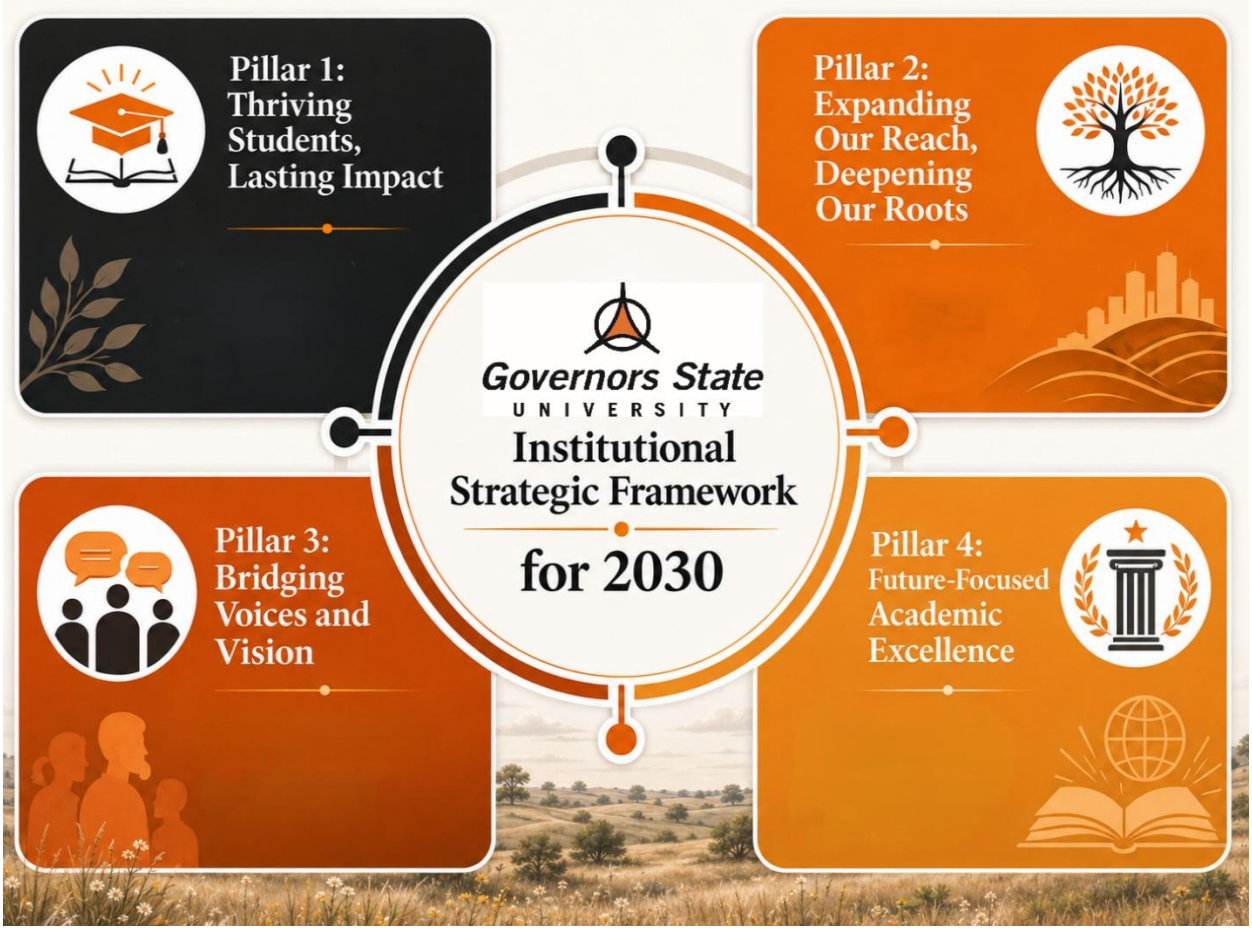
Better Together



Implementation Guide

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Executive Summary

The *Better Together: AY25/26 Progress Report* documents Governors State University's progress in moving the Institutional Strategic Framework 2030 from approval into refinement, alignment, and early implementation. The report includes background on the prior planning work that led to the framework's development and approval, while primarily focusing on AY25–26 progress in translating the framework into actionable goals, measurable KPIs, timelines, and implementation plans.

The framework is organized around four strategic pillars: ***Thriving Students, Lasting Impact***; ***Expanding Our Reach, Deepening Our Roots***; ***Bridging Voices and Vision***; and ***Future-Focused Academic Excellence***. During AY25–26, working groups advanced goals related to student well-being, career readiness, global engagement, regional partnerships, unified messaging, sustainable operations, academic innovation, and workforce-aligned academic pathways. Each goal includes a strategic purpose, KPIs, implementation strategies, timelines, progress updates, risks, and leadership needs.

AY25–26 served as a critical bridge year between framework approval and sustained implementation. Campus-wide meetings supported feedback, volunteer engagement, KPI refinement, and target development. By spring 2026, working groups had begun moving from planning toward implementation through cross-pillar collaboration, early pilots, launch of the Better Together website, and preparation of comprehensive goal documentation.

Overall, the report shows meaningful progress toward a more integrated, evidence-based strategic agenda. Continued success will depend on clear ownership, coordinated leadership, reliable data systems, sufficient resources, and sustained collaboration across academic and administrative units.

