaboration

#### ***Improve operational sustainability***

- Use more green technology in operating and maintaining the campus

## **Key Performance Indicators and Metrics**

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### ***Key Performance Indicators***

- ***Retention Rates***
- ***Graduation Rates***

- *Inequities between underrepresented students and all other students in retention and graduation rates*
- *Percentage of Students Graduating with Debt >= \$20,000*
- *Student satisfaction with experience at Ohio State*

## **Metrics**

<b>KPI</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Goal</b>
First-to-Second-Year Retention Rate	68%	73%
Four-Year Graduation Rate	17%	20%
Underrepresented/Other Students Gap in Retention Rate	57%/71%	62%/75%
Underrepresented/Other Students Gap in Graduation Rate	8%/19%	15%/23%
Percentage of Students Graduating with \$20,000 or More in Debt	53%	40%
Percentage of Graduates Satisfied with Ohio State Experience	61%	65%

Notes. Baseline year for retention rates is 2016. Baseline year for graduation rates is 2013.