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## WKU touts progress with 10-year strategic plan

By AARON MUDD [amudd@bgdailynews.com](mailto:amudd@bgdailynews.com) Oct 25, 2019

One year into implementation of a sweeping 10-year plan to boost diversity on campus, transform students' experiences and raise millions for student aid, among many other goals, Western Kentucky University is celebrating some early success.

During a meeting of WKU's Board of Regents on Friday, the university released a set of 15 metrics it pointed to as early milestones in its Climbing to Greater Heights plan. The metrics are part of a larger group of 80 indicators the university is tracking.

"As a community we have achieved remarkable progress," President Timothy Caboni wrote Friday in a campuswide message touting the results.

“Thank you to the implementation, executive and working committees for your efforts to move quickly on executing our strategic plan,” Caboni wrote. “Thank you, faculty and staff, for creating and implementing the tactics that align with our overarching goals and strategies. Most importantly, thank you for remaining true to our mission of supporting every WKU student through to graduation.”

Since beginning to implement the plan, WKU has seen slight gains in increasing the number of science, technology, engineering, math and health degrees and the number of underrepresented students graduating with said degrees.

WKU has also increased the six-year graduation of first-time, full-time students seeking a bachelor’s degree, with the rate increasing from 50.7 percent to 53.4 percent.

The full plan and list of metrics are available online at [wku.edu/strategicplan](http://wku.edu/strategicplan).

The strategic plan was approved by WKU’s Board of Regents in August 2018 after months of development and input from stakeholders across campus. A committee was formed this spring to follow up on the plan’s stated goals and develop ways to track progress.

The plan spans many areas, from students’ experiences on campus, budget and resource management and philanthropy.

Under the plan, WKU shifted to a more centralized advising approach and began building its new First-Year Village, complete with two new

residence halls, to improve the living experience for freshmen. A project to transform the university's library into a hub for dining, studying and socializing, called the WKU Commons, is also underway.



The launch of a \$50 million fundraising campaign to support students' recruitment, retention and experiences outside the classroom also helped create new scholarships at the university.

On the personnel end, the plan also included transitioning to a new, decentralized budget model that invests in strategic priorities and rewards performance from academic units.

In other business Friday, the Board of Regents reviewed a summary of Caboni's performance evaluation for the 2018-19 academic year.

The overwhelmingly positive summary was an information item, meaning the Board of Regents did not take formal action on it. The evaluation does not come with a change to Caboni's compensation

package, WKU spokesman Bob Skipper said.

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## **Aaron Mudd**

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