Development of Better Together: GovState's Institutional Strategic Framework for 2030

Academic Year 2023-2024

In Spring 2024, the Faculty Senate President conducted a series of focus groups to gather input on the mission, vision, and values articulated in Strategy 2025. Feedback was collected from the Faculty Senate, Student Senate, and Civil Service Senate. After reviewing this input, the strategic leadership team concluded that the campus feedback largely affirmed the existing mission, vision, and values. As a result, these statements were retained as the foundation for the next five-year strategy cycle and are presented in the next section of this report. Subsequent planning efforts then shifted toward developing a new strategic framework: one that would organize institutional goals, resonate across campus constituencies, and provide a coherent structure for aligning GovState's strategic efforts through 2030.

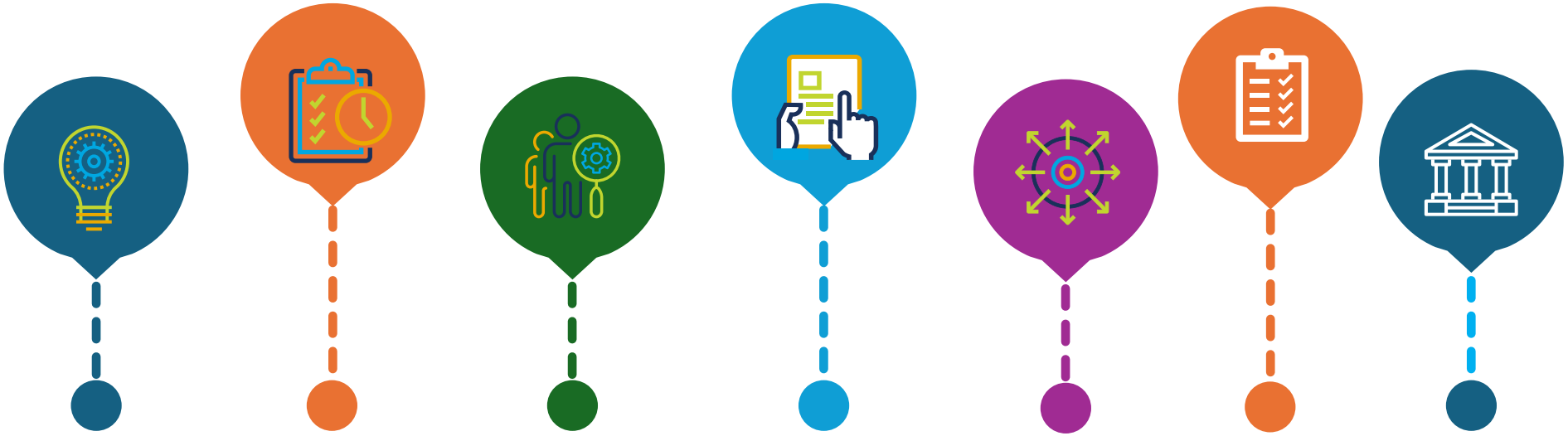
Academic Year 2024-2025

During AY24–25, GovState engaged in a broad and participatory process to develop the Institutional Strategic Framework 2030. In October and November 2024, online and face-to-face focus groups were held to review the Strategy 2025 goals, including discussion of how those goals had worked well and where they could be improved. These sessions also included environmental scanning to identify institutional strengths, opportunities, challenges, and threats. Notes from the focus groups were analyzed and used to develop the first draft of strategic pillars in December 2024.

In February 2025, an all-campus community charrette gathered feedback on the emerging pillars and goals while also inviting volunteers to participate in working groups. Through March and April 2025, pillar-aligned working groups refined definitions for each pillar and identified potential goals, measures, and actions. In May 2025, an independent Steering Committee and the Strategy Leadership Team reviewed, prioritized, and refined the draft goals developed by the pillar working groups.

The framework continued to advance during Summer 2025. In June, an update on ISF 2030 was presented to the GovState Board of Trustees. In July, GovState's new president, Dr. Joyce Ester, reviewed the strategic framework. In August 2025, the Board of Trustees formally approved the Institutional Strategic Framework 2030.

Academic Year 2024-2025: Better Together Activities and Achievements



Oct.15, 25, Nov. 1, 12-13 2024

Strategic Planning: Environmental Scan

December 12, 2024

First working draft of the pillar topics

February 7, 2025

Charette with campus community event: Better Together

March – April, 2025

Pillar-Focused Working Groups Develop Pillars Definitions and Explore Goals, Measures, Actions

May – June 2025

ISF Steering Committee and Leadership Team Review Draft ISF and Goals Update at June BOT Meeting

July 2025

Review ISF with President Ester

August 2025

BOT and Community

Adopt the Institutional Strategic Framework

Development of Better Together: GovState's Institutional Strategic Framework for 2030 (continued)

Academic Year 2025-2026

During AY25–26, GovState moved from approval of the Institutional Strategic Framework 2030 into refinement, alignment, and early implementation planning. In October 2025, working groups were reconvened, beginning with a meeting of working group leads to clarify the expectations for AY25–26 and how proposed goals connected to each pillar's aspirations.

