



# Mergers, Affiliations, and Strategic Partnerships

Faced with disruption, many higher education boards and institutions are successfully incorporating mergers, affiliations, and strategic partnerships as core components of their long-term strategy. Not all options are right for all institutions, so it's critical to understand each one in the context of your strategy and mission.

## NAVIGATE YOUR STRATEGIC OPTIONS

Institutions of all types are actively exploring and pursuing strategic partnerships, private system affiliations, and mergers. For some institutions, short-term survivability has required rapid identification and implementation of mission-sustaining partnerships or affiliations, while for others, the impetus to act has been to strengthen competitive position and gain access to new markets, programs, students, and revenue. No matter where you fall on this spectrum, AGB experts have the depth and breadth of expertise to advise you on readiness, strategy development, new partner identification, decision support, and stakeholder management. Our experts will work with you to:

### Assess Readiness and Create Alignment

- » Determine if you are in a financial position to remain independent, affiliate or partner, or merge.
- » Ensure your board and senior leadership understand the institution's competitive position.
- » Communicate to your full board and institution the need for strategic decisions that will result in long-term sustainability and growth.
- » Generate alignment among critical stakeholders.

### Identify Strategic Partners and Establish Relationships

- » Understand how to measure your value against the value of strategic partnerships.
- » For less financially stable institutions, develop the strategies necessary to attract a potential partner.
- » For financially stronger institutions, create a comprehensive decision matrix that outlines the characteristics of potential partners.
- » Identify top opportunities and/or partnership candidates and establish initial relationships.

### Develop a Plan of Action and Implementation

- » Determine milestones, timelines, and other critical factors to support partnership discussions.
- » Engage in due diligence and in-depth analyses of potential partnership deals.
- » Navigate the tactical components of a final deal, including implementation, guidance on accreditation and legal issues, timelines for teach-out agreements, and more.

## THE AGB DIFFERENCE

AGB experts are skilled collaborators with deep familiarity across higher education governance, leadership, and institutional operations—knowledge that comes only from years of experience working in the industry. AGB's sole focus as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is supporting higher education boards, leaders, and institutions. Our success is measured by our members' positive outcomes.

*“It is possible to reimagine the future of private institutions in a prosperous state, but probably not while holding on to past practices that have contributed to the decline. It is possible to express the institution's mission to its fullest extent while delivering a high-impact education using a business model completely different from the past and one that is more aligned with the future.”*

*—Excerpted from the AGB FAQ, Mergers and Affiliations: When and How to Attract Interest from Financially Viable Institutions*

Learn more about AGB merger, affiliation, and strategic partnership services.

[AGB.org/Consulting](https://www.agb.org/Consulting)

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