Minnesota State Meet and Confer

February 24, 2023

Attendance:

**SO**: Andriel Dees, Jackie Bailey, Satasha Green-Stephen, Bill Maki, Chris Dale, James Jorstad, Jaime Simonson, Ann Maile, Paul McIntyre, Nate Hallanger, Devinder Malholtra, Deb Gehrke, Deb Gehrke, Melissa Fahning, Satasha Green-Stephen,

**MAPE**: Nicole Emerson, Alex Erickson, Barb Gosch, Heidi Vidor, Suzie Lundsten, Aaron Pierson, Thomas Hensch, Kay Pedretti,

1. **Chancellor Search update**
   1. Deb Gehrke update - the pool is shaping up to be diverse - strong selection. Still expecting some more to come in added to the pool. Meetings tentatively scheduled, will meet to review and select candidates on March 7th. Interviews March 23rd & 24th ….April 19th tentative announcement. Trustees finalist and host open forum April 26/27. BOD, May 8th and hoping they can start August 1. Dates are tentative, but they are optimistic.
2. **Enrollment update**
   1. Bill Maki - (shared a file) generally FY 23 enrollment - the system wide projections down 3% at end of year. Started in June to be down 2.4% and then in October, it was 3.8 % down, and Feb, projected to be down 2.8 %. Main result, Spring Semester overall seems to be stabilizing. As a system down 1%. 2- year colleges are about even. State Universities enrollment is down more than the 2-year, and recovery is taking a bit longer.4.3% projected to be down for State universities. Comparing year to year it’s getting more stable. Summer has been trending up 8-10% . Fall 23 enrollment at System level will start to be tracked soon, and will start around Spring Break.
   2. Shared with the House higher ed committee on Tues, enrollment projections for FY 24/25 a lot of the campuses enrollments are stable and improved slightly from 23/23 some universities expecting to decline, 3%, 5%, 7% and that is generating budget discussions for revenue. Enrollment is going to be a big piece of what campuses will do going forward. Many campuses are having discussions about BESI’s and employee reductions. Don’t have an exact number of campuses who are looking to do these, but if enrollment doesn’t improve, there will be some campuses who are in financial difficulty and will have to look to BESI’s or layoffs.
   3. Q: mentioned BESI and layoffs. SO aware of any specific right now or is that still being determined? Bill- aware of some BESI’s offered at some of the campuses, but not on personnel reductions. Still going through the planning process and looking at alternatives right now. Chris Dale added-- BESI offered at Bemidji/NTC. Last year BESI at St. Cloud and HTC and Minneapolis and Metro. Safe to say when BESI are used it is in effort to try and avoid layoffs, if they can. Generally speaking, we don’t get as positive response to BESI’s as we hoped.
   4. Chancellor, these are tough times and tough decisions, availability of campus, and challenges they are facing. Urge local chapters, if not already hearing from leaders at M/C To have conversations. It’s hard to aggregate all of this at the state level. Chris--- general observations, MAPE unit has experienced the enrollment decline over the last decade. While other units have been steady or declining, MAPE has been rising.
   5. System level that happens? Any initiative from SO that helps with declining enrollment? What does/can the SO do? SVC Satasha Green-Stephen --- last summer they had a strategic management group, best practices, provided some recommendations to SO, and compiled and aligned with Academic and Student Affairs. Working on a document for the best practices, will be meeting with presidents, to get feedback. They identified how System can support and what is local level work. Higher a director to support campuses in developing a plan that aligns with . That person has been hired, and next week they will announce who that person is. Looked at the pipeline for transfer and how we get students to transfer from our two-year schools to the 4-year. Put together a roadmap of what happens inside and outside the classroom, which will help with retention. Use evidence based practices. When document is available, SO will post it and send out to bargaining unit partners. Q: Is there anything that helps bridge the gap between 2/4 year institutions? Students from 2-year, it’s not a good percentage that go to 4-year. Anything being looked at a system level? Yes, focus on transfer work. Transfer accountability model. Where are they transferring to? Not to MinnState, why? Team to look at best practices and transfer pathways . Making colleges accountable with transfer pathways to ensure schools are in compliance and bringing students in at the junior level. Why isn’t it considered success when students go to the U of M or schools outside of our system? Working on changing this dynamic and begin to capture that.
   6. <https://www.minnstate.edu/system/asa/docs/asa-strategic-plan.pdf>
3. **Legislative Update**
   1. Melissa F - update what’s happening right now, and what to expect. We are asking $350M. Have been before the house a number of times requesting $. More of a deeper dive into declining enrollments and the campus budgets. What do they look like under gov recommendation and under the $350 if we get the money (tied to enrollment). Also been before the house higher ed committee to do a deeper dive, and leadership announcing targets mid March into workforce and economic development. Bill has been drafted, and will be a hearing on that. We have a lot of support, but doesn’t translate to a high target or getting the whole money. We have done a lot of efforts and advocacy in order to focus on higher education a higher priority with house and senate. There will be a revised forecast at the end of the month.
