

State System receives consultant's recommendations as part of strategic system review

Harrisburg – The consultant hired to assist with the strategic review of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education has completed its data collection and analysis and today presented a series of recommendations for the future of the State System. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) presented the recommendations to the public and System officials during the Board of Governors meeting today.

"We all have a stake in the future of the State System so we wanted everyone to receive the same information, at the same time, from NCHEMS," said Board of Governors Chair Cynthia D. Shapira. "With these recommendations now in-hand, we will carefully review them before determining how the System evolves in the months and years ahead."

The NCHEMS recommendations are the result of a widely inclusive process that included more than 100 meetings held across the state. Sessions held on each of the 14 university campuses included hundreds of students, faculty, staff, alumni, business and community leaders and elected officials. In addition, more than 800 individuals offered comments and suggestions through the website established for this project. NCHEMS also analyzed student, program and financial data, as well as regional and national trends in higher education and workforce demands to provide insights for its recommendations.

"We asked for an independent, comprehensive, all-inclusive review of our System—its 14 universities and the Chancellor's Office. NCHEMS has provided that as an important step in this vital, long-range process," Ms. Shapira said. "With these recommendations now in hand, it's our turn to be bold—to seize the opportunity to redefine the State System for the future."

"We are thankful to everyone who has participated so far, and look forward to continuing to work with all of our stakeholders as we reshape the State System in a way that will ensure its long-term vitality. Because we are Pennsylvania's public universities, everyone has a stake in the outcome of this process, and what we do next."

Following today's presentation made during the regular quarterly meeting of the Board of Governors, NCHEMS will conduct a series of Q&A sessions with the various constituencies that participated in the strategic review, including student leaders, faculty and staff union leaders, legislative leaders, Board members, university presidents and university trustees.

The Board of Governors will continue to engage with stakeholders to review the recommendations—gathering feedback from students, faculty, staff and others—and will make decisions regarding which options to pursue for immediate, mid-term, and long-term implementation.

"Our dedicated faculty and staff do a tremendous job providing outstanding educational opportunities to students, and have done so for many years," Ms.

Shapira said at the time the review began. “We have the opportunity to do things even better as we move forward into the future.”

The Board of Governors and Chancellor Frank T. Brogan called for the review last year as the best opportunity to ensure the future of the State System. Mr. Brogan repeated that message today.

“We look forward to digging into the recommendations provided by NCHEMS today—the data they collected and the input they received—to help us make the decisions necessary to ensure the State System doesn’t just survive, but thrives well into the future,” Mr. Brogan said. “Our goal remains unchanged: to ensure the State System universities can continue to provide high-quality, affordable education to students today and long into the future.

“So, what’s our message to our students? As our 14 universities open their doors in the fall, we’re confident that we will come out of this process stronger and better poised to help you succeed. That’s our commitment to you, and our commitment to all of Pennsylvania.”

The Board of Governors launched the strategic review in 2016, at a time when the State System universities were facing unprecedented challenges, fueled largely by lagging state funding and decreasing numbers of high school graduates, leading to declining enrollments at many of the institutions. Those challenges remain.

To download a copy of the NCHEMS presentation and to follow the progress of the strategic review, please click [here](#).

Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education is the largest provider of higher education in the Commonwealth, enrolling more than 100,000 degree-seeking students and thousands more in certificate and other career-development programs. Collectively, the 14 universities that comprise the State System offer more than 2,300 degree and certificate programs in more than 530 academic areas. Nearly 520,000 State System university alumni live in Pennsylvania.

The State System universities are Bloomsburg, California, Cheyney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock and West Chester Universities of Pennsylvania. The universities also operate branch campuses in Oil City (Clarion), Freeport and Punxsutawney (IUP), and Clearfield (Lock Haven), and offer classes and programs at several regional centers, including the Dixon University Center in Harrisburg and in Center City in Philadelphia.

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