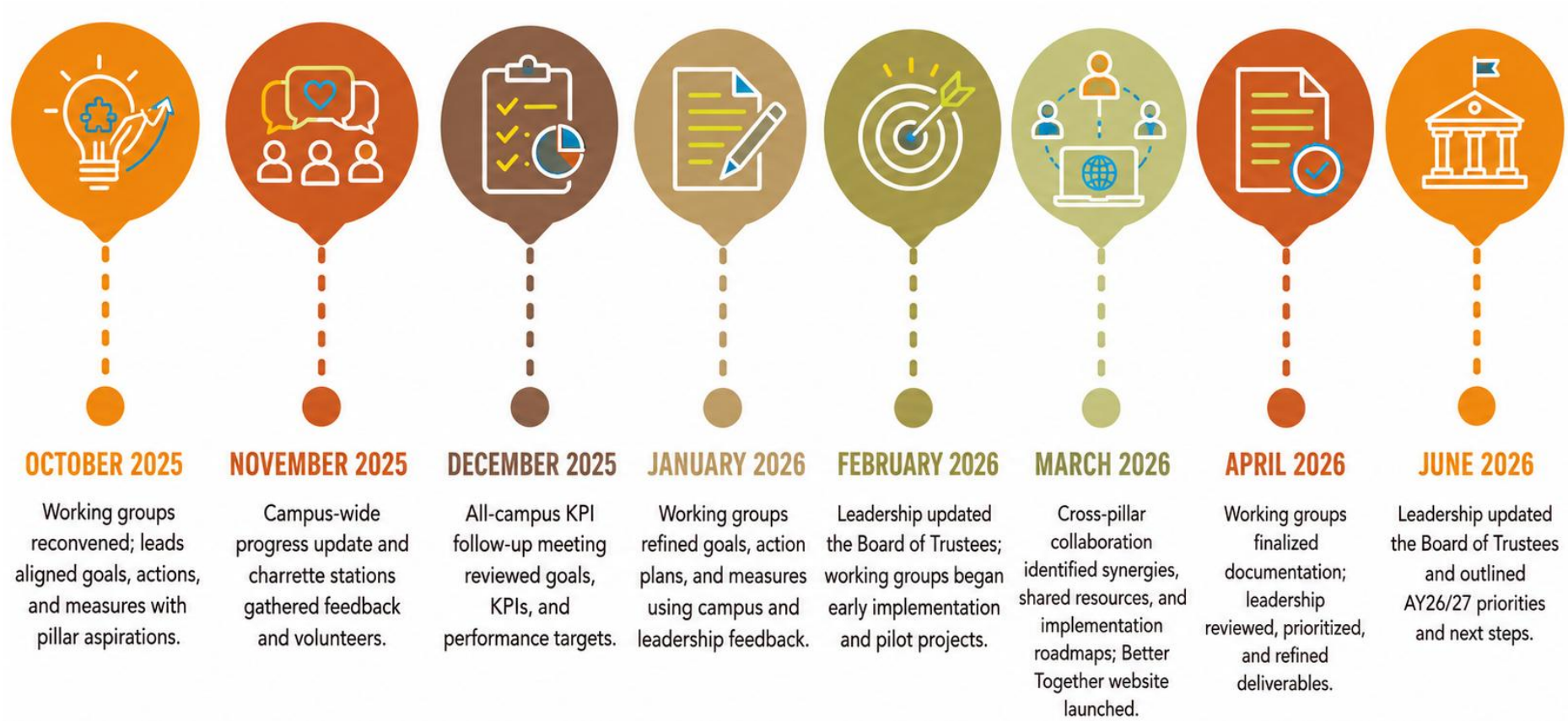
In November 2025, a campus-wide progress update was held to share the emerging goals and invite broader participation. Working group leads facilitated charrette stations to explain the goals, gather feedback, and collect names of volunteers interested in contributing to goal-specific working groups. Following this meeting, working groups continued developing measures, implementation plans, timelines, and resource needs.

In December 2025, an all-campus KPI follow-up meeting provided another opportunity for working groups to report on their goals and key performance indicators. The discussion focused on refining KPIs and beginning to identify appropriate performance targets. In January 2026, working groups incorporated feedback from the December meeting into revised drafts of their goals, action plans, and measures. This work emphasized clarifying rationales, strengthening connections to pillar aspirations.

By February 2026, the ISF Leadership Team provided an update to the GovState Board of Trustees on the refined goals, actions, and measures. Working groups also began transitioning from planning to early implementation, including piloting action projects where feasible. In March 2026, a cross-pillar collaboration meeting brought working group members together to identify synergies, shared resource opportunities, and implementation roadmaps for each goal. The Better Together: ISF 2030 website was launched to support communication and visibility.

In April 2026, working groups finalized comprehensive documentation of goals, action plans, and measures, while the Strategic Leadership Team reviewed, prioritized, and refined the working group documentation. In June 2026, the ISF 2030 Leadership Team provided another update to the GovState Board of Trustees and outlined priorities. Overall, AY25–26 served as a critical bridge year, translating the approved framework into actionable goals, measurable plans, cross-functional collaboration, and early implementation activity.

Academic Year 2025-2026: Better Together Activities and Achievements



GovState's Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Mission

Governors State University (GovState) is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society.

Vision

GovState will create an intellectually stimulating public square, serve as an economic catalyst for the region, and lead as a model of academic excellence, innovation, diversity and responsible citizenship.

Core Values

- *Invest in Student Success through a commitment to mentoring and a deliberate university focus on student achievement of academic, professional and personal goals.*
- *Provide Opportunity and Access to a first-class public education to residents of our surrounding communities and all those traditionally underserved by higher education.*
- *Serve as an Economic Catalyst for the citizens of the State of Illinois and our larger Midwest region, so that our communities grow and flourish.*
- *Prepare Stewards of our Future to thrive in the global economy, to contribute to ongoing innovative research and to serve as stewards of the environment.*
- *Demonstrate Inclusiveness and Diversity to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty and members of the broader community.*
- *Promote Quality of Life, which encompasses civic, personal, professional and cultural growth.*

ISF 2030 Strategic Pillar Aspiration Statements

Strategic Pillar Aspiration Statements describe the future state GovState seeks to achieve through successful strategy implementation. They provide a broad, shared direction for each pillar while allowing various units across the university to develop goals, initiatives, and measures that reflect their distinct roles. The statements create alignment around common outcomes without prescribing a single approach to achieving them.

