Minnesota State Meet and Confer

December 15, 2023

Attendance: Nicole Emerson, Kay Pedretti, Aaron Pierson, Suzie Lundsten, Barb Gosch, Ben Nwachukwu, Heidi Vidor, Marcia Beukelman, Rhett Stewart, Jaime Simonson, Amanda Prince, Ann Maile, Megan Spriggs, Jim Jorstad, Eric Davis, Scott Olson, Satasha Green-Stephen, Bill Maki, Jacquelyn Bailey, Noelle Hawton, Nate Hallanger, Ali Pickens-Opoku, Andriel Dies

**1. Supplemental Budget Request MAPE**

 Board approved $61M for FY 25, that $61M would be $122 m more for FY 26-27 to help fill the gap colleges are experiencing due to base cost adjustments. That has been submitted to the state. Planned to meet with the Governor's staff to talk about capital program request and expectations were tempered related to the likelihood due to aggressive increase in the supplemental year. Focus was state believed they’d have a structural shortfall, and that prediction, came to bear, the economic forecast last week the State has 2.4B surplus for 23-25, but structural imbalance 26-27 . the messaging around this– has been, don’t have high expectations that there will be ongoing based expectations moving forward. Next economic forecast comes out Feb/March and the Legislature will use that one for determining supplemental budget. Will decide if this money will be spent, or saved to help with the shortfall. Our system needs this funding and hope the stakeholders will lobby vigorously for that funding, Bill likes to try and be on the conservative, optimistic side. Plan that we’re not likely to get this money on an ongoing basis but hopefully we articulate the clear need, or maybe there will be some one-time money available.

Please let us know if MAPE can help with anything. Noell put together a one-pager on our supplemental request to show how it would impact the colleges and universities.

**2. Legislative Update MAPE**

This is an even numbered year so this is the bonding session, starts Feb 12. $541M capital request, $2M for HEAPER and ….. ? For capital major projects. Lot of work is being done. 40 visits this fall visiting campuses and projects and great work in that area, we had a chance to present the capital program in early November to MMB and Governor’s staff and the economic forecast assumes there will be a bonding bill this session. We do know that putting together a bonding bill is very political and takes a super majority and we wait to see how that all plays out. MN state makes a strong case, need addressing maintenance type items. Other piece, government relations will have a legislative breakfast at SPC, and had 25% of Legislators came to the breakfast, that will continue through Feb/March. Hope is to develop a pattern and behavior and they are grouped together by 4-6 institutions . Those efforts will occur and that’s the priority. The bonding bill.

ANy further discussions regarding needing 1.24B in HEAPER and asking for less money. Was there any further conversation.? Yes, many of capital projects have a big HEAPER component to it. We are not adding square footage on new projects, some demo, and build something back with smaller footprint. Challenge with HEAPR is finding a reasonable dollar amount. Soon the board will approve the 26 guidelines. There will be another discussion for that for the 27 session. THe trustees are asking why are we doing these things, and will continue to be on the forefront and hopefully be more direct. No net square footage was adhered to at the system level.

**3. NextGen/Work Day Update MAPE**

 Concerns not around technical update and status, it’s really around how people are feeling about this. HIgh anxiety, stressed, even if the info is out there they are not sure how it’ll affect them. People are reluctant to accept the current state and wait for the next version Creating a lot of stress. People don’t have confidence that this is going to be something that isn’t going to cause them to want to leave. There are 2 people on Aaron’s campus who want to leave, and they have been there a long time. We want to raise this as an issue. What is the plan for addressing this? There is the idea of addressing the technical aspect, and there is this other side. We do a terrible job on addressing the language we use and information that we send out, it causes failure. We need to communicate back to people.

