

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Citizen League Meeting Notes Summary

July 15, 2004 Meeting

Meeting Topic – Review the drafts of committee reports

Assessment Report – Presentation and Discussion

- Report should suggest actions while addressing the consequences of inaction
- Supply is said to be the individuals who have completed high education
- Demand is defined as how many high education completers are sought by employers
- The proliferation of private institutions represents an increase in supply in response to the individualized needs of an increasingly fragmented workforce
- Focusing on public higher education
- Discussed state support of research, but it often overlooks the embedded support that faculty do as a part of their normal responsibilities that are funded through instructional budgets
- University of Minnesota has competitive advantages over Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
- There may be a need for the Higher Education Services Office to oversee all of higher education in the state
- Need greater emphasis on the public good provided by higher education

Vision Report – Presentation and Discussion

- System roles – help public and private systems understand their role
- Students need to be held accountable for participating and performing in higher education
- Committee needs high impact statement that change is needed. Merely requesting more money will not create the change needed to better serve students and the state

Evaluation

- The subcommittees had quite different reports, but they need to be mutually supportive
- The assessment report should look at current state and vision report should define where it should be 20 years from now
- The governor and legislature are the primary customers of the final report
- Key issues: governance, mission differentiation, finance of the two public systems

July 29, 2004 Meeting - Topic – Student Financial Aid and Higher Education Finance

Guest: David Laird, President and CEO, Minnesota Private College Council

Private College Recommendations

- Improve access to higher education for low income and minority students by providing more state funding to HESO to offer more support for TRIO programs
- Increase retention and success for students with demonstrated financial need – decrease student financial and debt burden by reducing student share in the state grant program; increase cap on state grant funding for private college students and restore and expand child care grants
- Support research at the University of Minnesota – create a freestanding research foundation funded by legislature and private interests to fund research

Guest: Laura King, Vice Chancellor for Finance, Minnesota State Colleges & Universities

- Providing access is a key priority for MnSCU
- Students need more development skills in high school
- State grant program needs to be re-evaluated

Guest: Peter Zetterberg, Director of Institutional Research and Reporting – University of Minnesota

- There are two fundamental public goods provided by higher education. It creates an educated citizenry and it provides a ladder to success for the less fortunate. Right now, they are being pitted against each other
- States are reducing funding, expecting student financial aid to make up for it, but the federal government is cutting student aid and threatening to punish institutions that raise tuition
- Minnesota needs to allocate state financial aid in a more sophisticated way so processes are simpler for students and their families.
- Suggests allocating financial aid directly to institutions and letting them allocate their own based on parameters defined by the state.

Response from Kerry Fine to meeting

- Not much discussion regarding article in newspaper of a single system combining MnSCU with University of Minnesota
- Agreement by group that high school students should be better prepared; some thought 12th grade should be reformed
- Lack of agreement on discussion of access and financial aid
- There is a definite division between high tuition/high aid concept and funding students/funding systems – some want voucher system to give students more control over where the money goes

August 26, 2004 Meeting - Topic – Revised Draft Committee Report

Guest: Robert Bruininks, President, University of Minnesota

- Higher education helped create Minnesota's strong economy and high quality of life and plays a critical role in Minnesota's future. This committee should make the case for investing in higher education to keep Minnesota strong
- Minnesota has some of the best higher education in the country, but has only made an average investment over the last 20 years
- Universities like the University of Minnesota operate in a global marketplace and need resources to attract the best faculty, students, and research
- The University of Minnesota is one of Minnesota's most important assets
- University faculty attract about \$500 million in grants and contracts every year
- University of Minnesota took a \$200 million reduction in state funding in the last biennium, any more cuts will erode the overall quality and it's ability to serve Minnesota

Discussion on Access and Readiness

- Recommendation need to:
 - o Address groups like immigrants and low income
 - o Private sector needs to invest in college readiness
 - o Do not tie readiness to funding
 - o Should highlight PSEO
 - o Focus on underperforming 18-25 year olds
 - o Should identify incentives and penalties
- Access and Affordability
 - o Recommendation to reallocate financial aid resources to P-12 readiness ticket from report
 - o If selling higher education assets is intended to raise revenue by closing underutilized campuses, then report should state explicitly
 - o Give institutions flexibility to find funds themselves
 - o Hold legislature accountable for providing more resources

Response from Kerry Fine on Draft Citizens League Report

- Emphasis on old political reform movement jargon of "efficiency and effectiveness"
- They state primary function of higher ed is to be the "development of human capital and capacity" and that "higher education should build wealth and social capital for all citizens"
- Primary draft recommendations:
 - o Increasing excellence at U of M – especially grad ed and research; better faculty salaries, better or at least more predictable funding
 - o Create a new and independent "Knowledge Investment Board"
 - o Redesign current financial aid system
 - o Maximize capacity and use of MnSCU
 - o Higher Ed Trade Mission of the gov leading higher ed folds to China and India to see the competition