Thriving Students, Lasting Impact

Governors State University will be a student-centered community where every student has the support, connections, opportunities, and sense of belonging needed to thrive academically, personally, and professionally. Students will be empowered to navigate the university successfully, build meaningful relationships and professional networks, and translate their learning into career readiness, lifelong growth, and lasting impact in their communities and workplaces.

Expanding Our Reach, Deepening Our Roots

Governors State University will extend its impact locally, regionally, and globally through accessible learning opportunities and strong, reciprocal partnerships. The university will connect students, educators, employers, alumni, and communities in ways that expand educational pathways, strengthen work-based and global learning, and create lasting relationships that advance shared opportunity, workforce development, and community vitality.

Bridging Voices and Vision

Governors State University will be a connected and collaborative community where people understand institutional priorities, have meaningful opportunities to contribute their perspectives, and see how input informs decisions and action. Leaders at all levels will communicate openly, engage responsively, recognize contributions, and foster shared responsibility, strengthening trust and helping the university navigate change with greater clarity, alignment, and collective purpose.

Future-Focused Academic Excellence

Governors State University will provide a flexible, innovative, and student-centered academic experience that responds to changing learner, workforce, and community needs. Academic programs, credentials, partnerships, and support structures will be designed for relevance, accessibility, quality, and sustainability, enabling students to progress efficiently, build workforce-ready capabilities, and succeed in a rapidly changing environment.

Pillar 1: Thriving Students, Lasting Impact
Goal 1: Holistic Well-being Through Support Services Utilization
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 1.1	Improve student well-being and success by making counseling, wellness, and support services easier to find, understand and use while creating data-informed mechanisms to monitor engagement, access, and belonging
Key Performance Indicators	• Increase student awareness of wellness resources • Increase use of wellness support services • Improve student-reported sense of belonging, engagement, and well-being
Critical Contributors	• Counseling and Wellness Center; • Institutional Research & Effectiveness; • Faculty Senate Wellness Committee; • Academic Affairs; • Center for Online Teaching and Learning; • Student Well-Being ISF Working Group.
Improvement Projects	• Wellness Landing Page with QR Access and Scale Use • Student Listening Survey Assessments of Wellness, Engagement, & Satisfaction • Annual Well-Being and Belonging Report
AY26/27 Annual objectives	• Launch Wellness Landing Page with QR Access • Create and pilot Student Listening Survey • Plan and initiate Annual Wellness Report • Establish baselines and targets for KPIs
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Integrate wellness links and QR access into orientation, advising, and course communications; monitor awareness and service use. • Administer the Student Listening Survey campus-wide and publish the first annual well-being and belonging report. • Use baseline findings to implement priority improvements and confirm annual KPI targets.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Extend wellness outreach to student groups with low awareness or service use. • Repeat the survey and annual report; evaluate access, belonging, engagement, and well-being against approved targets. • Refine referral processes and resource navigation based on student feedback and service-use data.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Fully implement the wellness access and referral model across designated student touchpoints. • Meet approved 2030 KPI targets or document gaps and corrective actions in the annual report. • Embed the survey, reporting cycle, resource updates, and recurring support in unit work plans and budgets.

Pillar 1: Thriving Students, Lasting Impact
Goal 2: Accessible Career Preparation and Professional Engagement
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 1.2	Create scalable career development and alumni supported career readiness programs that connect students to workforce-aligned learning and professional networks
Key Performance Indicators	• Increase student use of online career resources • Increase student participation in mentoring and career support events
Critical Contributors	• Career Services; • Alumni Relations; • Academic Affairs; • Center for Online Teaching and Learning; • Student Career Development ISF Working Group.
Improvement projects	• Online career development training • Alumni-supported career engagement opportunities
AY26/27 Annual objectives	• Develop plan and resources for online career development • Develop and plan for alumni-supported career development events • Establish baselines and targets for KPIs
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Launch online career-development training and pilot alumni mentoring and career-engagement events. • Integrate career resources into orientation, advising, and selected academic programs. • Track resource use and event participation against approved annual targets; collect student and alumni feedback.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Expand effective online training and alumni engagement to additional programs and student groups. • Establish recurring mentoring and career events aligned with workforce needs. • Address participation gaps and improve resources using KPI trends and participant feedback.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Make online career training and recurring alumni engagement available across the designated academic programs. • Meet approved 2030 resource-use and participation targets; evaluate contributions to career readiness. • Embed staffing, alumni recruitment, resource maintenance, and annual assessment in ongoing operations.

Pillar 2: Expanding Our Reach, Deepening Our Roots
Goal 1: Expanded Global Offerings
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 2.1	Expand GovState's global learning footprint by strengthening online/global program participation, benchmarking global offerings, and improving student support for international and globally engaged learners.
Key Performance Indicators	• Increase learner participation in global/intercultural learning experiences • Increase learners engaging in virtual global academic opportunities • Retention, persistence, or completion rates for international learners
Critical Contributors	• Office of International Services; • Honors College; • Academic Affairs; • Global learning ISF Working Group.
Improvement projects	• Expand portfolio of academically aligned global programs • Expand affordable virtual global program options (e.g., COIL, virtual exchange) • Improve Student Support Systems for Global Offerings
AY26/27 Annual objectives	• Prioritize and advance Global Academic Program Opportunities • Advance new Destination Studies degree program • Assess options for cost-effective, virtual global programming • Assess barriers to international student success • Establish baselines and targets for KPIs
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Launch prioritized global offerings and pilot affordable COIL or virtual-exchange opportunities. • Advance Destination Studies through applicable approval and launch milestones. • Implement priority international student supports and track participation and persistence against approved targets.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Expand successful global and virtual opportunities across additional academic programs. • Implement approved Destination Studies offerings and assess enrollment and student experience. • Refine international-student supports using retention, persistence, completion, and barrier-assessment findings.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Complete implementation of the approved global-program portfolio and Destination Studies launch plan. • Meet approved 2030 participation and international-learner success targets or establish corrective actions. • Institutionalize partnership management, student support, affordability review, and annual program assessment.

