



Board Report  
06-14-17

Alan Marble

Board Retreat – Today’s Board Retreat was intended to address a couple of compelling issues: Cyber Security and Adult Learners. Additionally, it serves as the kick off to the development of our new Strategic Plan (the last report for the previous plan is currently being written). Accordingly, I appreciate the input and expertise of each Board member as we move forward.

Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) – The CBHE meeting last week provided some critical insights into the initial approach being taken by the Greiten’s administration as they put their policies into motion. Zora Mulligan, Commissioner of the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE), gave a thoughtful and informative talk regarding the priorities of the new administration. Frankly, they are first looking at “risk factors” that currently face the State of Missouri. Commissioner Mulligan listed six risks that are considered critical: 1) Cybersecurity and/or Cyberterrorism; 2) Opioid epidemic; 3) Natural Disasters (floods, tornadoes, earthquakes); Infrastructure challenges (aging roads and bridges); Financial fluctuations caused by external events (foreign currency manipulation, etc.), and Workforce development (“we just don’t have level of preparedness we need to be competitive... in both hard skills and soft skills).

Regarding higher education in particular, she emphasized a “pragmatic approach” – where degree attainment (and attainment on time) are important elements, but that we should also implement “micro credentials” (perhaps where a person receives certification on a particular software package, etc.). She also indicated the Administration will have little patience with long lead times... so if Boeing needs 50 programmers with a special skill set... we need to deliver in weeks not months.

The Administration mantra is “more jobs, and better jobs” so Commissioner Mulligan is reaching out to the office of Career Services on each campus to make sure our graduates are “work ready” when they cross the stage. She also emphasized the importance of internships for students and their immersion in the real world of work. But, she also specified that we should be very specific with employers of what our learning expectations are for internships, evaluation mechanisms, and the clear lines of supervision from the University.

Budget – As you know, the bill that passed the House and Senate (HB3) included a 6.58% core budget cut for all public colleges and universities. However, \$3 million was added back into the budget for the UMKC/MSSU Dental School partnership. But, as of this writing the bill is still on the Governor’s desk awaiting signature.

Council on Public Higher Education (COPHE) – The recent COPHE meeting started the process of discussing legislative priorities for next year. Obviously, the recovery of core

funding will be the lead issue, but others may emerge as the legislative session approaches. We talked a lot about the growing cost of the MOSER's retirement plan but no definitive solutions could be discovered. Two work groups are looking into various issues. The first is the CFO council and their efforts to find efficiencies through joint purchasing and other mechanisms... Rob Yust represents us in this group. The second committee is working on creating a new plan for the Performance Funding model we work under... Dr. Hodson is a member of this work group. We are hopeful that answers can be found in both committees.

Mid-America Athletic Conference (MIAA) – Discussion at the semi-annual meeting of MIAA member president's last week revolved around minor changes to scheduling for various sports, associate conference memberships, and the issues surrounding concussions in both football and soccer (along with other sports). There had been some talk of conference realignments, but that seems to have cooled for the time being.

Great Game of Education (GGOE) – We are working to finalize an agreement with SRC and the Great Game of Business regarding compensation for promoting the GGOE among other higher education institutions. Dr. Cragin is finishing up his presentation at the EduTech conference in Sydney Australia and we are receiving regular inquiries domestically for assistance in the implementation of open book management. We continue to roll out training for our own employees, but it is clear that GGOE positioned MSSU in a much better place than some of our colleagues when the recent budget cuts arrived. A tip of the hat should be given to everyone involved with the Great Game!