

SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF REGENTS
NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

System Administration, Las Vegas
4300 South Maryland Parkway, Board Room

Friday, January 14, 2022

Video Conference Connection from the Meeting Site to:
System Administration, Reno
2601 Enterprise Road, Conference Room
and
Great Basin College, Elko
1500 College Parkway, Berg Hall Conference Room

Members Present:

Mrs. Carol Del Carlo, Chair Pro Tem
Ms. Amy J. Carvalho, Vice Chair Pro Tem
Mr. Joseph C. Arrascada
Mr. Patrick J. Boylan
Mr. Byron Brooks
Dr. Patrick R. Carter
Dr. Mark W. Doubrava
Dr. Jason Geddes
Mrs. Cathy McAdoo
Mr. Donald Sylvantee McMichael Sr.
Mr. John T. Moran
Ms. Laura E. Perkins
Dr. Lois Tarkanian

Others Present:

Dr. Melody Rose, Chancellor
Ms. Crystal Abba, Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs and
Community Colleges
Dr. Constance Brooks, Vice Chancellor, Public Affairs and Advancement
Mr. Caleb Cage, Vice Chancellor, Workforce Development
Mr. Andrew Clinger, Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Yvonne Nevarez-Goodson, Deputy General Counsel
Ms. Keri Nikolajewski, Interim Chief of Staff to the Board
Mr. Joe Reynolds, Chief General Counsel
Ms. Tina Russom, Deputy General Counsel
Mr. Joe Sunbury, Chief Internal Auditor
Mr. Michael B. Wixom, Special Counsel
Dr. Federico Zaragoza, President, CSN
Dr. Kumud Acharya, President, DRI
Ms. Joyce M. Helens, President, GBC
Dr. DeRionne Pollard, President, NSC

Others Present:

(Continued)

Dr. Karin M. Hilgersom, President, TMCC

Dr. Keith E. Whitfield, President, UNLV

Mr. Brian Sandoval, President, UNR

Dr. J. Kyle Dalpe, Officer in Charge, WNC

Faculty senate chairs in attendance were: Dr. Julian Smit, CSN; Dr. Samantha Jewell, NSC; Dr. Virginia Irintcheva, TMCC; Ms. Shannon Sumpter, UNLV; and Dr. Amy Pason, UNR. Student body president in attendance was: Mr. Zachary Johnigan, ASCSN President, CSN.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with all members present. Regent McMichael led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo provided the Land Acknowledgement.

1. Information Only – Public Comment

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo stated all written/voicemail public comments received will be posted on the NSHE website, included with the permanent record, and provided to the Regents.

The following individuals provided written/voicemail public comment or spoke in support of Agenda Item 5, Letter of Support for Student COVID-19 Vaccinations and/or vaccine mandates:

- Robie Alcalá (*Alcala.Robie01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Merci Silva-Acosta (*Silva-Acosta.Merci01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Kent Ervin (*Ervin.Kent01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Richard Leonard (*Leonard.Richard01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Jiego Lim
- Doug Unger (*Unger.Doug01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)

The following individuals provided written/voicemail public comment or spoke in opposition to Agenda Item 5, Letter of Support for Student COVID-19 Vaccinations and/or vaccine mandates:

- Debbie Abate (*Abate.Debbie01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Kim Aglitti
- Misty Atkins
- Conzello Barnhill III (*Barnhill.Conzello01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Lauri Brown (*Brown.Lauri01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Mary Ellen Burckhard
- Janet Butcher
- Wendy Call (*Call.Wendy01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Nancy Carlson (*Carlson.Nancy01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Jon Carpineta (*Carpineta.Jon01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Lynn Chapman (*Chapman.Lynn01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Andrew Church
- Melissa Clement
- Holly Cortez (*Cortez.Holly01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Rita Crump (*Crump.Rita01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)

1. Information Only – Public Comment

The following individuals provided written/voicemail public comment or spoke in opposition to Agenda Item 5, Letter of Support for Student COVID-19 Vaccinations and/or vaccine mandates – *(Continued)*

