

**ROUNDTABLE STAKEHOLDERS AFFIRM LEGISLATIVE AND SBHE OBJECTIVES**  
**A Report of the Roundtable on Higher Education Meeting**  
**October 8, 2008**

The Roundtable discussions identified key actions that are vital to the future of the state and outlined some broad policy directions for the North Dakota University System. As indicated below, the participants' recommendations affirmed strategic objectives that have been established by the State Board of Higher Education as well as goals identified by the Legislative Interim Higher Education Committee. This convergence suggests that the University System is on the right track to meet North Dakota's critical education and workforce needs.

**Educational Attainment: Recommendations of the Roundtable on Higher Education**

**A well-educated population is vital to North Dakota's future. Educate the working age population to the level of the best in the world. Encourage lifelong learning.**

The State Board of Higher Education is addressing the recommendations through the following objectives:

- Collaborating with stakeholders, including the Department of Public Instruction and Career and Technical Education, to develop admission and placement policies that are consistent with the high levels of student preparation required for success in college and in the global economy.
- Continuing collaboration with the Joint Boards regarding P-20 education, including development of a plan to study and recommend a system of common challenging standards and assessments leading to alignment of high school graduation requirements and university admission standards and to improved ND performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- Defining clear pathways for students to progress to higher degree levels in each academic discipline.
- Increasing educational opportunities for non-traditional students (adults, other underrepresented groups), leading to a higher level of educational attainment throughout the state and a more highly qualified workforce.

Accountability Measures proposed by the Legislative Interim Higher Education Committee:

- The proportion of the population, ages 25-34, with at least an associate degree.
- The number of certificates, associate, and baccalaureate degrees awarded relative to the 18-year old population six years prior.

**Access: Recommendations of the Roundtable on Higher Education**

**Access is the key to a well-educated population. Increase access to higher education and ensure that every North Dakotan who wants to go to college is adequately prepared for and may attend a North Dakota college or university (especially with regard to underserved and non-traditional student populations). Focus on removing the following barriers to access: economic/financial; psychological; geographic/program delivery, and preparation/education attainment.**

The State Board of Higher Education is addressing the recommendations through the following objectives:

- Focusing on affordability as a high priority policy objective, including increased financial aid and a study of tuition and fee policy.
- Providing for program access through collaboration among institutions - evidenced by recent partnerships designed to serve the western part of the state.
- Meeting program needs in Bismarck through the higher education center concept.
- Using technology to increase the number of programs available through distance learning and enhance on-line course delivery
- Developing an Adult Education Council to offer advice and recommendations regarding policy, service, and financial aid for non-traditional age students
- Reaching out to underserved, low income students through administering the federal College Access Challenge Grant program.

Accountability Measures proposed by the Legislative Interim Higher Education Committee:

- The proportion of recent high school graduates enrolled in NDUS institutions the following fall by county.
- The proportion of the 25-44 year old population with at least a high school diploma enrolled in an NDUS institution for a credit-bearing course.
- The number of student credit hours delivered by NDUS institutions to students attending another NDUS institution.
- Tuition and required fees relative to the lowest quintile per capita income in the state.
- Percent of family income needed to pay for college expenses after deduction of grant aid.
- Average amount of student loan debt incurred each year by undergraduate students.

### **Contribution to Economic Development: Recommendations of the Roundtable on Higher Education**

**The presence of a well-educated population and higher education institutions throughout the state (including small business development and research centers) stimulates statewide economic growth. Continue to partner with the private sector to meet economic development needs and to enhance opportunities for research such as Centers of Excellence, EPSCoR, and other programs.**

The State Board of Higher Education is addressing the recommendations through the following objectives:

- Engaging in a comprehensive process to ensure that the NDUS is well positioned to provide access to an appropriate array of academic programs, research capacity, workforce training, and cultural enrichment consistent with the roles of a university system of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Developing and sustaining partnerships with the private sector to meet business and state needs.
- Maintaining open communication with and obtaining feedback from Roundtable participants and other key stakeholders.

Accountability Measures proposed by the Legislative Interim Higher Education Committee:

- The number of recent NDUS graduates employed in North Dakota.
- The number of recent NDUS graduates employed in North Dakota in jobs paying at least twice the amount established as poverty level.

- Annual dollar amount of research expenditures by NDUS institutions of funds received from federal, foundation, and business sponsors.

### **Meeting Workforce Needs: Recommendations of the Roundtable on Higher Education**

**A skilled workforce is essential to North Dakota's continued economic growth. Partner with the private sector to develop skills that will meet current and future workforce needs. Maintain a systematic process for the private sector to provide input to the NDUS. Ensure the ability for NDUS institutions to respond immediately to workforce needs with new programs, requiring flexibility and financial resources.**

The State Board of Higher Education is addressing the recommendations through the following objectives:

- Engaging key leaders in an active dialogue focused on North Dakota's common vision for higher education.
- Identifying and implementing effective strategies to address the state's workforce development and training needs at all levels (non-credit, certificate, two-year, four-year, graduate, professional).
- Utilizing the System's educational assets to deliver programs where they are needed
- Consulting with private sector employers to assess students' level of preparation in the skills required for success in the current and future workforce.
- Offering programs structured to provide progressively higher levels of skills certification, for example, certificates leading to associate and baccalaureate degrees.

Accountability Measures proposed by the Legislative Interim Higher Education Committee:

- Number of certificates and associate degrees awarded in vocational/technical fields.
- Number of baccalaureate degrees awarded in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.
- Student performance on nationally recognized examinations.
- First-time licensure pass rates.
- Employer satisfaction with recently hired graduates.
- Alumni and student satisfaction with preparation.