

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

Wis. Stats. 38.50 (10) (a)
Form EAB 1.10 (Rev. 11/15)



STATE OF WISCONSIN
EDUCATIONAL APPROVAL BOARD
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The Educational Approval Board (EAB) is a postsecondary education agency that employs a regulatory model focused not only on compliance, but also institutional effectiveness. To facilitate an environment in which schools seek to be effective organizations that improve over time, the EAB requires schools to submit evidence appropriate planning has been conducted. Although similar to a strategic or business plan, this information will enable the EAB and school officials to engage in a dialogue over time about the future of the school.

Schools that already have some type of strategic or business plan (e.g., schools that have either a corporate or accreditation plan) must adapt these documents to the following requirements and focus on Wisconsin operations and students. The EAB does not expect any school to divulge any sensitive, proprietary business information. The information must address the five elements identified below and provide the information requested.

I. SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School:

Penn Foster Career School

II. PLANNING ELEMENTS

A. MISSION. Describe your school's mission and vision, which identifies its purpose and its core values.

Penn Foster's mission is to enhance the lives of our students and clients through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and credentials that will allow them to achieve their goals by advancing in their chosen field, starting a new career, or pursuing lifelong learning.

Penn Foster's vision is to create a better world through knowledge and skill. Penn Foster is the last mile leading from training to employment. Our institution is the premier institution for affordable, self-paced and self-directed learning orientated toward training and preparing individuals for a career and growing with them as their career evolves. Penn Foster supports the need for individuals to access and participate in education that meets the following criteria: Accessibility -able to engage with the curriculum, community, and instructors at any time and through any devices;

Employability-designed to support the changing needs and evolving experiences expectations of the employer marketplace; Speed -able to be executed at the speed the student wishes but one that is guided by best practices and cohort successes and milestones; and Affordability -affordable on the student's or sponsor's term with a lower cost model that uses that smart integration of technology, people, and process to deliver a strong educational solution.

B. MARKET. Discuss the nature of your school and the business in which it is engaged. Describe who your existing and/or potential customers are and what motivates them to enroll in your school. Explain how you let these customers know you are in business. Finally, identify who your competitors are and how you are different from them.

A typical student in our Career School is between the age of 25 and 44, is employed, but not working in their field of choice. The typical student earns an income of less than \$30,000. Many of our students did not have success in the traditional school setting and find it difficult to study or take tests. Students may choose to enroll in Penn Foster because they want to work at their own pace and find that the program fits with current family/personal needs and/or work/professional needs. The top three reasons students enroll in Penn Foster are the flexibility of course offerings, pricing options and the accreditation offered.

Advertising is through national media sources readily accessed by all states' residents (i.e. national print publications and online). There is no targeted advertising through local media (i.e. billboards, regional newspapers).

Penn Foster competes with all online programs and is recognized for its decades of student advocacy and credibility through licensure and institutional and programmatic accreditation.

C. MANAGEMENT. Describe your management team and how it functions to lead, administer and position the school. If your school has advisory boards, describe how the school uses them for program and school improvement.

Penn Foster's bylaws provide that its Board of Directors manage the company's "business, property, and affairs." In practice, this is accomplished in two ways: First, our Board exercises oversight and approval of the company's annual operating budget; major corporate transactions, including mergers and acquisitions, company financings, and mortgages; executive hiring and compensation arrangements; and large capital investments and other major company undertakings. Second, the Board actively monitors and guides the performance of the company's executive officers who are charged by the Board with establishing and implementing the company's business strategy (developed with the review and input of the Board), managing the company's operating budget and financial performance, and overseeing all facets of the company's operations, including the recruitment, hiring, and retention of company personnel.

Penn Foster has advisory councils for industry specific programs that meet on annual basis and to provide feedback on curriculum.

D. SWOT ANALYSIS. Identify your school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Based on the results of this SWOT analysis, provide the following:

- 3 to 5 goals for strengths/weaknesses and how they will be addressed by your school.
- 3 to 5 goals for opportunities/threats and how they will be addressed by your school.

The goals should have specific objectives, defined results, a timeline for completion and metrics (some type of evaluation or measurement) by which the institution can evaluate/measure their success. In developing its goals, the school may wish to refer to the Elements of Effective Institutions graphic that is included on the back page of this form.

Strengths - Deep history and experience in distance learning; Extensive experience working with at-risk student cohorts; Systems and support designed to facilitate self-directed and self-paced learning models; Programs of study aligned with areas of job growth; Movement toward program alignment with industry-specific certifications (i.e. VTNE or PCTB exam); Model designed to support a student population with specific needs including lower price, flexible scheduling and online delivery; Support system made up of electronic and personal interventions; Extensive data and analytics supporting program design, student progression, and support; Understanding of the accreditation and regulatory environment. **Weaknesses** - Need for increased data on placement statistics; Need for more sophisticated delivery of outcomes based content and assessments.