- Lisa Durgin (*Durgin.Lisa01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Susan Frailey
- Amy Gale (*Gale.Amy01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Eugene Gerscovich (*Gerscovich.Eugene01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Russell Gronert (*Gronert.Russell01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Melanie Gross (*Gross.Melanie01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Leyda Guandique (*Guandique.Leyda01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Susan Hahn (*Hahn.Susan01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Janine Hansen
- Kristen Hansen (*Hansen.Kristen01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Vernon Hatch
- Lindsay Iverson (*Iverson.Lindsay01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Lynn Jackson (*Jackson.Lynn01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Sylvia Johnson (*Johnson.Sylvia01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Kristen Kapur (*Kapur.Kristen01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Anthony LaBounty (*LaBounty.Anthony01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Kelly LaBounty (*LaBounty.Kelly01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Cindy Lake (*Lake.Cindy01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Jennifer Lattin (*Lattin.Jennifer01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Jordynn Lattin (*Lattin.Jordynn01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Shaylee Lattin (*Lattin.Shaylee01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Daphne Lee
- Mary Lim (*Lim.Mary01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Mary Clare LoPresti (*LoPresti.MaryClare01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Kandy Lyons
- Chiarra Macellaio (*Macellaio.Chiarra01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Deborah Mardon (*Mardon.Deborah01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Corinne Martin (*Martin.Corinne01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Barb Mathers (*Mathers.Barb01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- LaNiqua McCloud (*McCloud.LaNiqua01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Mathea McKinley (*McKinley.Mathea01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Chris Mullins (*Mullins.Chris01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Nancy Pitt (*Pitt.Nancy01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Carolina Quintana (*Quintana.Carolina01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Kristen Reeves (*Reeves.Kristen01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Casey Rodgers (*Rodgers.Casey01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Cameron Rose (*Rose.Cameron01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Wiselet Rouzard (*Rouzard.Wiselet01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Bob Russo (*Russo.Bob01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Michelle Sanchez-Bickley (*Sanchez-Bickley.Michelle01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Gloria Sharlein
- Kat Sienkiewicz (*Sienkiewicz.Kat01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)
- Fred Simon

1. Information Only – Public Comment

The following individuals provided written/voicemail public comment or spoke in opposition to Agenda Item 5, Letter of Support for Student COVID-19 Vaccinations and/or vaccine mandates – *(Continued)*

- Kathleen Sliter *(Sliter.Kathleen01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Ken Snyder
- Julie Stevenson *(Stevenson.Julie01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Charlotte Stewart *(Stewart.Charlotte01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Mary Swirsky *(Swirsky.Mary01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Kristen Sylva *(Sylva.Kristen01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Glen Tenney *(Tenney.Glen01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Patty Toone *(Toone.Patty01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Caroline Turner *(Turner.Caroline01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Jolain Tyndall *(Tyndall.Jolain01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Ariel Van Cleve *(VanCleve.Ariel01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Maryann Weldin
- Chelsea Wilson *(Wilson.Chelsea01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*

The following individuals provided written public comment in support of a fair and equitable process for Agenda Item 8, Update on ad hoc Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board Search Committee:

- Kent Ervin *(Ervin.Kent01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Doug Unger *(Unger.Doug01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*

The following individuals provided written public comment in support of a 3 percent Cost of Living increase for Agenda Item 13, 2023-25 Biennial Operating Budget/2023 Capital Improvement Projects and Overview of Funding Formula:

- Kent Ervin *(Ervin.Kent01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*
- Doug Unger *(Unger.Doug01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*

The Nevada Faculty Alliance provided a Petition for Safe NSHE Campuses signed by faculty, staff, students, and family members of the Nevada System of Higher Education. *(PetitionForSafeNSHECampuses01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.)*

Susan Werner spoke in favor of allowing rational individuals to weigh options and make their own decisions.

Kent Ervin spoke about the pressure faculty and staff face and the lack of support. Cost of living adjustments are inadequate, and employee health benefits have been cut, including eliminating long-term disability. He called on the Regents, Chancellor, and Presidents to make faculty compensation and benefits the highest budget priority and advocacy.