   2. Unions/ student orgs, rally at Capital on Tuesday, Students United and LeadMN day at capitol and partnered with faculty and staff, Chancellor and Roger Moe was there and spoke about the importance of higher education. Many bills are floating around. Senator Umbetton(??) is focusing on emergency grants. She took our budget request and put the funding into that Bill. Lots of different Bills moving through the process. Sharing through legislative and committee members, many editorials written, and Chancellor and Moe, highlighting the importance of these. Chair Moe met with community and business leaders, and they’ve been writing letters to support us, and we have a lot. We are focused on that target, because that's the next step in the game. The Gov did not fund 2 of the 3 requests. He funds MN state stabilization, but from support, he only puts in $5 m out of the $125M we are requesting and 100M he only puts in $1.5.M Forcast revised at the end of month, committee deadline. We’ve left the presentation stage and requests, in the 2nd stage of the session. Bill flurry. In a session they lay many bills over to be included in the omnibus bill. They don’t want to include a lot of policy and she could see them doing something separate that will be full of policy. They have to hear all bills by March 24th. April 4th is key, they will have to have their budget bill in Finance and Ways and Means committees, then go on break and will be done 5-10 and then negotiations will start.
   3. Bonding- lots of movement. Gov was much more generous for our bonding request. He is supporting all but a small amount of >>>?? House and Senate are moving quickly. Rhetoric the bill they want to pass is left over from last year. Monday this week the house capital investment, bonding, and cash, we’re in the the bonding bill, moving that to Ways and Means on 2/27 will get to the floor March 7th. Since dems are in the majority they are following suit. Still need a supermajority to pass. They are working on that, and a bit more optimism on the house. They also sent over Ways & Means vehicle bills…. They sit, and they dump a bill on it instead of having to start over. Making sure they have their ducks in a row to have something passed. The 19 projects follow our list, to fund 13 of 19 of our projects, that’s pretty far. They don’t fund a lot of HEAPR. That’s a revised number because of inflation. They are only planning to fund $44.5M of our $110M ask.
   4. Q: MAPE does have a lobby day coming up March 23rd. Wondering out loud, will there be new recommendations of what we could be asking for? Will any of our asks be different by then? A: Stay focused on $350M. We won’t back down on that. She will make sure we know what’s happening before Lobby Day. So much talk about early targets and being out in early March, not sure if that will happen or not, it would be unusual. Because the same party is in both the house and the senate. Focus on requesting $350M and the importance of funding that whole thing, but if we know the targets we could mention those. Funding the U of M and our request, they would need $600M-700M.
4. **Workday followup**
   1. At our last meet and confer, we had some discussion regarding the folks that are “left behind” to keep the lights on at the system office and on the campuses, positions not being refilled, leaving extra duties and stress. A big HUGE thank you, at least from the system office, for approving several positions to be filled that were waiting for several months, it has been a huge help. Know that there will be more coming! Those left behind are stressed, overworked, are leaving, etc. How do we improve morale for those not directly involved with the project? Eric Davis said to keep it on the agenda and thus what we are doing today. Jackie Bailey doesn’t see anyone as left behind, they see all staff key and integral to the everyday, whether they are working on the workday project or not. “No cog in the wheel can be left behind, or we won’t be where we are.” Working to bring in as many dollars as they can, but it does lead them to have to make some tough choices. Some were funded and some were not. Holistically, what does our system need to support teaching and learning and the whole. Also discussing prioritization of work, put a moratorium on ISRS improvements, doing only things supporting regulatory needs, and can focus on other areas. Also encourage teams on cross-training, to help lighten that load. Just some of the ways she has started supporting the team. Making sure they have those connection pieces. Think about the IT landscape, inside and outside higher education, her team has generally been unaffected by the layoffs in industry right now, we hope to maintain in that space. With the need come hard choices. We would love to fill all positions, but it’s not in the landscape we are in today. Barb - we used left behind because that is the wording being used and how people are feeling. We appreciate those positions that have been filled and understand the give and the take, but also ask that the information is disseminated. Like that we are using the word intentionality, but make sure it is being communicated with employees. It is important for morale and for the people doing these VERY important tasks for the system office, students, our campuses, and the people using these products. The people doing this work need to understand how important they are and how much we appreciate them. Chancellor - this goes beyond just MAPE membership, with COVID, the rapid change, changing enrollments, people are feeling some anxiety and stress, keeping people engaged and giving them all the information in as transparent a manner as possible is so important. Barb - The more transparency we see, it will prevent people from leaving. The quicker we can do that, hopefully the quicker we can keep people from leaving. It is more important to keep the people we have than find new ones. “Retention is not just a word limited to students.”
5. **M State Campus Climate Evaluation Update**
   1. Andrial Dees update Mstate evaluation, issue raised on Dec 16th. They did want to engage employees on climate. Some had some reluctance to share, and they interviewed employees with a law firm. They were conducted in common, no discipline or performance management but any retaliation would not be tolerated in this type of exercise. This was voluntary and there was a great participation across the campuses. There was a summary of findings shared across the campus. There will be a shared responsibility working with employees to get a positive work culture. Hosting professional development on workplace culture. With that we understand things moving along well. Encourage MAPE to hold local meet and confer.
