Minnesota State Meet and Confer

December 16, 2022

Attendance: Andriel Dees, Jackie Baily, Satasha Green-Stephen, Bill Maki, Eric Davis, Chris Dale, James Jorstad, Jaime Simonson, Ann Maile, Paul McIntyre, Nicole Emerson, Alex Erickson, Barb Gosch, Heidi Vidor, Suzie Lundsten, Aaron Person, Nate Hallanger, Jamie Simonsen

1. **Enterprise Shared Services Update**
   1. Last M/C provided an update with relaunching the expansion of enterprise wide shared services. Since summer working on creating a governance framework to solicit new ideas and create a comprehensive process that can be applied to any shared service going forward. One was creating a governance group ESS made up of 5 Vice Chancellors and 4 presidents elected by their peers. Rogers-Lake Superior College, Johnson-Ridgewater, Wood-SMSU, Davenport-Mankato, this group of 9 has worked throughout the Fall and created a playbook to consider more shared services. Choosing a pilot service to run through the process. The pilot that was chosen was Employee Investigation.
   2. Employee Investigation at enterprise level. Big question around investigations, when there is a need for an external investigator… not on campus. Looked at a few different issues around bandwidth and volume if there is enough work around the system to see a need for hiring a shared investigator. Initially there was a need, but also wanted to look at the number of investigators on different campuses, and how there might be a shared service across the system. We don’t have a defined process to do that. After reviewing the data, they determined that they could bring that service in-house into the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Decision was this would not move forward as a shared service, but would be an in-house service that would build the infrastructure. There may be a time where there would be a shared investigator, but not right now. Looking forward to bringing the process into this work.
      1. While going through analysis, Investigation was not a good pilot for this, but intent to share services will still be discussed, and can come back and be shared with us. Finance and Facility might lend themselves to shared services.
      2. Q: how does this impact business? Winona state- investigations on campus done by their investigator. Years ago Riverland had an investigator from outside come in that they requested versus the in-house investigator. How might the process look different? A: This is what we want to figure out. We’ve noticed that there is an increase in inquiry…SO has required them to think differently. Difference would be: build infrastructure to scale and define the process rather than doing it ad-hoc. How do we make sure we’re being responsive, timely and responsibly.
2. **System Procedure 1B.1.1 Report/Complaint of Discrimination/Harassment Investigation and Resolution Update**
   1. Recap: policy last semester/spring the system conducted a full review of the policy and was approved by the Board. The companion procedure review, received great comments also from MAPE. Took under advisement and wanted to do one more round to make sure we were thoughtful…added an extension for more comments and are taking it under advisement. The main changes focused on narrowing definitions and clarity. And trauma-informed care is clear about different roles within the processes. Info was taken under advisement and is with the Chancellor for final review. After that will update training to support the changes that were made. Next M/C can give an update.
   2. Trauma-informed care - Title IX - regulations informed much of this work to be trauma-informed. 1.B.3 was already trauma-informed, so it was a good natural segue.
3. **System Procedure 1C.0.2 Respectful Workplace -Proposed Changes Update**
   1. Has followed the same path as the 1.B.1 procedure. Revisions had been posted and received feedback. The workgroup met and considered feedback and made modifications. Passed that on. After distribution, there was further feedback and requests. Group met to discuss further modifications and they outlined the pros and cons of adopting the changes. Next, they will discuss with the Chancellor the pros and cons. Final approval shouldn’t be too far off.
   2. Proposed Changes with Pros and Cons -
      1. Reconsider the fact that they had not modified the appeal process
      2. Also, question about the timeliness of investigations.
      3. Average time currently for respectful workplace for investigation system wide. Do we have data on that now? Chris Dale- no we don't track this at the campus level. Labor Relations is ad hoc involvement when needed.
4. **Biennial Budget Request update**
   1. Last 2 weeks update to the MN budget projection. Has this led to any differences? Where are we at with this?
      1. The budget was approved by the Board of Trustees Nov 16th. Appreciate the MAPE letter sent. Board approving the request and supporting equity 2030. When we had the opportunity to present the request, MMB and the Office of Higher Education were impressed that the stakeholders all came together to endorse this request. Thank you. Related to the question, we have not…the process works, the forecast last week doesn’t give us an opportunity to change our $350M request. Bill has to provide a bit of caution to the surplus - a significant amount of that money $12B is one-time money and the Governor is coming out with caution as well for a one-time feature, so as not to obligate the State for new spending when the economy shifts in the future. Right now, shifting into lobbying mode for our request. Last week gov relations had a conference, getting deeper understanding as the request, and educating the newly elected house and senators and higher education. Starting to understand the house-named committee members this week, we now have clarity on how to strategies. We won’t be changing our request, lobbying vigorously for it, hopefully get more entities endorsing our request (workforce this is a critical driver, trade unions, etc) other large employers at the table with us, in order to have strong, closes the gap in unmet needs in the workforce.
      2. Q? Any request about NextGen?
