

AP

Kentucky colleges, universities to seek funding increase

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — Kentucky state colleges and universities will ask for their first funding increase since the 2007-08 budget, lawmakers were told.

Aaron Thompson, president of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, said public colleges will seek a 6.2% increase next fiscal year and an 8.8% increase in the 2022 fiscal year over current base funding levels. Current funding for higher education institutions is \$862.9 million, and the request would increase the figure to \$913.3 million in 2021 and \$935.8 million in 2022.

Thompson told the Courier Journal after the budget subcommittee meeting Thursday that he is not sure whether the budget Gov. Andy Beshear presents to the General Assembly on Tuesday will include the request but is optimistic.

“The governor has come out to say he supports higher education and wants to at least stop the bleeding and hopefully infuse some dollars in it,” Thompson said.

Kentucky has cut higher education funding in each two-year budget since 2008, while colleges and universities have increased tuition rates to replace lost funding.

Thompson told legislators that after more than a decade of higher education cuts, “we are down to the point where we are cutting into the bone.”

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