



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

To: Higher Education Committee

From: Joseph P. Frey

Subject: Developing the Regents 2012-2020 Statewide Plan for Higher Education

Date: December 6, 2010

Authorizations:

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

What issues should CUNY, SUNY, and independent and proprietary higher education institutions emphasize in their 2012 master plans and should the Department emphasize in the next Statewide Plan?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute

Proposed Handling

This matter will come before the Higher Education Committee at its December 2010 meeting for discussion. It had been scheduled for consideration in November; however, press of other business precluded the Committee's discussion at that meeting.

Background Information

The Regents Statewide Plan for Higher Education is one of the key documents focusing New York's 270 public, independent, and proprietary higher education institutions on priority concerns and objectives. It provides for the Board of Regents and the State's colleges and universities the opportunity to plan strategically in addressing critical issues in higher education. The Education Law charges the Board of Regents to do two things:

1. to specify, by April 2011, the nature of the information, plans, and recommendations to be submitted by CUNY, SUNY, and independent and proprietary institutions in

their long-range master plans; describe statewide needs, problems, societal conditions, and interests of the citizens, and their relative priorities, on which those plans should focus; and provide appropriate supporting information;

2. to act, by October 2012, on the CUNY and SUNY long-range master plans, taking into account all available information about the plans and facilities of the independent and proprietary institutions, incorporating them into the Statewide Plan to the extent the Board approves them and submitting them, and the Statewide Plan as a whole, to the Governor for approval and to the Legislature.

The law authorizes the inclusion in the Statewide Plan of other matters not comprehended within the CUNY and SUNY plans; however, it does not require that the Statewide Plan do so.

The description of statewide needs, problems, societal conditions, and interests traditionally takes the form of identification by the Board of its priority concerns for the planning period (i.e., 2012-2020). It also may include statewide objectives and challenge institutions to describe in their plans how they will contribute to meeting those objectives. A full description of the legal requirements for the Statewide Plan is included in the Appendix.

We ask the Board to begin to identify a focused set of issues and priority concerns on which higher education should concentrate over the next ten years. The issues focus on challenges New York colleges and universities may encounter through 2020. Priorities are what the Regents will ask the colleges and universities to address to support the Regents P-16 reform agenda. Once it has identified an initial list, the Department will seek the advice and comments of leaders of all four sectors of higher education (CUNY, SUNY, independent institutions, proprietary colleges). The attachment includes statements of today's issues and the Board's present priority concerns in higher education, as the staff understand them:

- Reform of the preparation and certification of teachers and school leaders,
- Increase opportunities for high school students to take advanced, college-level courses,
- Assure access to higher education for all new Yorkers,
- Assure that students are able to complete their programs of study, and
- Encourage innovative approaches to delivering high quality education.

However, today's priority concerns may not be the ones the Board should emphasize for the next decade. For example, with the present initiatives to strengthen the preparation and performance of teachers and school leaders, is it appropriate to have this as a priority for a time period that extends to 2020?

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee begin a discussion of issues and priority concerns that will culminate in March with approval of a Bulletin of the 2012 Statewide Plan for Higher Education.

REGENTS STATEWIDE PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

I. What are the key issues that New York's colleges and universities may encounter over the next ten years?

1. **Adjusting to changes in demand for higher education and for different subjects of study.** The Department projects the 2018 high school graduating class to be 16.5 percent smaller than in 2008, if nothing changes. How will that affect enrollments? Will reforming the schools improve New York's 71 percent high school graduation rate, moderating the decline, or will the requirement that every high school graduate be college and career ready lower the rate (as one of the speakers from Achieve suggested at the College and Career Readiness Working Group in November), exacerbating the decline?

Moreover, the demand for the preparation of teachers will go through cyclic changes based on changes in student enrollment, aging out of the teaching workforce and changes in the required educational program (e.g., an increase in the number of units students must take in mathematics and science will have a impact on work force supply and demand).

2. **Assuring alignment of high school graduation requirements with expectations of readiness to undertake college-level study.**
3. **Assuring that all programs of study meet high standards of academic quality, including education offered on-line and education provided by institutions from outside the State.**
4. **Defining the Regents role in regulating higher education institutions that contract with a private business or industry to offer credit-bearing courses and degrees for its employees.** This would affect the State's colleges and universities as well as out-of-state institutions that petition the Regents to operate in New York State.
5. **Given the State's demographic changes described above, the challenge of enhancing New York as a destination for higher education students from other states and abroad.** (About one out of four full-time students now come from outside the State).
6. **Improving student retention and graduation, especially for students in community colleges.**
7. **Improving student transfer mechanisms and articulation of programs, creating a more efficient system of higher education in New York State.**
8. **Keeping higher education affordable for New Yorkers.** What can institutions of higher education do to make a college education more affordable for New Yorkers?

9. Enhancing institutions' service to the communities in which they are located.

What should the role of the college be in strengthening the communities in which they are located?

II. What are the Regents priorities in higher education?

Regents Priorities. The Board of Regents mission is "To raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the people in New York."

In carrying out that mission, the Regents are focusing on reform of New York's public P-12 schools. We have established a systemic approach to improve teaching and learning consisting of learning standards and aligned curricula that are measured by performance-based assessments. The core instruction (standards, curricula, and assessments) is delivered by well-prepared teachers and school leaders who have received relevant professional development based on student growth data. The analysis of these data informs improvements in instruction that will result in the academic progress of students. At the plan's center is the belief that all students should graduate from high school ready for postsecondary education and employment. (This statement is adapted from the Race to the Top application.)