1. Information Only – Public Comment

Brad Summerhill was concerned that the Board was not discussing faculty salaries or cost of living increases at today's meeting. TMCC is seeing the effects of the great resignation. Students and faculty deserve better. NSHE must ensure that employee salaries do not stagnate and lose value. NSHE wages have lost 15.6 percent of real value from Fiscal Year 10 to Fiscal Year 21, but with inflation added in, faculty have lost more than 20 percent of real value in take-home pay. Cost of living must be a priority.

Zachary Johnigan stated that student mental health concerns are significant and that the needs in the area are escalating. Students are vulnerable, and many are not prepared for the challenges that can disrupt their education and impact persistence and graduation rates. Therefore, CSN students ask for an NSHE operating budget request that includes a high priority for mental health. The Board of Regents must provide direction to the Chancellor to develop budget priorities that consider continuing mental health services initially funded by a federal substance abuse and mental health grant. The mental health of students depends on the Board's consideration and action.

Tracy Sherman requested the Board's support in retaining and recruiting faculty members by prioritizing faculty and staff financial support. (*Sherman.Tracy01.14.22 on file in the Board Office.*)

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo noted Agenda Item 6, One-Year Extension to Employment Agreement, President Joyce M. Helens, GBC, was withdrawn from consideration.

2. Information Only – Board Chair's Report – Chair Pro Tem Carol Del Carlo hoped everyone had a happy holiday season.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo stated she is proud of her Nevada Promise Scholarship student and encouraged all to become Nevada Promise Scholarship mentors. She thanked Vice Chair Pro Tem Carvalho for chairing the December special meeting.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo recently attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) national board training, which included reviewing board bylaws and policy. In addition, Nevada has a large delegation that will attend the ACCT National Legislative Summit. She also attended the NSC installation of President DeRionne Pollard and visited UNLV's Black Fire Innovation.

3. Information Only – State of the System Address – Chancellor Melody Rose presented the 2022 State of the System address via a PowerPoint that included national challenges, Nevada's challenges, organizational achievements, opportunities, growing the student body, and growing and diversifying revenue streams. (*Ref. BOR-3 on file in the Board Office.*)

In response to comments made by Regent Boylan, Chancellor Rose stated before her arrival, the Board created predictable pricing. Predictability is a crucial component of NSHE's commitment to access. Unfortunately, students across the country do not know

3. Information Only – State of the System Address – (Continued)

how tuition rates will change during their schooling. Not knowing what tuition will be is hard for families to plan. NSHE's cost of attendance increases at a predictable rate allowing students and families to plan financial obligations. The point she is trying to convey is that NSHE is committed to keeping the price of admission low. The challenging conversation is how to ensure that the commitment to students is kept while taking care of faculty and staff.

Regent Boylan noted Nevada's 49th national ranking and asked the Chancellor to provide the Board with information at a later date on why that is. He also requested that the Chancellor provide NSHE's rankings in future presentations in all comparative graphs.

Chancellor Rose stated her presentation was a high-level starting point conversation and she is happy to discuss any topics going forward. She pointed out on slide 16, Nevadans by Degree, that it is not a good thing to have some college but no degree. That is the population that spent time and resources taking a few classes but doesn't benefit from a degree. Nevada being higher than the nation is not good because people walk away with credits, no degree, and are disgruntled. Regent Boylan understood but wanted to know why they were walking away.

Regent Boylan requested a comparison graph of the money spent on both sides related to Ballot Question 1, the people behind Ballot Question 1, and how much they contributed.

In response to a question from Regent Boylan related to awards conferred by year, Chancellor Rose stated the slide includes student success measures in the number of certificates and degrees granted. Chancellor Rose also noted that the unknown designation within the underserved populations had not identified race or ethnicity.

Regent Boylan thanked the Chancellor for her presentation.

Regent Perkins left the meeting.

