

July 2, 1999

HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING - STUDY PLAN

The study plan the committee approved at the June 30, 1999, meeting includes receiving:

1. Input and recommendations from task forces to be formed in key study areas that will report to a roundtable of committee members, private sector representatives, higher education representatives, and others.
2. Information from representatives of the North Dakota University System on the status of funding equity issues and concerns related to funding comparisons between the University of North Dakota and North Dakota State University, the other four-year universities, and the two-year colleges, including information on the factors that need to be changed to address any funding equity concerns to allow for the equitable distribution of funding. Before undertaking additional study, the State Board of Higher Education should share with the committee current information available to the board that either provides indications that current funding relationships are equitable or suggest areas of concern. Areas of concern could relate to student-faculty ratios, faculty salary levels, per student funding, or the ability of an institution to provide courses and curricula consistent with the mission of the institution.
3. Testimony from the Governor's office, State Board of Higher Education, higher education institutions, higher education students and faculty, members of the Legislative Assembly, the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Public Instruction, and representatives of North Dakota high schools, business and industry, and others regarding:
 - a. The expectations of the North Dakota University System in meeting the state's future needs;
 - b. The appropriate funding methodology to meet future expectations and needs; and
 - c. An accountability and reporting methodology.
4. A report by the State Board of Higher Education as required by North Dakota Century Code Section 15-10-14.2, regarding the long-term goals of the North Dakota University System and the progress in implementing the goals, including a review of the Bush Foundation study report and the status of the implementation of its recommendations. This report would be presented to the committee and the Governor.
5. Information from representatives of the North Dakota University System regarding faculty salary comparisons, including private sector, regarding the potential use of faculty endowments for critical faculty salary increases, and comparisons to other states' higher education systems.
6. Information from representatives of the North Dakota University System regarding the state's membership in the Midwestern Regional Higher Education Compact and plans for the state's participation in the compact's student exchange program.
7. Testimony from other interested persons regarding higher education funding methodology, expectations of the North Dakota University System in meeting the state's future needs, and an accountability and reporting methodology for the University System.
8. Develop recommendations and any bill drafts necessary to implement the recommendations.
9. Prepare a final report for submission to the Legislative Council.