Pillar 2: Expanding Our Reach, Deepening Our Roots

Goal 2: Career-Connected Pathways Through Reciprocal Regional Partnerships
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 2.2	Advance reciprocal civic, employer, and education partnerships by improving cross-campus coordination, expanding work-based learning, and strengthening high school and community college engagement.
Key Performance Indicators	• Increase in active regional partnerships supporting career-connected learning. • Increase in work-ready Pell and credit/no-credit offerings. • Increase learners completing work-ready Pell or credit/no-credit programs. • Increase learners engaged in project-based learning.
Critical Contributors	• Academic Affairs; • University Library; • School of Extended Learning; • Community Partnerships ISF Working Group.
Improvement projects	• Advance work-ready Pell programs • Advance credit/no-credit offerings • Advance project-based learning opportunities
AY26/27 Source objectives	• Assess/prioritize/advance work-ready Pell programs • Assess/prioritize/advance credit/no-credit offerings • Assess/prioritize/advance project-based learning opportunities • Establish baselines and targets for KPIs
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Formalize priority regional partnerships with agreed learning opportunities and mutual responsibilities. • Launch prioritized work-ready Pell offerings subject to eligibility and approval, and credit/no-credit offerings. • Pilot partner-supported projects and track participation, completion, and partnership activity.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Expand successful offerings and project-based learning with active regional partners. • Use learner outcomes and partner feedback to improve pathways and address participation and completion barriers. • Review partnership benefits and progress toward approved annual offering, participation, and completion targets.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Fully implement the approved partnership portfolio and career-connected learning offerings. • Meet approved 2030 partnership, offering, completion, and project-participation targets or document corrective actions. • Embed partner renewal, employer feedback, outcome reporting, and program support in annual operations.

Pillar 3: Bridging Voices and Vision

Goal 1: Institutional Voice and Decision Transparency
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 3.1	Strengthen institutional trust and shared understanding by creating accessible opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to contribute perspectives on university priorities and by clearly communicating how decisions are made, implemented, and informed by campus input.
Key Performance Indicators	• Use of stakeholder-engagement processes • Use of "What We Heard / What We Did" communications • Climate measures of transparency, visibility, and trust
Critical Contributors	• Institutional Engagement and Excellence; • MarCom; • Academic Affairs; • Student Affairs; • HR; • Faculty/Civil Service/Student Senates; • Institutional Voice & Decision Transparency ISF Working Group
Improvement projects	• Institutional Dialogue and Feedback Framework • Closing the Communication Loop
AY26/27 Annual objectives	• Create consultation framework; • Inventory input mechanisms; • Establish criteria/templates; • Pilot major initiatives; • Set baselines and targets for KPIs.
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Apply framework to designated initiatives; • Centralize consultation opportunities and decisions; • Assess participation and awareness.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Expand structured consultation across planning/policy processes; • Assess meaningfulness and feedback-loop effectiveness; • Improve from results.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Institutionalize engagement and feedback-loop practices; • Meet 2030 KPI targets; • Integrate into governance/planning.

Pillar 3: Bridging Voices and Vision
Goal 2: Collaborative Leadership and Institutional Trust
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 3.2	Build a culture of trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility by strengthening leadership visibility, responsiveness, recognition, and communication across organizational levels and by equipping leaders to engage employees effectively during institutional change.
Key Performance Indicators	• Leadership visibility and accessibility • Supervisor communication and support • Completion of leadership/change-communication development • Execution of employee and student recognition initiatives • Climate measures of leadership, trust, and employee experience
Critical Contributors	• HR; • Institutional Engagement and Excellence; • Academic Affairs; • Student Affairs; • MarCom; • Faculty/Civil Service/Student Senates; • Collaborative Leadership and Institutional Trust ISF Working Group
Improvement projects	• Leadership Communication and Engagement • Collaborative Leadership and Change Readiness
AY26/27 Annual objectives	• Define leadership expectations; • Establish baselines; • Identify development gaps; • Create leadership framework; • Pilot listening/dialogue opportunities.
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Launch development programming; • Establish recurring leader engagement; • Use common change-communication practices; • Strengthen recognition.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Expand participation; • Use climate/feedback data to target improvements; • Refine practices; • Share effective cross-unit collaboration examples.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Embed leadership/change-management expectations; • Establish development for new leaders; • Institutionalize periodic assessment; • Meet 2030 KPI targets