   2. Concern the documents that came across that said it WAS an investigation, it felt messy, and Suzie shared documents with VC Davis. IT was messy, staff were upset and felt threatened. Can say there is no professional development that is taking place. Suzie is the chair of MC there. General feeling of mistrust. It was supposed to be a non threatening evaluation. Theory was saying that discipline COULD take place that was in the documents that Suzie shared. The strong sense of distrust is still there. Staff hasn’t heard anything either. Will relay information to administration, it would make more sense to ask the admin directly what those events are, planned for Spring Semester. Chris Dale- the documents that were an issue were the Tennison Warnings. There are forms that are performed, they are designed for investigations. Would be nice if people thought it through, this whole idea of Tennison Warning is foreign and is easy for flaws like that to happen. Too bad the use of a standard form made people uneasy and upset. Hope that people are willing to give the people the benefit of the doubt. External party to do this was a reflection that they DO care. Andriel, we want to make sure and support any measures of support, all employees to come together to get a better workplace culture. Want to make sure the communication sh append at the campus level.
6. **Performance Reviews**
   1. Data concerning performance reviews. Looking over that data, there isn’t a consistent culture of reviews being given. Want to point out this is statutory requirement, 43a.20 says the commissioner that it shall have a performance evaluation system. You’ll probably say this belongs at the campus. What are you doing to make sure this is happening?? Chris-- thanks for the reference. Can assure us, Chris has communicated to CHRO community to remind them of the obligation. The importance of doing this, in particular that MAPE is aware of this. It hasn’t produced a response, and our hope is to push the community to get them done.
   2. This is so important, several of the members on our team haven’t even received them. Especially important when staff have new duties added.
7. **Administration Disrespectful Conduct Issue**
   1. Come to our attention by another Business agent at MAPE but also in the Star Tribune about another president.
   2. Alex- MAPE at 10 years. Crown Jewel, so many people are here with little turnover. Excellent culture, we are collaborative and work together. We are concerned about what’s going on at MinnState SE, and then Ridgewater College, the president. Happened in the presence of Megan Dayton, MAPE President. Not asking for a sophisticated response. Your words and actions will go further than ours. If you as SO can handle it, we’d like to avoid further issues that could be plugged in with MAPE. We want people happy and successful in the workplace. If you’d like to respond, great, if not, then yes. Due diligence of members and are tracking carefully.
   3. Devinder- thank you for sharing that. We are all aligned to the same goal, to have an empowered and respectful workplace. No question about that. We are a large complex system, when such an incident comes to light, we treat it as an opportunity to learn and grow, how it happened, and why? Are there processes that don’t make such instances come up in a timely manner? We are taking a hard look at our policy and practices. Starting this Spring, we are starting a monitoring framework, glad VC Dees is here, she’s doing that work. How we are looking at that policy and practice, nothing is swept under the rug. Ultimate goal is that our employees have workplace respect for what they need and respect.
   4. Andriel-- we have taken a hard look and have implemented and updated the 1v1 (1B1?) policy and procedure. That has been formally approved and updated our training that would make that work accessible for all so that all employees. We are working on providing broader training around those trainings. Working with partners on that to get out soon, but just so there is understanding, what the changes are and enhance the work, and greater accountability with harassment issues, specifically under protected statuses. Along those lines, from Chancellor perspective, framework is up and running, working closely with Dr. Priyank Shah (Assoc VC of EI) and leadership to make sure our campuses are prepared to conduct the assessment. Specifically around belongingness for students and employees. ⅓ of our institutions are in climate assessment, and should start to see those responses this summer. Also have a director for equity assessment who is engaged in this work as well. This is high priority and don't take these issues lightly and collaborate and work with our stakeholders, including MAPE and other bargaining units to create a positive work culture.
   5. Chris 1.C.02 workplace procedure probably doesn't speak to the issue we’ve raised. We are trying to create a respectful workplace. It is important to know if you have a complaint against HR or the president, part 7 subpart b. We can do something about that. Maybe the problem we’ve identified arises in this context b/c when we train with people, the union reps have a certain amount of freedom when interacting. The union rep has a certain freedom from constraint that they wouldn normally not have as an employee from the campus. Free to use respectful workplace as a ‘muzzle’ but maybe that influences how people run those meetings. We would hope the same from your top leaders even if it’s not required.
   6. From the Procedure:
      1. If the complaint concerns a member of the Human Resources office, the complainant may contact the Human Resources director or other appropriate administrator. If the complaint concerns the college or university president, the complainant may contact the vice chancellor for Human Resources in the system office.
      2. Alex- message received. Thank you!

**Next Meet and Confer:**

**May 5, 2023**

**Your awesome Barb… and Suzie… trying to keep up with the speakers today… they must be hired for speaking well and fast!**