In response to a question from Regent Brooks related to the decline in student populations, Chancellor Rose responded that COVID-19 had an impact on the degree-granting institutions, more pronounced on several of the community colleges. Regent Brooks stated it was important to note that the Data Dashboard showed that NSHE was much lower than the national average. Regent Brooks asked Chancellor Rose to elaborate on which populations are declining and what the Board's focus should be on. Chancellor Rose stated the Data Dashboard is an incredible resource. Chancellor Rose said 2026 predictions show there will be declining sub-populations nationally due predominantly to declining birth rates, but because of Nevada's diverse environment, some of the sub-populations are growing in Nevada.

Regent Perkins entered the meeting.

Chancellor Rose is concerned about the declining presence of African-American men and indigenous people within Nevada.

3. Information Only – State of the System Address – (Continued)

Regent Brooks appreciated the presentation.

Regent McAdoo thanked Chancellor Rose for the presentation and appreciated slide 33, leaving the Board with a visual picture of the eight-year-olds being NSHE students in 10 years.

Regent Arrascada voiced his concerns related to faculty and classified staff salary compression. Faculty and classified staff have only received a 1 percent pay increase. Chancellor Rose pointed out growing fears among faculty and staff related to the erosion of compensation and benefits. There are challenges in retention and workforce morale.

Regent Perkins left the meeting.

Chancellor Rose stated faculty and staff are tired and concerned. NSHE wants to be an employer of choice, and that means it must compensate effectively.

Regent Arrascada stated it is beneficial to include all the parties affected in the conversations.

Regent Brooks asked how Chancellor Rose would approach the Legislature if faculty continued to express concerns about salary compression and comparative wages and students struggle with student loan debt. Chancellor Rose stated NSHE does have to take credit concerning low student loan debt because fees are low compared to other states. Regarding how NSHE will solve the problems related to compensation, it is a Board-level conversation. The Cabinet is gathering the data and campus requests to put together proposals for the Board's consideration.

Regent Perkins entered the meeting.

Regent Brooks observed that the institutions' level of achievement has increased based on their respective missions, enrollments, and student access. He thanked the Chancellor for her time.

Vice Chair Pro Tem Carvalho believed the State of the System Address was not meant to be critiqued but instead was the Chancellor's opportunity to give her impressions and direction for the System. She thanked Chancellor Rose for her vision and leadership.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo also thanked Chancellor Rose for her presentation.

The meeting recessed at 11:26 a.m. and reconvened at 12:00 p.m. with all members present except Regent Carter.

4. Approved – Minutes – The Board approved the minutes from the November 12, 2021, special meeting. (*Ref. BOR-4 on file in the Board Office.*)

Regent McMichael moved approval of the November 12, 2021, special meeting minutes. Regent Perkins seconded. Motion carried. Regent Carter was absent.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo encouraged her peers to be more careful with their words, particularly describing students. All should use supportive language and be aware that some words are taken with great offense.

5. Approved – Letter of Support for Student COVID-19 Vaccinations – The Board approved the proposed Letter of Support for student COVID-19 vaccinations to be issued to appropriate governing bodies with jurisdiction to impose vaccine requirements. (*Ref. BOR-5 and Supplemental Material on file in the Board Office.*)

Chancellor Rose presented a proposed Letter of Support for student COVID-19 vaccinations prepared by the Chancellor, in consultation with Chair Pro Tem Carol Del Carlo, to be issued to appropriate governing bodies with jurisdiction to impose vaccine requirements for consideration. The Board directed the preparation of this letter during its December 30, 2021, meeting to be brought back for approval at this meeting.

Regent Brooks asked for clarification on the United States Supreme Court ruling as it will relate to an NSHE vaccine mandate. Chief General Counsel Joe Reynolds stated one of the rulings relates to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) requirement that businesses with over 100 employees receive a vaccine series. The Supreme Court believed that was an overstep by OSHA and outside its authority. The second ruling upheld by the Supreme Court involved the Department of Health and Human Services' requirement that healthcare workers receive a COVID-19 vaccine mandate. Neither of the rulings will affect the Board's policy recommendation.

Chief General Counsel Reynolds noted that employee and student vaccine mandates have different legal authorities. For example, student vaccines fall under the State Board of Health's jurisdiction while employee vaccines fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents.

Regent Geddes stated he fully supports the letter. The overall will of the Board was to support the student mandate. He encouraged his colleagues to support the letter.

