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## HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 2, 2024

Workforce Training Center, TrainND Northwest, 415 22nd Avenue NE, Williston, North Dakota

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

Hartnett 200 Collaborative Space, Hartnett Hall, Minot State University, Minot, North Dakota

Representative Mark Sanford, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, at TrainND Northwest.

**Members present:** Representatives Mark Sanford, Landon Bahl, Claire Cory, Jay Fisher, Karla Rose Hanson\*, Bob Martinson, Mike Nathe\*, David Richter, Mike Schatz, Cynthia Schreiber-Beck\*, Steve Swiontek\*; Senators Robert Erbele, Karen K. Krebsbach\*, Curt Kreun\*, Jonathan Sickler, Ronald Sorvaag

**Members absent:** Representatives Matt Heilman, Dennis Johnson; Senator Sean Cleary

**Others present:** Senators Brad Bekkedahl, Williston, David Hogue, Minot, and Donald Schaible, Mott, members of the Legislative Management

Senator Randy A. Burckhard, Minot

Penny Slagle, Grantlee Hoffman, Zahi Atallah, and Keith Olson, Williston State College; Hunter Berg, Williston State College Foundation; Susan Granrud, Job Service North Dakota; Steven Shirley, Rick Hedberg, Amy Lee, Darren Seifert, and Laurie Weber, Minot State University; Carmen Simone, Dakota College at Bottineau; Wayne Sick, Department of Career and Technical Education; Alan S. Dohrmann, Adjutant General; Mark R. Hagerott, North Dakota University System; and Tim Mihalick, State Board of Higher Education

See [Appendix A](#) for additional persons present.

*\*Attended remotely*

**It was moved by Senator Erbele, seconded by Senator Sorvaag, and carried on a voice vote that the minutes of the October 10-11, 2023, meeting be approved as distributed.**

Dr. Bernell Hirning, President, Williston State College, presented information ([Appendix B](#)) regarding an overview of Williston State College (WSC), including enrollment trends, capital projects, and the institution's master plan.

Ms. Penny Slagle, Coach, Williston State College, commented regarding WSC's clay target shooting team.

Mr. Grantlee Hoffman, student, Williston State College, commented regarding his experience on WSC's clay target shooting team.

Dr. Zahi Atallah, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Williston State College, presented information ([Appendix C](#)) regarding WSC academic programs and collaboration with other institutions.

Mr. Keith Olson, Director, Small Business Development Center, Williston State College, presented information ([Appendix D](#)) regarding the WSC Small Business Development Center.

Mr. Hunter Berg, Executive Director, Williston State College Foundation, presented information ([Appendix E](#)) regarding student scholarships at WSC. He noted foundation scholarship funds distributed have grown from \$228,068 in the 2004-05 academic year to \$3,245,062 in the 2023-24 academic year.

Ms. Susan Granrud, Williston Workforce Center Manager, Job Service North Dakota, presented information ([Appendix F](#)), regarding workforce needs in the state. She noted the state has over 16,000 open jobs with a typical average wage of \$30.75 per hour. She noted the health care field has the most job openings in the state, with over 3,000 reported open positions.

Mr. Kenley Nebeker, Executive Director, TrainND Northwest, presented information ([Appendix G](#)) regarding TrainND, including programs offered, companies and individuals served, and revenue generated by the training network. He noted TrainND trained 16,008 unduplicated employees, generating \$4.97 million of revenue during fiscal year 2023.

Mr. Patrick Lane, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, presented information ([Appendix H](#)) regarding higher education trends and practices in other states. He noted postsecondary enrollment is declining nationally and regionally.

Ms. Lisa Johnson, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, North Dakota University System, presented information ([Appendix I](#)) regarding higher education trends and practices in the state. She noted North Dakota University System enrollment peaked in 2011, the same year nationwide higher education institution enrollment peaked. She noted the number of high school students enrolled in University System courses has increased from approximately 3,000 in 2013 to over 5,000 in 2023.

Mr. David Krebsbach, Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs and Chief Financial Officer, North Dakota University System, presented information ([Appendix J](#)) regarding the higher education challenge grant program, financial aid program performance, and higher education return on investment.

The committee toured TrainND Northwest and the Western Star Career and Technology Center on the campus of WSC.

The committee recessed at 3:30 p.m. and reconvened at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 3, 2024, at Minot State University (MiSU).

Dr. Steven Shirley, President, Minot State University, presented an overview ([Appendix K](#)) of MiSU, including enrollment trends, capital projects, and the institution's master plan.

Mr. Rick Hedberg, Vice President for Advancement, Minot State University, presented information ([Appendix L](#)) regarding the MiSU Foundation.

Dr. Amy Lee, Chair, Department of Nursing, Minot State University, presented information ([Appendix M](#)) regarding the Department of Nursing at MiSU.

Mr. Darren Seifert, Chair, Department of Math, Data, and Technology, Minot State University, presented information ([Appendix N](#)) regarding the Department of Math, Data, and Technology at MiSU.

Dr. Carmen Simone, Dean, Dakota College at Bottineau, presented an overview ([Appendix O](#)) of Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB).

The committee toured Hartnett Hall at MiSU and DCB's nursing and dental program facilities at the Minot Trinity St. Joseph campus.

Ms. Laurie Weber, Minot State University, presented information ([Appendix P](#)) regarding the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). She noted FAFSA was modified for students applying for the 2024-25 academic year with the intent of streamlining the process, but the modifications caused significant issues and reduced or delayed student completion of FAFSA. She noted the financial uncertainty resulting from the FAFSA changes may impact student enrollment.

Mr. Wayne Sick, Director, Department of Career and Technical Education, presented information ([Appendix Q](#)) regarding the statewide area and career center initiative grant program. He noted the program has awarded \$121.1 million to 13 area and career center projects.

Major General Alan S. Dohrmann, Adjutant General, presented information ([Appendix R](#)) regarding out-of-state postsecondary tuition grants awarded to qualifying members of the National Guard, including the number of grants awarded for use at out-of-state institutions and grants awarded for online or remote coursework, pursuant to North Dakota Century Code Section 37-07.2-01.1. He noted 17 applications totaling \$30,920 were submitted for tuition assistance for out-of-state postsecondary tuition for the fall 2023 semester.

Dr. Mark R. Hagerott, Chancellor, North Dakota University System, presented information ([Appendix S](#)) regarding the Envision 2035 strategic initiative. He noted an estimated 71 percent of jobs in the state will require postsecondary training in 2031.

In response to a question from a committee member, Mr. Tim Mihalick, Chair, State Board of Higher Education, noted the board allowed North Dakota State University to implement a new scholarship program to address the potential impact on enrollment of Minnesota's North Star Promise free tuition program.

No further business appearing, Chairman Sanford adjourned the meeting at 2:56 p.m.

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Alex J. Cronquist  
Senior Fiscal Analyst

ATTACH:19