         * Hearing a lot from campuses… the Board makes the request to the state, unless there is an invitation to MMB, will still be the $350M . As the chancellor indicated at the November board meeting, as the Leg process unfolds, there are opportunities for funding that are not part of our formal request. We’ll be ready to engage in conversations for NextGen or free college. The official request is $350M. Could be other opportunities.
      3. Q - Can we start requesting a higher base funding, so we don’t have to go back and ask for supplemental?
      4. A: It is part of this, stabilization of $125M for campus appropriations, over 6% as well as seeking for tuition freeze benefits for our students. Shifts the share of the education back to state, rather than the student. This advances that agenda. Each biennium, we go in with a strong request, we come in strong due to inflation … ??..... This might move us in this direction faster.
5. **Enrollment Update**
   1. Enrollment update in the chat… Enrollment trends, how it will affect layoffs and BESIs.
      1. Chat is an update is what he would have handed out. We’ve seen, as reported to the board in October. Enrollment has softened. We are at the beginning of FY. University is down, projecting to be down 5% as a sector. It does play out institution by institution. 3 of the universities are the same, 4 have enrollment decline. Colleges 11 of 26 are flat or increasing from FY22 numbers and 15 are decreasing. Campus CFO conversations BESIs have been implemented dealing with long term financial structures. We will report to the board in January and have discussions with some institutions that trigger financial health indicators. Not aware of any layoffs in the near future, but suspect the likelihood of that if the enrollment doesn’t stabilize at some of the institutions.
      2. Eric Davis, not aware of any layoffs - some institutions are in hardships, that might institute reduction of force.
      3. Chris Dale- consistent set of BESIs sent to Chris Dale for review from several colleges and universities. Don’t know if they have been announced yet. Active Fall for BESIs. Take from this, they’ve all been about trying to reduce spending in the next 2-3 year run. Alleviate some budget pressures . Not all about spending, some are about reorganization. This suggests to him that the constraints on budgets are real.
6. **NextGen/Workday Update**
   1. If the legislature is going to fully fund Next Gen - sticking to the $350M budget request.
   2. It was recently announced the HR component is going to be delayed for about a year. Want to talk about some of the fracture points at both the campus and system level.
      1. Hits to campus
         * Many people have moved over from their current job to work on Next Gen for temporary assignments. Has caused a lot of bleeding - others are being made to add that work and their plates are double full. Now there is a freeze on hiring - no plan to fill any positions that have left since the start of WorkDay. Morale is really low, people are very stressed out, people are leaving. Are you aware of this? What can we do to help boost morale and help stop the bleeding and stress, so those employees don’t leave?
           1. Clarification - July of 23 to July of 24. Those moving to WorkDay - those positions can be backfilled on the campuses. (Barb-this includes the system office, not just the campuses)
           2. Employees were allowed to take a leave of absence from their current positions - there was an authorization to fill. Not surprised campuses chose not to fill - may not have the funds or may not find a satisfactory pool of applications - the job market is very competitive right now. Morale - one of the biggest challenges facing Minnesota State right now. We know employees are feeling exhausted and overworked. The approach is multifaceted - thank you for your testimony for those left behind to carry on. That is a real hardship for people and the expectations haven’t shifted much. First we need to acknowledge it - next, it is a multifaceted approach. Zoom is not the best form to do this work - many things have become very transactional. We need to be very intentional in building a sense of community and belonging, especially those that are new to Minnesota State who aren’t used to our trusting relationships - how do we get that across? We have to make this more connected to each other. How can this be faced? NextGen was not made to be prohibited to backfill. System Office IT - some were assigned to the project, but not funded by the project.
           3. The Chancellor is very committed to refilling the positions related to NextGen - monitored very closely. Cannot speak to campuses. From a SO perspective - reducing the amount of meetings, very taxing on ourselves and others. Spent time just doing simple get togethers to be able to spend time with each other. Dedicated open hours to talk about things that are needed. Chancellor is always asking how they are doing and stopping down to see them and talk to them. From a workplace perspective - everyone is just exhausted. Give people the opportunity to spend time with their families.
           4. We are not asking about the NextGen group - we are specifically asking about the people left behind. It’s great for those working with the NextGen team, but we aren’t asking about them. Hearing NextGen has priority. Employees and supervisors are too busy working on NextGen. We are asking about those left behind to “keep the lights on.” These people are not getting thank yous or getting acknowledgement. It’s very taxing and frustrating for those left behind. How do we keep morale going for these folks? How do we make them feel important? They are lining up to leave, because they are doing twice the work. Heard from supervisors that they cannot back fill because VC Davis said they aren’t funded for these positions.
           5. We completely understand where they are coming from. What are some resources we can offer to these employees and how they can navigate this? We want to make sure we are thanking everyone. We hear you and we get it. What are some strategies we can use to better support our staff?
