

David L. Wright, chief policy officer, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

In his role as the chief policy officer for the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, David L. Wright routinely advises the governor's staff, legislature and campus leaders on policy matters related to higher education. His office also provides research reports and statistical data to system leaders, college presidents, campus personnel and the public.

He is the primary architect of the 2010-2015 Public Agenda for Tennessee Higher Education, which identified educational attainment as the state's most pressing need vis-à-vis higher education and established degree production goals for the state and its higher education systems consistent with institutional mission. The Public Agenda set the stage for a public higher education funding formula that allocates almost all of each institution's state support on the basis of student outcomes.

Prior to coming to Tennessee in August 2006, Wright served as senior research analyst for the State Higher Education Executive Officers, where he developed the State Higher Education Finance study, a national annual survey of state higher education appropriations, tuition revenues, enrollments and tax effort. Before entering the public policy arena, he served in several capacities on college campuses in Arkansas and Florida. He is a doctoral candidate at Florida State University.