Pillar 4: Future-Focused Academic Excellence
Goal 1: Expanded Access through Innovative Educational Models
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 4.1	Expand access through flexible, student-centered academic models that improve GovState's agility, align offerings with market demand, and support enrollment, retention, completion, and workforce relevance.
Key Performance Indicators	• Number and percentage of programs with stackable credential pathways • Enrollment and completion rates in stackable and flexible-format programs • Average time from academic program proposal to approval and launch • Number and percentage hyflex or accelerated classes offered
Critical Contributors	• Academic Affairs; • University Curriculum Committee; • Innovative Educational Model ISF Working Group
Improvement projects	• Expand undergraduate minors into certificate pathways • Launch new graduate certificates • Accelerating Program and Curriculum Approval • Pilot and Scale New Class Delivery Models
AY26/27 Source objectives	• Identify/prioritize/initiate change in minors for certificate pathways • Identify/prioritize/initiate change for new graduate certificates • Launch new procedures for accelerating curriculum approval • Identify/prioritize/initiate new accessible delivery models • Establish baselines and targets for KPIs
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Launch prioritized undergraduate certificate pathways and graduate certificates after required approvals. • Pilot selected hyflex or accelerated delivery models with faculty preparation and student support. • Apply revised approval procedures and track proposal turnaround, pathway enrollment, and delivery-model outcomes.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Expand successful stackable pathways and flexible delivery models across prioritized programs. • Use enrollment, completion, and student feedback to refine program design and delivery. • Address approval bottlenecks and monitor progress toward approved turnaround and program-coverage targets.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Complete the approved portfolio of certificate pathways and flexible delivery models. • Meet approved 2030 pathway, enrollment, completion, delivery, and proposal-turnaround targets or document corrective actions. • Embed regular market review, instructional support, and curriculum-process evaluation in academic planning.

Pillar 4: Future-Focused Academic Excellence
Goal 2: Design Flexible Academic Pathways Informed by Workforce and Student Needs
Elements of Implementation

Long-term Goal 4.2	Create responsive, sustainable academic programs and employer-supported pathways that align curriculum, credentials, partnerships, and assessment with regional workforce needs and student success outcomes.
Key Performance Indicators	• Number of active workforce-aligned micro credentials • Number and percentage of learners earning micro credentials • Learners using dual credit or credit for prior learning
Critical Contributors	• Academic Affairs; • Advising; • School of Extended Learning; • Credit for Prior Learning Personnel; • Admissions; • Flexible Enrollment Pathways ISF Working Group
Improvement projects	• Launch new micro-credentials • Build new registration pipeline through dual credit and credit for prior learning
AY26/27 Source objectives	• Identify/prioritize/initiate micro credential programs • Identify/prioritize/initiate use of dual credit/CPL to build enrollment • Establish baselines and targets for KPIs
AY27/28 Proposed objectives	• Launch prioritized workforce-aligned micro credentials with employer input and required approvals. • Pilot dual-credit and credit-for-prior-learning pathways with clear admissions, advising, and credit-recognition processes. • Track credential attainment and pathway use against approved annual targets.
AY28/29 Proposed objectives	• Expand successful micro credentials and dual-credit or prior-learning pathways with academic and employer partners. • Clarify how credentials and recognized credits connect to further study and career opportunities. • Use attainment and pathway-use data to address barriers and refine offerings.
AY29/30 Proposed objectives	• Fully implement the approved micro credential portfolio and dual-credit and prior-learning enrollment pathways. • Meet approved 2030 micro credential, attainment, and pathway-use targets or establish corrective actions. • Embed employer review, advising, credit-recognition procedures, and annual outcome assessment in ongoing operations.



THE *I*, *we*, WE MODEL

FROM INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION TO INSTITUTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

How do we bring the pillar aspirations of Better Together: ISF 2030 to life?

Daily choices	*Team contribution*	*Formal ISF goals & projects*
I	*we*	WE
INDIVIDUAL ACTION	TEAM / UNIT CONTRIBUTION	INSTITUTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

WHAT UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION CAN I MAKE?

- Link my role to a pillar aspiration.
- Choose one action I control.
- Share ideas and follow through.

I

WHAT CAN OUR PROGRAM, DEPARTMENT, DIVISION, OR COLLEGE OR DEPARTMENT CONTRIBUTE?

- Identify aspirations our team can influence.
- Turn them into unit practices or improvements.
- Coordinate roles and review progress.

we

WHAT SHOULD WE ENABLE INSTITUTIONALLY?

- Formal ISF goals, projects, KPIs, and resources primarily live here.
- Align structures and support with the pillar aspirations.
- Remove barriers and monitor progress.

WE

EXERCISE: Review the pillar aspiration. What can I do? What can our team do? How can we advance the institutional goals? Share your thoughts with your colleagues to help others adopt your Better Together mindset.

Proposed Institutional Strategy Council

The proposed Institutional Strategy Council (ISC) would provide a continuing representative structure to guide implementation, assessment, and renewal of GovState's institutional strategy. The Council would connect shared governance, administrative leadership, critical contributors, students, and external partners to translate institutional priorities into coordinated action and measurable results.

Implementation responsibilities

The ISC would recommend annual institutional objectives and a coordinated portfolio of improvement projects. It would maintain a strategy deployment framework linking long-term goals, annual milestones, projects, KPIs, targets, and owners; review alignment, feasibility, sequencing, resource needs, risks, and cross-unit dependencies; and recommend three to five institution-level KPIs with clear definitions, baselines, targets, data sources, and reporting schedules. Dashboards, milestone reports, and annual unit reports would inform progress reviews, corrective recommendations, and escalation of unresolved barriers.

Membership and leadership

Voting membership would include elected Unit A faculty, Faculty Senate leadership, university executives, institutional research and effectiveness leadership, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, an alumnus or alumna, and a regional partner. Nonvoting resource participants could contribute implementation expertise. An administrative co-chair designated by the President and a faculty co-chair elected from the Council's elected faculty members would jointly lead the Council. ISC would meet during the Unit A contract year, with additional meetings as needed.

Annual planning and accountability

An annual cycle would review prior-year results in early fall, align and prioritize objectives and projects in fall, monitor milestones and resolve barriers in winter, and refresh the portfolio in spring. Implementation records would identify outcomes, milestones, executive sponsors, project owners, participating units, measures, resources, approvals, dependencies, and risks. Annual review would recommend whether to continue, scale, redesign, pause, or conclude each effort. The Council could establish goal teams and advisory groups and engage the university community and external partners through inclusive consultation.