It’s a big project, people will be overwhelmed and not sure what their role is. It’s not abnormal for this, and people feel nervous not knowing where they’re going to land. Sometimes that can be elicited when they log in and look under the hood. Would like to think that we will build a system that will work. Change Management - we will continue to learn and grow. This is a first implementation. We’ll continue to take feedback, listen and learn and tweak CM . Things are always changing, and trying to do the best to keep up with that. We continue to listen and learn and pay attention. Give the people a chance to look and see what we’ve built. IT Side going through lots of demos and trials to see what it is like. From a resourcing perspective - we are hiring positions - this is how we will sustain afterwards. More work will be going to Jacqueline Bailey. The SO has been paying more attention to what we are going to need to maintain this from day to day. We had ISRS for 25+ years, so people are uneasy with a new system and how it is going to affect their work. Ask for deference and grace. Less than 7 months from go live - it;s going to be messy. We’ve had some really great wins, lots of great people. Scott acknowledged that people feel this way. Between now and May 1st, we will try to help people remain calm. What lies ahead is something better than what we have. MOST frustrations from MAPE and AFSCME about ISRS. Strategies or ideas - information flow is fixable. Maybe more, work with campus leaders, so there is more of an acknowledgement from staff and President’s about the anxieties.

Suggestion- there is we are getting a disconnect. Campus leaders, and people doing town hall, saying anyone can join, when a member does join, they have to prove why they need to be on the call. Calling people out based on their role, looking at their Office 365 contact card.

Still getting this everyone is welcome, come, and when we do like why are you here. Recommendation: we have a form, something people can fill out, they can fill out and say this is my experience, this is my issue. Ask a question, can you explain this to me. If people are not getting the information, we can request it. How can we bridge some of this and have a way to reach out. They’re not feeling welcome. Sending emails and not getting responses. The list needs to be updated, several of these leaders don’t work on these campuses anymore. We need to have a way to get information without having to go through these leaders. This concern is what we are bringing to the table - about people not on NextGen, but it affects their work. These people are NOT working on the project. These are our major concerns - the people not invited to the town halls, the people not on the table. There is a next gen email - NextGenERP@minnstate.edu

A lot of fear based on previous experiences and based on their own campus, people who have gone through changes, they’ve seen that haven't gone well and this sense of impending doom. Show the positives, people are already imagining the negatives. What the follow up will be post roll out. Rolled out things that would promise would do things and it wouldn’t. And the solution was oh well it’s not going to live with it. Still have to use it, with people who have to deal with things when it doesn’t work. Hyper-Care the first few months, help desk functions available, “it’s not working”…. First 3 months after go live. Very intensive. Be ready that this is going to happen and that we use the right processes and will be outlined for you. Par of thor, training doesn’t happen 6-8 weeks prior to go live. We will be looking at all issues, with one person, across the campus, across the system. Things start to die down after that. This will be an ongoing iterative improvement. We can make changes as we go, it doesn’t end at launch. Our job is to get in and see what is going on and make changes as necessary. There is no transfer of knowledge, I can’t share that with everyone. There isn't a continuity plan - campuses are going to need a LOT of assistance. I will NEVER be able to transfer the knowledge to the person after I leave. I have a lot of concerns about what will happen to my campus. The goal is to keep an eye on all campuses. The system will be held and managed at the system office - it’s our job to help and guide people through. We will be there alongside you the entire way.

Good time to reiterate the transfer of knowledge issue in the system. This is uncomfortable for people. We go into Student Affairs for a reason. You have an amazing person in charge of this in Brent Glass.

**4. Performance Review Update MAPE**

 This has been on our agenda for 3 years and 4th time this year. We heard you were going to check in w/HR professionals to look at getting this resolved. Many are not getting our reviews, stategory and in our contract,and we still don’t get it. What happened with HR people?

Wednesday afternoon reinforced once again their obligation to provide once a year, for all members of MAPE. He can only speculate what keeps people from doing it, and they don’t think it’s useful and they don’t do it, or they don’t do it. He doesn’t know and there is no excuse for it. Not able to manage this at the system level, it does need to be managed at the college level. Was the system office included - they are not getting done at the system office as well. Has this gone through the presidential route as well? Are they aware that this is not happening? Has not spoken with the presidents - will do so in January. Have tried to put other consequences in place and those are the kind of escalations that we can begin to put into place, so it’s not only in the best interest of the employee and the supervisor, but they may not receive their increase if they don’t do them. Eric cannot defend the supervisors and managers. He knows it’s not okay. Regular feedback sessions should be taking place, there shouldn’t be any surprises during the review. No more than 6-8 weeks should go by where there isn’t a feedback session with a supervisor. If there are other avenues that you can get this out, that is important. After bringing this up for so long, our next step is going to be a grievance. We want to resolve this without that step.