Regent Geddes requested a deeper review of the Board's constitutional authority and whether the Board can mandate student vaccines.

Regent Boylan asked for the legal definition of a mandate whether it is enforceable by law. Chief General Counsel Reynolds stated the general definition is that a mandate is a requirement and has the force and effect of any regulatory law. The Board of Health is the ultimate enforcement authority of student vaccine mandates. Because the Legislative

5. Approved – Letter of Support for Student COVID-19 Vaccinations – *(Continued)*

Commission did not adopt the permanent regulation, it effectively expired after 120 days.

Regent Boylan stated he understood that a mandate is not a law but only a suggestion for those that accept it. Chief General Counsel Reynolds respectfully disagreed and reiterated that a mandate has the effect of law. If a student does not abide by the mandate, it will prevent them from registering for classes.

Regent McAdoo asked who has the authority to mandate student vaccinations. Chief General Counsel Reynolds stated the Board of Health has the authority to impose vaccine mandates on K-12 and higher education students. State regulations provide agencies the authority to enact emergency regulations outside of the routine administrative processes. Once an emergency regulation is put in place, it goes to the Legislative Commission to decide whether it will become permanent. If it does not receive a majority vote, the emergency regulation will expire after 120 days. Under Nevada law, an agency is precluded from extending the same emergency regulation for a second 120-day period.

Chief General Counsel Reynolds noted that the Board of Regents has independent regulatory authority on employee matters. Further, the Nevada Supreme Court recognizes that the Board of Regents Code has the force and effect of law.

Vice Chair Pro Tem Carvalho asked for the Presidents to provide their comments.

All Presidents, speaking for their respective institutions, support the proposed Letter of Support for student COVID-19 vaccinations.

UNR Faculty Senate Chair Amy Pason stated faculty are requesting that the Board provide a statement of support for student vaccine mandates.

Regent Perkins stated she must do what's best for most of her constituents and those present on the campuses. However, she also wants to protect the rights of those who choose not to get vaccinated. She hopes the Board of Health will consider that vaccines or the lack thereof will affect people of color more adversely than the general population.

Regent McAdoo noted she would vote no on the agenda item.

Regent Carter entered the meeting.

Regent Boylan requested that both sides of the argument be represented at future meetings.

Regent McMichael moved approval of the proposed Letter of Support for student COVID-19 vaccinations to be issued to appropriate governing bodies with jurisdiction to impose vaccine requirements. Regent Geddes seconded.

5. Approved – Letter of Support for Student COVID-19 Vaccinations – (Continued)

Regent McMichael stated most students are in favor of reinstating a student vaccine mandate.

Regent Geddes stated faculty, staff, students, and the campuses want this mandate.

Motion carried via a roll call vote. Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo, Vice Chair Pro Tem Carvalho, and Regents Arrascada, Carter, Doubrava, Geddes, McMichael, Moran, and Perkins voted yes. Regents Boylan, Brooks, McAdoo, and Tarkanian voted no.

6. Withdrawn – One-Year Extension to Employment Agreement, President Joyce M. Helens, GBC – This item was withdrawn.

7. Approved – Extension to Employment Agreement, Interim Chief of Staff to the Board Keri D. Nikolajewski – The Board approved an extension to the current Employment Agreement of Keri D. Nikolajewski to serve as Interim Chief of Staff to the Board beyond the January 14, 2022, expiration date, and continue until a permanent candidate to fill the position of Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board is selected by the Board and that individual's first day of employment commences. (*Refs. BOR-7a and BOR-7b on file in the Board Office.*)

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo requested an extension to Keri D. Nikolajewski's current Employment Agreement to serve as Interim Chief of Staff to the Board beyond the January 14, 2022, expiration date and continue until a permanent candidate to fill the position of Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board is selected by the Board and that individual's first day of employment commences.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo thanked Interim Chief of Staff Nikolajewski for all she does for the Board.

Regent McAdoo moved approval an extension to the current Employment Agreement of Keri D. Nikolajewski to serve as Interim Chief of Staff to the Board beyond the January 14, 2022, expiration date, and continue until a permanent candidate to fill the position of Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board is selected by the Board and that individual's first day of employment commences. Regent Boylan seconded. Motion carried.

