

BOARD OF REGENTS

BRIEFING PAPER

1. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: *Bylaw* Revision, Elimination of the Board of Regents Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access Committee

MEETING DATE: August 27, 2026

2. BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

The *Bylaws of the Board of Regents*, Title 1, Article VI, Section 3, establishes the standing committees of the Board and their duties.

The Cultural Diversity and Security Committee was established in 2005 to "recommend policies to the Board that create, enhance, promote, and support a diverse culture and provide a secure environment for students, faculty, staff, and the public." In 2009, responsibility for security matters was removed from the Committee's charge, and it was renamed the Cultural Diversity Committee. Since then, the Committee has undergone several name changes, serving as the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Committee since 2022.

An internal review of the Committee's activities over the past six years found that it convened 16 meetings, the majority of which consisted primarily of informational agenda items. During that period, the Committee forwarded nine substantive recommendations to the full Board for consideration.

A review of more than 40 members of the National Association of Higher Education Systems (NASH) found only three with governing boards that maintain a standing committee or subcommittee specifically dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion matters: the City University of New York (CUNY), the State University of New York (SUNY), and the Vermont State Colleges System.

This agenda item invites discussion and possible action on the proposed elimination of the IDEA Committee. Rather than through a standing committee, these matters would be considered by the full Board as part of its ongoing governance and oversight of the System. This approach reinforces NSHE's commitment to fostering a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment in which all students, faculty, and staff can succeed and thrive, while promoting broader Board engagement, more robust deliberation, and more fully informed decision-making.

3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Approve a revision to the *Bylaws of the Board of Regents*, Title 1, Article VI, Section 3, eliminating the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access Committee as a standing committee of the Board.

4. IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

Periodic review and evaluation of the Board's committee structure is a governance best practice aimed at promoting efficient and effective governance and aligning resources and activities with current needs and objectives.

5. CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:

- ☐ Access (Increase access to higher education)
- ☐ Success (Improve student success)
- ☐ Close Institutional Performance Gaps
- ☐ Workforce (Meet workforce needs in Nevada)
- ☐ Research (Increase solutions-focused research)
- ☒ Coordination, Accountability, and Transparency (Ensure system coordination, accountability, and transparency)
- ☐ Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

6. INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

The proposal supports coordination, accountability, and transparency by integrating matters related to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access into the Board's regular governance and oversight responsibilities. Considering these matters before the full Board promotes coordination across all areas of Board oversight, ensures that all Board members share responsibility and accountability for related policies and outcomes, and enhances transparency by conducting discussions and decision-making in a single public forum.

7. BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

Eliminating IDEA as a standing committee:

- Allows IDEA-related topics to be considered in the context of finance, academics, student affairs, workforce, and other Board responsibilities, where they may be more directly relevant.
- Reinforces that these issues are integral to the Board's overall governance and oversight responsibilities, rather than the responsibility of a single committee.
- Promotes broader Board engagement and more comprehensive decision-making.
- Streamlines the committee structure and reduces duplicative meetings and administrative support.

8. POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

Retaining IDEA as a standing committee:

- Provides focused attention to issues that may receive less discussion when competing with other Board priorities.
- Allows for deeper discussion of complex issues before recommendations are presented to the full Board.
- Demonstrates to students, faculty, staff, and the public that the Board considers these issues a continuing priority.

9. ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

Make no change to the *Bylaws* and retain the IDEA Committee as a standing committee of the Board.

10. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE:

The Chancellor recommends approval as consolidating IDEA-related responsibilities within the full Board strengthens systemwide oversight and ensures these priorities are addressed in a more integrated, transparent, and broadly engaged governance process. This change streamlines committee structure while reinforcing NSHE's commitment to an inclusive and supportive environment.

11. COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- ☐ Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- ☒ Amends Current Board Policy: Title 1 Article VI Section 3
- ☐ Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Fiscal Impact: Yes _____ No ☒ x
- Explain: _____

POLICY PROPOSAL
BYLAWS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS
TITLE 1, ARTICLE VI, SECTION 3
Standing Committees and their Duties

Additions appear in ***boldface italics***; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 3. Standing Committees and their Duties

...

[d. ~~The ***Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Committee*** shall:~~

- ~~1. Recommend policies to the Board to create, enhance, promote and support an educational and working environment that fosters inclusion, diversity, equity and access for all students, faculty and staff;~~
- ~~2. In collaboration with NSHE's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access Council (IDEA Council) appointed by the Chancellor pursuant to Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 6 of the Board of Regents *Handbook*, review and assess issues, information, and activities that promote inclusion, diversity, equity and access among the students, staff and faculty of the System;~~
- ~~3. Take actions appropriate to increase awareness, visibility, and emphasis of campus inclusion, diversity, equity and access; and~~
- ~~4. Apply the definitions and meanings to the terms used in this section as follows:~~
 - ~~a. "Inclusion" means active and intentional engagement, affirmance and valuing/respect for individuals and groups of diverse backgrounds, and creating a place of belonging for all individuals and groups across the System;~~
 - ~~b. "Diversity" includes the differences among individuals or groups that impact perceptions, experiences and interactions, including, without limitation, differences based upon race (including hair texture and protected hairstyles such as natural hairstyles, afros, bantu knots, curls, braids, locks and twists), ethnicity, color, national origin, gender (including pregnancy related conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, physical ability or disability, military status or military obligation, culture, age/generation, education, income/socioeconomic status, religion, expression, linguistics and intellect.~~
 - ~~c. "Equity" means fair and just treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all individuals and groups, and the absence of barriers to inclusion and achievement that are systemically associated with societal advantage or disadvantage based on diversity; and~~
 - ~~d. "Access" means the equitable opportunity for all to fully participate in and contribute to programs, services, activities, environments, and decision/policy making. Access includes ways to make space for all individuals and groups to participate regardless of ability and experience such as accounting for design and use of spaces (physical and virtual), language, culture, information, and relationships.]~~

(Reletter subsections e through h)