**5. NorthStar Promise Update MAPE**

Update: (HANDOUT) Thinking about and working on promoting since Aug. Office of higher ed, from a marketing standpoint. There is a website with basic information, fact sheets, put out an RFP for an agency that would create templates for the campuses. Those marketing info wouldnd come our way till Jan. Not soon enough, people are talking to students NOW about next year. What we did first was hand out fliers at the MN State Fair at our booth. Had signs that said you may qualify for free tuition and a flier with QR code that brought to a page about affordability and information about the Promise. 1500 letters were handed out at the NACAC National College Fair, and all colleges are there. Gave out flyers there as well. Happy to say that 3000 flyers, 747 use the QR code to get to our affordability. 25% hit rate. This is great. We have been doing paid advertising on FB and instagram, radio, and streaming audio ads, and put together key points to campuses. Starting Sept 1 and the campaign ends today. Click on ads and go to the affordability page. 2416 people clicked on the links. Try to give tools to teams and when slammed with work, the work is already done for them, they can just use a template to rebrand to put it on their own school. Tools available for all the social media platforms. October MN State month all campuses waived their app fees and tours and visits, and doing marketing and driving visits to campuses, and embedded that information about the Northstar promise. Email to hs counselors, postcards, and an add on the website carousel. Oct 11% increase in applications from last October during Minnesota State Month. Nov is up 15% from last year. 21k applications, December 12,088 applications. We are seeing a significant increase in applications since the fall. The Northstar promise doesn’t apply to a lot of people. We have frozen tuition, lowest tuition in the state, lots of scholarships and grants, quality education, scholarships and wrap-around and support service and a lot of great things to talk about. How do we wrap that up in a bow? We came up with the Minnesota State Promise. We promise to….. Started to market that, it talks about free tuition for people under $80k. And all of the other great things that MN State education can help.

**6. HR Service Center Update MAPE**

 How are things going? Seeing HR hub, successes? failures? How are things going from your perspective? Mostly stable. Seeing more evidence of failures where things are breaking down. Most dramatic is the beginning of fall semester, several hundred part-time faculty who were not paid on time, root cause– main cause was late onboarding, late approvals by ASA people at the colleges for part time and contingency. Principal reason for break down. Why? Look at the failure of communication of all parties involved. How we tackle that is multi-faceted… work with HR partners on these issues. This is HR work that was forced upon ASA. Nope, this is YOUR role, you may not like it. There are other complicating factors that are outside of our work - Dean turnover is very high. St. Cloud Tech - 72 faculty didn’t get paid on time, next highest was Minneapolis College. Reason was turnover of Academic Leadership and Deans. They started the same week these people were onboarded. We are working through that, we have raised awareness and commitment to be more aware of it. We haven’t changed anything in a meaningful way to the mechanical way things work underneath this. Can’t tell faculty this won’t happen again. Shared with Nicole, information at one college where people didn’t receive a paycheck for 2 weeks after they should have, which is a violation of state law. We know that, we cannot defend it. Root cause was shared responsibility. Service centers base payroll on the information they get from the colleges. One person was extended as temporary and it wasn’t communicated, so they were separated, no pay, lost all benefits, etc. All these things are inexcusable and indefensible. Did some very targeted training with this college. Eric monitors on a monthly basis all errors, overpayments and underpayments. Those numbers expressed as a percentage remain low. The errors are BIG and high profile, very disruptive, but more people are paid accurately and appropriately. Process 20,000 records per month, and do very well, very few errors. Eric is genuinely proud of the service center, there are things that work. The service center as a business model makes it more resilient and gives us more assurance of standardization. If you went in and audited these errors, they would not stand up to public scrutiny.

User experience- lot of turnover- finance has had a lot of turnover. HR shared service advisory group they give feedback, two presidents, and Dr. Parker, 2 CIO’s, 2 CFO, and 3 ASA, share with us their feedback from perspective from their constituencies. No question that each of these groups has concerns. They’re anxious about workday, they are frustrated with the amount of work that goes into processing HR transitions. Some highlight there is a lot of knowledge that others need to know about other ways that they can solve those problems. It takes a lot of pressure on the Deans. Hear it from the business office as well, concerned about the data that comes back, they’re not getting things done right the first time. The tech folks, not a lot of complaints there. Main issue is the token and onboarding, give security, and if their onboarding isn’t timely they get held up.