8. Information Only – Update on ad hoc Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board Search Committee – Committee Chair John T. Moran provided an update on the progress of the ad hoc Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board Search Committee. The next meeting will be on January 28, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. Committee Chair Moran encouraged everyone’s participation.
9. Information Only – Update on ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee (Agenda Item 9) – Committee Chair Amy J. Carvalho provided an update on the progress of the ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee. The first meeting will be January 24, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.
10. Information Only – Update on Affiliation with Renown Health, UNR Med – UNR President Brian Sandoval and UNR Med Acting Dean Melissa Piasecki, M.D., provided a summary of the progress achieved in operationalizing and implementing the clinical and academic affiliation between UNR Med and Renown Health. *(Ref. BOR-10 on file in the Board Office.)*

Regent Arrascada asked Acting Dean Piasecki to expand upon the scholarship opportunities. Acting Dean Piasecki stated that scholarship funds were distributed on agreed-upon methods and allocated as one-year scholarships to five physician assistant students and one-year scholarships for five first-year medical students, and ten one-year scholarships to third-year medical students. The first-year scholarships were based on need, and the third-year scholarships were based on merit and need.

In response to a question from Regent Doubrava related to the process, Acting Dean Piasecki stated the process had gone smoothly, and she believed the success was due to the hard work and relationships with the Renown partners.

11. Information Only – Update on Sierra Nevada University Transfer, UNR – UNR President Brian Sandoval and UNR Senior Vice Provost Jill Heaton updated the Board on Sierra Nevada University’s (SNU) transfer to UNR. *(Ref. BOR-11 on file in the Board Office.)*

UNR Senior Vice Provost Jill Heaton updated the Board on the July 1, 2022, transfer of Sierra Nevada University (SNU) to UNR. The University is making progress on all authorizations and approvals from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), the Nevada Commission on Postsecondary Education, and the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, the UNR and SNU Executive Transition Teams meet regularly to combine programs and operations to minimize the impact on students, faculty, staff, donors, and community stakeholders. Each team also meets with its respective NWCCU representatives for guidance and input. On September 20, 2021, UNR and SNU jointly submitted letters to the U.S. Department of Education expressing their intent to pursue the acquisition and have responded to several additional information requests. After many hours of work, UNR submitted its Substantive Change Proposal to the NWCCU on November 30, 2021. UNR made several commitments, including:

1. SNU students can finish their studies in their current geographies.
2. UNR will deliver the degree programs to SNU students in their current modalities.

11. Information Only – Update on Sierra Nevada University Transfer, UNR – (Continued)

3. UNR will hire qualified SNU faculty and staff to support operations and academic offerings across the degree programs.
4. UNR committed it will cost no more to attend UNR than it did SNU.

On December 20, 2021, UNR and SNU received approval from the NWCCU on its Substantive Change Proposal, then communicated to the Nevada Commission on Postsecondary Education. The NWCCU required a teach-out plan that provides for the equitable treatment of students if higher education institutions cease to operate or cease instruction. UNR and SNU jointly evaluated 15 undergraduate and four graduate degrees in developing the teach-out plan. Eight programs are equivalent between the two institutions, and six are reasonably equivalent among the undergraduate programs. In addition, two of the four graduate programs are reasonably equivalent. However, one undergraduate and two graduate degree programs differ significantly, making it difficult for SNU students to transfer without negatively impacting their time to degree completion. As a result, UNR will be submitting one undergraduate and two graduate teacher education degree programs to the Board of Regents for consideration for the duration of the teach-out only. UNR and SNU have begun working with the U.S. Department of Education to gather and prepare documentation for a joint submission. UNR anticipates 350 students will transition from SNU.

UNR and SNU are committed to ensuring the transition provides clear pathways to academic success for SNU students who always come first.