           6. Want to make sure to say that this affects our system office employees too, not just campuses. Often the SO gets overlooked because there are 32 campuses. Be sure to include the SO in this conversation as well.
           7. Acknowledge this work is challenging and hard. Might work on NextGen, but are not funded by NextGen. Hoping to create some efficiencies, so we can reduce some of this work.
           8. Barb has spoken directly about something affecting employers and Minnesota State. Included information in the chat from Surgeon General. Need to re-examine our talent management strategies. How do we ensure staff are happy. We sometimes forget about employees at the system office to help the campuses. We don’t really have an answer to address this concern. We need to work together to support one another. SO budget is constrained. If we get what we asked for from the legislature - we might have some relief. We appreciate partnering with MAPE to hear these experiences, so we can work on that together.
7. **Flexible Workplace Location**
   1. We’ve talked about this several times, but we hear about it a lot from members. Recently learned that the SO has a telework agreement in place. We understand the employees of the SO are not in front facing positions, which makes it easier. However, we feel it is important to campus employees and their morale. What we have learned recently is that MAPE employees are wanting to work from a flexible workplace. However, there are many schools that are saying no. One school in particular shared with their employees that if they even suggest that they even want to do a flex work location, they will be looked at when it comes time for layoffs and they would be first on the list. This was Lake Superior College. We are very concerned about this. Especially with the weather we have had, the ability to have a flexible workplace is beneficial to the college, especially when colleges need to close.
   2. We are losing valuable and highly qualified people because we are not competitive. We know the job market has changed and there are a lot of places offering telework. We are hearing a lot of “we don’t care” from positions. The whole work is having trouble filling positions. This also correlates back to equity and inclusion. We need to be sure we are inclusive of our employees. Some campuses are in greater MN and it is hard to fill a position, especially when it is a technical positions and require a lot of work history or experience. It’s hard to fill them because they aren’t offering telework. Some campuses are not able to work effectively. We understand the hardships. We respect the Chancellor’s view, but we are trying to bring attention to the fact that this is not going away and getting bigger and bigger and bigger. We will continue to bring this up. Hopefully we can work on this together. It won’t be easy. These are some of the concerns being shared by our campuses.
   3. One of the MAPE advisors at one school - she collected data and found that when she worked on campus (4 days per week), 75% of meetings are via zoom versus in house. Students are also looking for ways to meet with us virtually versus face-to-face.
   4. We also have to realize that the state of MN is posting a TON of jobs that are telework. We are losing tons of employees and
   5. VC Davis - Our position at the system office has not changed. We have a ton of pilots going on - one at Lake Superior College as well. Also meeting with Nicole next week to talk about this. We know this is very real. We hear this from our Presidents, CHRO, etc. This doesn’t help the colleges, they don’t feel they can compete. Campuses know their needs better than we do. I’m not a fan of the universal no. Also not a fan of a universal yes. Not a fan of the testimonials being brought forward. We need to apply business criteria to business decisions. Will continue to lean in and add voice to this when he has a chance. Want to provide supervisors the tools. Supervisors are also burned out. Want to add more autonomy to people’s positions and more flexibility. We do see pockets where we are and where we are not.
   6. Kay - just remind us all what an admin tells the system office may or may not really be what is going on on the campus. We do appreciate what you said, but we do need to remind you that what an admin feels is going on on campus is not the same as what others feel is occurring on campus.
   7. Aaron - understand the business decision, but we ask why. Tell us why this is a business decision. Answer is - they don’t have a case. It is a bias being held of what this experience should look like. When asked for data - they push back.
   8. Chris Dale - reject that this is a bias. They know how their campuses work and their decisions are going to be informed by that. They aren’t doing this out of some kind of spite - doing this because they feel this is what they must do to help slow the enrollment declines.
   9. Nicole - important to reiterate - date informed practices are important. At SCC, decisions are data informed. We are seeing the benefits of that. When decisions are made and there is nothing to back it up, it is okay to reiterate that.
   10. Barb - we continue to hold MAPE meetings and continue to hear from our members. Many times hearing that two doing the same job, one is allowed to telework and the other is not for no reason. Decision left up to supervisors. Some allow it, some do not. People are afraid, legit afraid, to ask for fear of backlash. We hear this from our members and this is the truth.
8. **M State Campus Climate Evaluation**
   1. Notification sent to everyone on a campus that were sent this information one or two day before the assessment/evaluation took place.

They said this was not an investigation, few participated in the campus climate survey, not sure if there was harm done to members. Consider reaching out to this campus- strenuously, to advise how this should work. This didn’t go over well, they felt ambushed. Yes, this could be used against you in the future. Please try to tighten up. First was suppose to be in

**Next Meet and Confer:**

**February 24, 2023**

**May 5, 2023**