

MTSU Strategic Plan 2035  
Annual Progress Report

**Priority 3 Cultivate sustainable partnerships.**

**Strategy 3.2 Improve institutional advocacy and communication**

**Initiative 3.2.1 Strengthen, disseminate, and ensure consistent use of the university’s overall marketing and branding strategies.**

Action	Begin Date	End Date	Report on Metrics and Summaries of Progress to Date	Notes
Develop an elevator pitch that is clearer and more concise than the existing mission and vision statements	August 2025	(revised) September 2026	<p><b>Completion of task</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conferred with Faculty Senate president to seek ideas and suggestions on a brief, focused and direct statement that aligned with faculty perception of MTSU's strengths. The Faculty Senate president, in turn, engaged members of the Senate's Steering Committee for inputs, which have been forwarded to our working group. A brainstorming session with the Steering Committee is set for April 2026.</li> </ul>	
Support and implement an integrated communication platform to facilitate the sharing of information across the university and with partners and potential partners	August 2025	April 2028	<p><b>Completion of task</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Piggybacking upon the efforts by the 3.1 Implementation Committee and the Community Engagement Classification Council, our group has reviewed prototypes for a potential platform and conferred with Information Technology Division on ways to expand upon said prototype with new technology (VP/ITD invited to join conversations on topic).</li> </ul>	
Establish a plan for the use of campus-wide email communication, with a focus on reducing volume and increasing quality.	August 2025	Fall 2026	<p><b>Completion of task</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collected best practice information from comparable institutions that have addressed the challenge.</li> <li>Scheduling a campus visit from a communication executive from an institution that would be closely aligned with similar challenges we face.</li> <li>Will have a working prototype of a weekly email digest that would be designed to unify university-wide messages now sent via campus-wide blasts into a single, formatted presentation (which would</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New product, which would launch by September 2026 (pending approvals), would also eliminate the current Subscriber blast emails, as well as other regular campuswide messages from administration and athletics.</li> </ul>

			also serve as a model for colleges and departments).	
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Initiative 3.2.2 Create and invest in a strategic funding enhancement plan that effectively engages state, alumni, and donor partners

Action	Begin Date	End Date	Report on Metrics and Summaries of Progress to Date	Notes
Develop a campus-wide priority needs assessment consistent with the strategic plan	August 2025	Spring 2027	<b>Completion of task</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment will begin with the development of institution priorities, established with the concurrence of new leadership and the BOT. Priorities will be evaluated both for their importance to the University and the likelihood of external support.</li> </ul>
Develop a fundraising plan and begin to allocate resources to meet the needs of a new capital campaign	August 2025	Spring 2027	<b>Completion of task</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once priorities have been established, a comprehensive case statement will be developed to "test market" the funding potential for a capital campaign. BOT will need to prioritize reallocating resources in support of a campaign.</li> </ul>

Initiative 3.2.3 Enhance our comprehensive recruiting strategy and more effectively articulate the multifaceted value of the MTSU educational experience.

Action	Begin Date	End Date	Report on <b>Metrics</b> and Summaries of Progress to Date	Notes
Review and reevaluate publications and media to ensure inclusion of proposed elevator pitch that is clearer and more concise than the existing mission and vision statements	April 2026	July 2026	<b>Completion of task</b>	
Review and reevaluate recruitment events for greater emphasis on Middle Tennessee communities and gatherings that support yield	April 2025	Ongoing	<p><b>Completion of task</b></p> <p>Admitted Student Days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2,168 students registered for an Admitted Student Day this year, which is a 22% increase compared to last year.</li> <li>1,901 students attended an Admitted Student Day this year, which is a 29% increase compared to last year.</li> <li>178 students collectively attended the two Celebration of Scholar events at the president’s home this year, which is a 55% increase compared to last year.</li> </ul> <p>True Blue Tour</p>	<p>Admitted Student Days Survey highlights helpful for next year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event is working extremely well. The overwhelming tone is very positive: students repeatedly use phrases like “very welcoming,” “felt at home,” “made me feel like I belong,” and “this confirmed my decision,” indicating that the event is successfully deepening commitment to enroll.</li> <li>Human connection is the differentiator. The most impactful elements are the people—faculty, current students, staff, and advisors—who are described as kind, accessible, and genuinely invested in students’ success, making MTSU feel supportive and personal rather than transactional.</li> <li>Program-level experiences drive commitment. Academic and major-specific sessions, building tours, labs, clinics, and hands-on demos are consistently cited as the most helpful parts of the day, giving students a clear picture of what they will study, the opportunities available, and the careers they can pursue.</li> <li>Operational challenges weaken an otherwise excellent experience. Confusing schedules and maps, limited wayfinding, long lines for IDs and housing, and overcrowded or hard-to-hear sessions appear repeatedly in the comments, introducing avoidable stress and frustration that distract from the strength of the academic content and welcoming campus environment.</li> </ul>

- Based on attendance, application and enrollment data, and feedback from the recruitment staff we have recommended changes to the True Blue Tour schedule for fall 2026 which have been approved by the president.

- Clarity and structure amplify impact. When students know exactly where to go, what to do next, and how to prioritize key sessions, they feel more confident and in control; where that structure is missing, the day can feel like a “free-for-all” even though the underlying content is strong.
- Targeted support for different student types is a gap. Transfer and some niche-major students value the event but at times feel they are not being spoken to as directly; adding more visible, tailored touchpoints for these groups would help ensure that all high-intent students experience the same sense of belonging.

True Blue Tour/Recruitment 26-27

Date	Event
Wednesday, August 26, 2026	Rutherford County College Night
Tuesday, September 22, 2026	TBT – Nashville, TN
<b>Saturday, September 26, 2026</b>	<b>True Blue Preview</b>
Tuesday, September 29, 2026	TBT – Johnson City, TN
Wednesday, September 30, 2026	TBT – Knoxville, TN
Tuesday, October 6, 2026	TBT – Shelbyville
Wednesday, October 14, 2026	TBT – Huntsville, AL
Wednesday, October 21, 2026	TBT – Memphis, TN
Thursday, October 22, 2026	TBT – Jackson, TN
Monday, October 26, 2026	TBT – Williamson County
Wednesday, October 28, 2026	TBT – Chattanooga, TN
Thursday, November 5, 2026	TBT – Middle Tennessee
<b>Saturday, November 14, 2026</b>	<b>True Blue Preview</b>
Saturday, February 6, 2027	Admitted Student Day
Friday, February 19, 2027	Admitted Student Day
Saturday, February 27, 2027	Admitted Student Day
<b>Saturday, March 20, 2027</b>	<b>True Blue Preview</b>