Regent Geddes reiterated that other NSHE institutions are integrated to make this a System asset. Senior Vice Provost Heaton stated they have focused on the regulatory process, but this will be an NSHE resource.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Pro Tem Carvalho related to the Henderson SNU program, Senior Vice Provost Heaton responded Executive Vice President and Provost Jeff Thompson is in discussion with NSC and UNLV about the teacher education programs.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo stated the community is thrilled about the acquisition.

UNR President Sandoval thanked Chancellor Rose and Chief General Counsel Reynolds for their assistance, support, and advice. He also complimented Provost Thompson and the transition teams for their time and efforts.

12. Information Only – Institutional Metrics, UNR – UNR President Brian Sandoval presented data and metrics on UNR’s progress in achieving the strategic goals adopted by the Board via a PowerPoint that included metrics identified by the Board designed to compare the performance of NSHE and its institutions to other states or respective peers in five key areas: 1) Access; 2) Success; 3) Closing the Achievement Gap; 4) Workforce; and 5) Research. (Ref. BOR-12 on file in the Board Office.)

12. Information Only – Institutional Metrics, UNR – (Continued)

In response to a question from Vice Chair Pro Tem Carvalho related to the student to advisor ratio, UNR President Sandoval did not know the exact number but hiring advisors is a priority.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo was happy to see the UNR's number of international students. UNR President Sandoval stated UNR is in discussion with several international student recruiting entities.

Regent Boylan appreciated the presentation.

The meeting recessed at 2:01 p.m. and reconvened at 2:10 p.m. with all members present.

13. Approved – 2023-25 Biennial Operating Budget/2023 Capital Improvement Projects and Overview of Funding Formula – Chief Financial Officer Andrew Clinger discussed the process of developing the NSHE's 2023-25 biennial operating budget request and the budget for capital improvements for the 2023 Legislative Session, including the establishment of System budget priorities and possible enhancements to the base formula funded operating budgets, as well as other state-funded budgets. In addition, Chief Financial Officer Clinger provided an overview of the NSHE's funding formula. (*Ref. BOR-13 on file in the Board Office.*)

Regent Boylan asked about the cost-of-living allowance (COLA). Chief Financial Officer Clinger stated this was just an overview of the process and to hear what Regent priorities are.

Regent Geddes stated it is important to reiterate that any changes to the legislative funding formula must go through the Legislature.

Regent Perkins asked how continuing education unit certificates fit into the weighted student credit hours (WSCH). Chief Financial Officer Clinger stated non-credit-bearing courses do not count in the WSCH funding formula.

In response to a question from Regent Arrascada related to inflation and salary compression, Chief Financial Officer Clinger stated that as the next steps begin, those are requests that can be looked at. However, he pointed out that COLA is proposed and granted by the Legislature historically.

Regent Brooks appreciated the depth of the report.

In response to a question from Regent Brooks related to the funding formula, Chancellor Rose stated she would have a perspective as they move into the following steps but felt it was premature at this point until public processes are complete.

Chair Pro Tem Del Carlo shared an update at the request of UNR President Sandoval that with the hire of 24 advisors, the UNR student to advisor ratio will be 350:1.

14. Postponed – NSHE Fee Waiver Report – This item was postponed to a future meeting.
15. Postponed – System Computing Services Strategic Plan – This item was postponed to a future meeting.
16. Postponed – ad hoc Fiscal Sustainability Committee Initiative Update – Shared Services/System Computing Services – This item was postponed to a future meeting.
17. Information Only – New Business

Regent Perkins requested the Board examine NSHE’s federal grant capacity for each institution.

Regent Geddes requested Chief General Counsel Reynolds explore the Board’s constitutional authority with respect to vaccine mandates.

18. Information Only – Public Comment

Kent Ervin appreciated the Board’s support of the Letter of Support for the student mandate. Dr. Brian Labus, Dr. Cheryl Hug-English, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development Caleb Cage, and Chief General Counsel Reynolds have worked tirelessly on the NSHE Covid Task Force and acknowledged their efforts over the past two years.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Prepared by:

Angela R. Palmer
Special Assistant and Coordinator
to the Board of Regents

Submitted for approval by:

Keri D. Nikolajewski
Interim Chief of Staff
to the Board of Regents

Approved by the Board of Regents at its April 22, 2022, meeting.