We heard a lot of the same thing, “TURNOVER”. If a supervisor has a lot of turnover, they get reviewed. They’re doing something wrong that people don’t want to work for you. The biggest issue with transfer of knowledge– turnover, how can we look at this and look at it and say what's going on!?!? There is a **culture issue** that needs to be addressed. Turnover is causing these issues, we need to look at this. Eric has studied turnover, there are many factors, we have an aging workforce, pay, we've fallen behind, we are not competitive, probably #1 people why people leave is\... factors value proposition, and what experience do they have, telework, etc. Some competitors offer full time telework. Lots of factors. One relationship with supervisors, and managers and they all feel overwhelmed, they don’t quite have the skills, it’s hard and some supervisors say they can’t telework, and we have to support their skillset. Jobs are too hard, we ask too much of people. It’s frustrating to know that, and not know a path forward.

How would we know why people leave if we don’t do exit interviews? Why not?

**7. Tuition Waiver MAPE**

 Overall what we are hearing from multiple campuses, is that they are waiting for the system office to provide them the processes and guidance on how to do this. They are telling our members that something is coming from the system office and they are going to tell us.

Campuses are just not accepting tuition waiver, and “opting out”. Blanket statement, not going to do it going forward. This was keeping me here, and now you’re not giving me this benefit.

We are only going to approve 8 credits. (old contract). Under professional development which is very confusing for HR professionals. We’ll just say sure, 8 credits, and is not what the contract says 22 at college or university.

Do not need to follow this until 2024, not sure where this is coming from. We don’t have to follow that.

We bargained in good faith and for the betterment of our members and now the answer is automatically NO. Professional development, ….discretionary means “NO” to campuses. This was not our intent. We are frustrated. Only way to advance their career is to advance education.

Scott says this is a benefit that we can offer our employees. Learn and advance and gain new things. We are excited about the opportunities here.

Eric - waiting on system office– yes, this is true. We have tried as a system to guide the campuses with the “discretionary use” at some places they will approve, others get the universal NO. We are working hard to get a more consistent practice and acknowledge that it’s discretionary. Eric is talking (3 conversations with presidents leadership) we are coming together with a common approach. Eric has put it in writing and asking colleagues for feedback. Goal is to get this memo out before the Spring semester so we can prepare for that approach. Hearing from Presidents about the budget. Dynamic together we can help. Admins are fearful that all MAPE and AFSCME employees are going to want to use it and bankrupt the institution. On one side, fear that if we hold up a universal NO at least it’s consistent, but it’s not getting at the issues we talked about

It has a much bigger effect on my attitude and my commitment to stay. I want to get my masters. This benefit punches above its weight. From a $$ standpoint, it’s not that big, but from a retention standpoint, it’s huge.

We are on the same page, however, with not that big on a change to the language, why is there such a hiccup in the language. Why are people confused about when it starts, etc. What happened? Why are people confused? Hesitancy on part of 2 year presidents, there will be more cross sector from college to U’s than the other way. The flow of money will be in one direction. There is not a reason not to do it, it’s a reason to figure out HOW to do it. The state U presidents don’t seem to have those concerns. Let’s get back to WAIVER! Exploring several ways to make the exchange of money less of a factor. Some of the challenges that come up - Space available is a practical way, once they enroll you, they don’t have a way to control when you enroll in a course. You can enroll at any time. Once you take that seat, it may take it away from another student if the class is full. Has been a concern in the past and does happen in some programs, less of a concern today.

No satisfactory answer is why this happens. We have lots of resources available to explain it all. All of those tools are there. If there is confusion about this being a new language in a new contract, we don’t know why. We are going to figure this out - there is going to be a benefit that will cross sectors and will not be a universal no. How we do that may still be in process. It will have to be approved in some way. It will be very soon.

Our employees altogether struggle with ALL of the following:

1. No reviews
2. workload
3. Turnover
4. No tuition reimbursement
5. Workday

Closing argument - one thought - Our employees have difficulties with workday, the stress, the high anxieties. No reviews, not being valued, not having discussions with their supervisors, their workload is crazy, lots of turnover, no tuition waiver, etc. Bringing this all together - no wonder people are tense. All of this is under our control. We need to figure out how to make this better for our employees.