Within that focus, in higher education the Board's present priorities are to continue efforts to:

- A.** Implement the plan for *reform of the preparation and certification of teachers and school leaders* (the first priority in higher education). (**Issue #1**)
- B.** Increase high school students' opportunities for advanced, college-level study by enhancing *opportunities to take college courses* while in high school, including such initiatives as Advanced Placement courses and International Baccalaureate programs and Early College High Schools and other dual enrollment opportunities. (**Issue #2**)
- C.** Assure *access to higher education* for all New Yorkers. This is essential to follow through on investments made in P-12 reform and to support workers who need to develop or enhance their skills. The goal is to assure that New Yorkers of every racial/ethnic group and gender have equal chances to graduate from college, and that the racial/ethnic and gender composition of the State's teachers and school leaders, and practitioners of the licensed professions, reflects New York's diversity. (**Issues # 4 and 8**)
- D.** Assure that all students have good opportunities to *complete their programs of study* and earn their undergraduate and graduate degrees. This requires attention to the adequacy of State and federal student aid so that the price students and their families must pay to attend college is within their means. It also requires improving institutions' success in accepting transfer credits, retaining and graduating students, and raising the statewide associate degree and baccalaureate completion rates. (**Issues # 5, 6, 7, and 8**)

- E. Encourage innovative approaches to delivering higher education while holding all undergraduate and graduate programs to **high standards** that support student learning and success. **(Issue #3)**

III. What is the timetable for developing the next Plan?

- **December 13-14, 2010.** Board of Regents holds initial discussion of priorities/goals/objectives for the 2012 Statewide Plan, which will be the basis for the Bulletin of the 2012 Statewide Plan.
- **January - March 2011.** Department gathers background information and suggestions. Statutory Commissioner's Advisory Council discusses preliminary priorities/goals/objectives and advises the Regents. Board continues to formulate/revise priorities/goals/objectives for the Bulletin of the 2012 Plan.
- **April 4-5, 2011.** Board approves Bulletin for distribution to the field.
- **April 25, 2011.** Department transmits Bulletin to all degree-granting institutions, requesting development of master plans for 2012-2020 (statutory date).
- **Prior to June 1, 2012.** Association of Proprietary Colleges and the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities schedule receipt of individual institutional master plans, with copies to the Department.
- **June 1, 2012.** Department receives SUNY and CUNY master plans (statutory date) and consolidated master plans for the independent and proprietary sectors.
- **Subsequent to June 1, 2012.** The Regents continue to formulate the 2012 Statewide Plan, including the sector master plans, with the advice of the statutory Commissioner's Advisory Council and input from the institutions and public hearings. Plan adopted in October 2012 (statutory date).

What does the Education Law require?

Content of the Plan. Section 237 of the Education Law requires that the Statewide Plan include certain elements, authorizes the inclusion of other elements at the Regents discretion, and encourages an overall approach to planning.

1. Required. The Statewide Plan **shall** incorporate the SUNY and CUNY Master Plans, to the extent the Regents approve them, and “all available information with respect to the plans and facilities of independent institutions of higher education.” Certain content of the SUNY and CUNY master plans is specified in statute. In addition, the Regents may specify information, plans, and areas of recommendation to be included (see below).

In effect, Section 237 contemplates the Regents identifying statewide needs, societal conditions, and the interests of New Yorkers and calling on SUNY, CUNY, and independent institutions to address them. The Statewide Plan harmonizes the SUNY and CUNY master plans with one another and with the plans of independent institutions. The SUNY and CUNY plans are subject to the Regents approval; the plans of independent institutions are not subject to approval.

The Statewide Plan also **shall** include a summary of all recommendations in the preceding Plan, and subsequent amendments, stating the action taken and progress towards achievement.

2. Authorized. In addition, the Statewide Plan **may** include plans with respect to “other matters not comprehended within the plan of the state and city universities,” including but not limited to:
 - Improving institutional management and resources,
 - Instruction and guidance programs,
 - Financial assistance to students, and
 - Extension of educational opportunities.

However, the law does not require that the Plan include such matters; that remains within the Regents discretion.

3. Encouraged. Section 237 states that the “purposes of planning” (not the Statewide Plan as a document) **should**:
 - a. Define and differentiate the missions and objectives of higher education.
 - b. Identify the needs, problems, societal conditions, and interests of the people of the State of New York to which programs of higher education may most appropriately be addressed.
 - c. Define and differentiate the missions and objectives of institutions of higher education.

d. Develop programs to meet the needs, solve the problems, affect the conditions and respond to the public's interests by:

- (1) Setting goals.
- (2) Describing the time required to meet those goals.
- (3) Identifying the resources needed to achieve the goals.
- (4) Establishing priorities.

e. Be in sufficient detail to enable all participants in the planning process, representatives of the people and the people themselves to evaluate the needs, objectives, program proposals, priorities, costs and results of higher education.

f. Optimize the use of resources.

g. Evaluate program effectiveness.

However, the law does not require that the Statewide Plan exhibit these attributes.

Planning Bulletin. Section 237 requires that, before developing or revising the Statewide Plan, the Regents **shall** request master plans for SUNY, CUNY, and each independent institution. (Such request usually is called the Bulletin of the Statewide Plan.) It **requires** that the request be issued by April 25, 2011, and that it **shall**:

- Specify the nature of the information, plans, and recommendations to be submitted;
- Describe statewide needs, problems, societal conditions, and interests of the citizens, and discuss their priorities; and
- Provide appropriate information that may be useful in formulating such plans.

Transmittal Deadline. As modified by Section 137 of Chapter 82 of the Laws of 1995, Section 237 **requires** the Regents to adopt or revise the Statewide Plan and transmit it to the Governor (for approval) and to the Legislature on or before November 1, 1964, and every eight years thereafter (i.e., November 1, 2012).