Opportunities - Accelerate onboarding of existing content into new competency-based learning platform; Technologies (including learning management software) are becoming more cost effective and therefore aligned to Penn Foster's need to maintain a low-cost program for its student population; Established brand with improving student outcomes provides foundation for employer relationships that could help students on their path to employment; Market size is large and growing (more than 75M adults in the United States with an associate degree or less); Job market supports the need for trained professionals in vocational areas including allied health, trades, veterinary health, and others; More explicit post-graduation career and college pathway; New academic coaching model aligned to the needs of our market. **Threats** - Cost to support growing student needs; Challenges of transitioning existing content and programs onto new delivery platforms and state-by-state regulatory differences.

D. SWOT ANALYSIS *(continued)*

Each operational unit within the institution has specific objectives tied to overall institution goals and objectives, all of which are aligned to the mission and strategic plan. These would include very specific metrics for marketing and enrolling students, servicing student care needs in a timely manner, providing instructional support, exam grading, updating curriculum, complying with licensing and accreditation standards, managing financial growth, hiring and retaining top talent, measuring and improving student retention and satisfaction, and designing content and services to new technologies. Each unit leader has specific goals entered into an institution-wide program called BetterWorks. Goals are entered quarterly and monitored daily, week, monthly, and quarterly against established timelines and benchmarks. All objectives are connected across the organization and tie to the key strategies of the organization for the planning year. Penn Foster has identified the key areas of focus for the business and developed five main goals that provide the foundation for the strategic plan. There will be many tactics and programs in support of these goals, but each tactic should map to one of five areas:

- Meet and/exceed financial (revenue and cost) growth and efficient targets
 - Sub goals established by key managers that tie to this objective would include goals such as reducing costs, improving data analytics, and developing pricing strategies.
- Make and deliver a product and platform that is easy to use, easy to plug into (interop, integrate, etc.)
 - Sub goals such as launching new consumer programs and creating content aligned to new and existing client partner needs.
- Attract and retain new learners and clients through existing and new channels
 - Sub goals would include making the admissions process more efficient and providing expanded training for new hires on the Admissions Team.
- Advance the leading workforce development brand and platform by improving our value-add
 - Sub goals include repositioning Penn Foster as a social purpose brand to grow consumer acquisition, accelerating b2b partnerships, and improving employee recruitment and retention, and setting priorities for a website strategy aligning brand messaging and optimizing conversion.
- Create an environment for our people to reach their highest potential and maximize their value and loyalty
 - Sub goals are supported by H/R manager's goals to build leadership training programs and to ensure outstanding customer service to employees, and by the Academic Team's goal to expand professional development requirements for faculty.

Each Department's sub goal directly aligns to the institutional goals mentioned above and impacts the institution's performance.

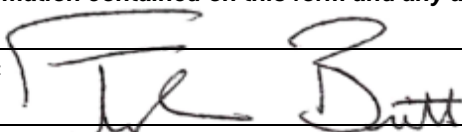
E. FUTURE THINK. Describe your school 5 years from now. What will it look like and how it will be positioned in the market place.

Penn Foster will continue to engineer and refine a truly unique learning system customized for the at-risk learner in a self-paced, student-paid or sponsor-led environment. Through this system, Penn Foster will address: the evolving landscape of career readiness which puts an emphasis on life-long learning and ongoing skill building; the need for affordable and accredited education solutions that can be attained without student debt; the imperative to drive improved student outcomes from employability to graduation; and the design of a system that incorporates academic, motivational, and financial support systems designed specifically for the Penn Foster target student. In addition, Penn Foster will continue to invest in building a community of learners to connect students who are geographically dispersed and also proceeding through programs at the right speed for their individual needs. By building community and service around the educational experience, Penn Foster will help students reach their desired outcomes. Penn Foster has expansive plans to use new technologies to enable a personalized learning experience in a self-paced and self-directed environment while still staying true to the low cost and affordability that is the foundation of the Penn Foster business model. The institution and platform will be even more relevant in the context of a labor market where, for employers, regulators and students, competencies are the new currency in education.

III. SUBMISSION

I hereby certify that the information contained on this form and any attachments to the form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Authorized School Official:



Print or Type Name and Title of Authorized School Official:

Frank Britt, Chief Executive Officer

Date:

05/09/2018