Reporting and governance

The ISC would report concurrently to the President or designee and the Faculty Senate and provide substantive formal updates. Accessible agendas, minutes, implementation objectives, KPI definitions, and a public-facing dashboard or comparable mechanism would support transparency. Its authority would be advisory and coordinating; decisions on curriculum, personnel, budgets, operations, and policy would remain with established authorities. Formation would require Faculty Senate consultation. The Council would support transition to successor strategies and review its charter at least every three years, with the first review no later than May 2030.

Shared Governance Groups Involved with Implementing ISF 2030



GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

Strategic implementation at Governors State University is a collaborative, evidence-informed process that connects governance, leadership, goal teams, and units to advance *Better Together: the Institutional Strategic Framework 2030.*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Receives regular strategic-plan reports and provides policy-level oversight, including approval of mission, scope, educational goals, and key University policies.

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Provides institutional leadership by advising on strategic priorities, aligning resources, removing barriers, and championing shared ownership of strategy implementation.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY COUNCIL (ISC)

Provides representative leadership for implementation, assessment, and renewal of *Better Together: ISF 2030.* Recommends annual objectives and improvement projects; links long-term goals, milestones, projects, KPIs, targets, and owners; and reviews progress, risks, resources, and cross-unit dependencies.

FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS | EIGHT LONG-TERM GOALS

ISF 2030 GOAL WORKING GROUPS

Critical contributors and interested volunteers aligned to the four strategic pillars and eight long-term goals. Develop and implement action plans, milestones, assessment measures, and recommendations.

ACADEMIC UNITS

Colleges, programs, and academic support areas create aligned unit strategic plans with unit-specific objectives, projects, and annual reports.

NON-ACADEMIC UNITS

Administrative, student-support, and operational units create aligned unit strategic plans with function-specific objectives, projects, and annual reports.

ASSESSMENT, DASHBOARDS & REPORTING

Supports implementation through KPI dashboards, milestone reports, annual unit reports, target tracking, and transparent communication. Provides ongoing decision support across governance, leadership, working groups, and units.

Governors State
UNIVERSITY
An Illinois Public University

Participants AY25/26

November 2025 Better Together All-Campus Meeting and Charrettes

Kerrington Adams	Christopher Goodson	Steven Russell
Lannaea Alexander	Chris Greiner	Craig Schmidt
Danielle Austin	Erin Gutierrez	Lise Schneider
Kneshia Avery	Timothy Harrington	Beverly Schneller
Megan Barelli	Dustin Hogan	Sara Schnoor
Uriah Berryhill	Glenna Howell	Michelle Sebasco
Renee Bickett	Tina R. Hughes-Burke	Steven Sharp
Antigone Blackwell	Olumide Ijose	Xiaobo She
Teri Bushey	Sara Jozwik	Erin Sheffner
Cynthia Carr	Victoria Karnes	Konya Sledge
Mary Carrington	Alice Keane	Bradley Smith
Mushtaq Choudhary	Julie Keck	John Sowa
Marlon Cummings	Brock Krska	Jessica Specht
Frank Czuba	Nikki LaGrone	Matthew Sprong
Sonia Dalmia	Cheun-Yeong Lee	Robert Stanley
Siobhan Dalrymple	Corrie Lee	Jeff Stevenson
Margaret D'Astici	Anton Lewis	Andrius Tamulis
Joseph Day	Daisy Lozano	Renee Theiss
Antonio De Castro	Katelyn Matulewicz	Scott Thesen
Jennifer Di Sandro	Makiko Miyara	Amy Vujaklija
Lorena Diaz	Susie Morris	Amy Wagner
Cari Didion	Camille O'Quin	Stephen Wagner
Christopher Dignam	Kerri O'Shea	Christine Watt
Rasha Elhage	Patricia Owens	Keith Werosh
Melinda Elliot	Lisa Pennington	Karen Williams
Jan Figa	Ujvala Rajadhyaksha	Joshua Young
Cesar Flores	Tiffani Robertson	Jason Zingsheim
Kimberly Gonzales	Peter Rockey	Kim Major-Ford

Working Groups AY25/26

Thriving Students, Lasting Impact

Goal I: Promote Holistic Well-being Among Students and Increase Access to Services

Goal Leader: Tiffani Robertson

Members: Tina Hughes-Burke; Matt Sprong; Mushtaq Choudhary; Erin Gutierrez; Daisy Lozano; Konya Sledge; Dustin Hogan; Susie Morris; Robbin Mitchell; Victoria Karnes; Kim Major-Ford; Angelica Damiani; Janae Brown; Emmanuel Lopez

Thriving Students, Lasting Impact

Goal II: Expand Student Access and Workforce Alignment

Goal Leader: Cesar Flores

Members: Christine Watt; Matt Sprong; Konya Sledge; Susie Morris; Lise Schneider; Darcie Campos

Expanding Our Reach, Deepening Our Roots

Goal I: Expand Global Offerings

Goal Leader: Joe Day

Members: Matt Sprong; Kerri O'Shea; Cynthia Carr; Cheun-Yeong Lee; Kneshia Avery; Marlon Cummings

Expanding Our Reach, Deepening Our Roots

Goal II: Amplify Civic Engagement and Build Reciprocal Partnerships

Goal Leader: Craig Schmidt

Members: Christine Watt; C. Kimberly Gonzales; Kerry Adams; Joshua Young; Erin Gutierrez; Alice Keane; Daisy Lozano; Scott Sowinski; Renee Bickett; Danielle Austin; Antigone Blackwell; John Sowa; Marlon Cummings

Working Groups AY25/26 continued

Bridging Voices and Vision

Goal I: Unified Messaging

Goal Leader: Zion Banks

Members: Konya Sledge; Amy Vujaklija; Erin Sheffner; Jeff Stevenson; Susie Morris; Keith Werosh; Patricia A. Owens; Antonio DeCastro; Isabella Hollingsworth

Bridging Voices and Vision

Goal II: Streamlined and Equitable Operations

AY25/26 Goal Leader: Julie Keck

Members: Teri Bushey; Kerry Adams; Katelyn Matulewicz; Isaac Lee; Peter Rockey

Future-Focused Academic Excellence

Goal I: Expanding Access through Innovative Educational Models

AY25/26 Goal Leader: David Conrad

Members: Matt Sprong Ujvala Rajadhyaksha; Nikki LaGrone Katherine Carl; Mary Carrington; Siobhan Dalrymple

Future-Focused Academic Excellence

Goal II: Designing Responsive and Sustainable Programs

AY25/26 Goal Leader: Michelle Sebasco

Members: Erin Gutierrez; Nikki Lagrone; Lannaea Alexander; Brad Smith

ISF 2030 Leadership Team AY25/26

Beverly Schneller (Provost)
Robert Stanley (Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness)
Stephen Wagner (Chair of Management, Marketing, Entrepreneurship)

Participants AY24/25

Note – attendance was not recorded at fall focus groups on Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats in efforts to promote candor and openness

February 2025 Better Together All-Campus Meeting and Charrettes

Ujvala Rajahyaksha (facilitator)	Sonia Dalmia	Uriah Berryhill
Chris Tweddle (facilitator)	Novia Pagone	Tiffani Robertson
Cesar Flores (facilitator)	Catherine Balthazar	Michelle Sebasco
David Conrad (facilitator)	Erica Ceka	Antibone Blackwell
Anton Lewis (facilitator)	Darcie Campos	Marlon Cummings
Brad Smith (facilitator)	Lise Scheider	Stacy Amedeo
Craig Smith (facilitator)	Sara Schoor	Sonia Dalmia
Shonda Lawrence (facilitator)	Chuck Pustz	Knesha Avery
Josh Sopiarz (facilitator)	Melinda Elliott	Shonda Lawrence
Scott Sowinski (facilitator)	Chris Tweddle	Renee Bickett
Zion Banks (facilitator)	Rashidah Muhammad	Lise Scheider
Suzie Morris (facilitator)	Sara Jozwik	Giggy Wagner
Lara Hrycaj (facilitator)	Rich Manprisio	Heather Penn
Katelyn Karstenson	Deborah King	Mary Carrington
Cari Didion	Amanda Evans	Amy Vujaklija
Michelle Sebasco	Jing Zang	David Rhea

Working Groups AY24/25

Thriving Students, Lasting Impact

Cesar Flores (Chair)	Deborah King
Tiffani Robertson (Co-Chair)	Amanda Evans
Darcie Campos	Jing Zang
Lise Scheider	Giesela Grumbach
Sara Schoor	Glenna Howell
Chuck Pustz	Danielle Osmelak
Melinda Elliott	Amy Wagner
Chris Tweddle	Rasha Elhage
Rashidah Muhammad	Morenikeji Asaaju
Sara Jozwik	Ahmet Can
Rich Manprisio	

Expanding Our Reaching, Deepening Our Roots

Craig Schmidt (Chair)	Lise Scheider
Uriah Berryhill (Co-Chair)	Giggy Wagner
Tiffani Robertson	Heather Penn
Michelle Sebasco	Mary Carrington
Antigone Blackwell	Amy Vujaklija
Marlon Cummings	David Rhea
Stacy Amedeo	Natalia Rekhter
Sonia Dalmia	Joao Salm
Knesha Avery	Clare Tang
Shonda Lawrence	Jayne Goode
Renee Bickett	Nicole Bing

Working Groups AY24/25 continued

Bridging Voices and Vision

Erin Sheffner (Chair)	Peter Rockey
Joshua Young (Co-Chair)	Lisa Porter
Susie Morris	Stacy Amedeo
Melanie Whitelow	Kyra Booker
Amy Vujaklija	Josh Sopiarz
Scott Sowinski	Laura Hrycaj
Zion Banks	Erica Ceka

Future-Focused Academic Excellence

David Conrad (Chair)	Catherine Balthazar
Michelle Sebasco (Co-Chair)	Erica Ceka
Katelyn Karstensen	Katherine Carl
Cari Didion	Priyanshi Garg
Brad Smith	Abbas Imam
Sonia Dalmia	Clare Tang
Novia Pagone	Amy Vuyaklija
Ujvala Rajadhyaksha	

Steering Committee and Leadership AY24/25

Joshua Allen (Cabinet)

Natalia Rekhter (faculty)

Daniel Cortese (faculty)

Benjamin Almassi (faculty)

Susie Morris (maybe, staff/CC)

Megan Barelli (staff/CC)

Katelyn Karstensen (staff/CC)

Paige Dulkowski (staff/CC)

Melanie Whitelow (staff/CC)

Elaina Frierson (student)

Lanetta Thomas (student)

Eraina Green (student)

BOT members

Tiffani Robertson (working group chair)

David Conrad (working group chair)

Craig Schmidt (working group chair)

ISF 2030 Leadership Team AY24/25

Beverly Schneller (Provost)

Robert Stanley (Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness)

Stephen Wagner (Chair of Management, Marketing, Entrepreneurship)

For additional information please visit:

https://www.govst.edu/better-together-institutional-strategic-framework-isf-2030