

The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, met at the Comfort Suites in Urbandale on April 5 and 6, 2003, to begin drafting the Board's 2004-2009 strategic plan. Those in attendance included existing Board members, newly-appointed Board members, institutional heads and Board staff, as follows:

Board Members

Owen J. Newlin (President)
Amir I. Arbisser (arrived 9:50 a.m.)
Neala R. Arnold
Mary Ellen Becker
David J. Fisher
Clarkson L. Kelly (absent 4/6/03)
David G. Neil
Sue Erickson Nieland
Deborah A. Turner

Regents Designate

Robert N. Downer
John D. Forsyth

Institutional Heads

David Skorton
Gregory Geoffroy
Robert Koob
William Johnson (excused both days)
Dennis Thurman

Board Staff

Gregory S. Nichols
Robert J. Barak
Pam Elliott
Charles K. Wright
Carolyn Stockdale
Barb D. Boose
Deb Hendrickson

BOARD OF REGENTS, STATE OF IOWA

Saturday, April 5, 2003, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting began with a welcome from President Newlin who introduced the new Regent designates and provided background regarding previous strategic planning by the Board. He said strategic planning helps to establish focus, direction and continuity; provides strategic direction to staff; and helps to ensure public accountability by the Regent institutions.

Executive Director Nichols identified several significant changes that have occurred since the existing strategic plan was established in 1997. He emphasized that, while the staff would offer drafts of components of the plan at this meeting, this was the Board's plan. He then introduced facilitator Barb Ettleson of Outcomes Unlimited, a Des Moines-based firm that aids organizations in planning, team building and management/employee training.

Ms. Ettleson asked each of the Regents to identify trends from the pre-reading materials that were significant to them and to share their goals and expectations for the retreat. The institutional heads also participated in this process.

Next was a presentation by Dr. Robert Sevier, Senior Vice President of Stamats, who provided information, statistics, trends and issues in the higher education environment in the U.S. Meeting participants asked Dr. Sevier several questions after his presentation.

After breaking for lunch, Dr. Tom DeCarlo and Dr. Mike Barone of B & D Market Solutions, Ankeny, presented survey data on the perspectives of Regent stakeholders regarding possible priorities of the Board, including quality, accessibility, accountability, diversity, P-16 education, and economic enhancement.

Ms. Ettleson then asked meeting participants to share their issues and concerns based on information they had received during the meeting. Items identified included:

- Changes in student demographics, aspirations, expectations and college selection;
- Importance of communications and effective, multi-layer marketing;

- Need for educational institutions to be client-centered;
- Need for “a sense of urgency” in tackling current challenges affecting higher education;
- Potential conflict between amenities and accessibility;
- “One size doesn’t fit all” in education and the need to be responsive;
- Changes in the growth markets in higher education from traditional to more diverse students including people of color, older students, commuter students, and part-time students;
- Possible changes in benchmarking to demonstrate “best-in-class” status in various areas (for example, using the University of Phoenix for benchmarking distance education);
- Need to identify the types of students that Regent institutions should serve and the availability of resources to identify appropriate benchmarks;
- Potential of competing for students in areas with high numbers of high school graduates, such as California and Texas;
- Whether Iowa legislators are willing to fund “three great universities” in the state; and
- Role of state universities vs. role of community colleges and possible enhanced collaborations with both types of institutions.

Ms. Ettleson divided the group into four teams to begin discussing the mission statement that staff had drafted. The teams then reconvened for further discussion. Once everyone was reasonably comfortable with the mission statement, participants directed staff to incorporate the edits for review the following day.

The meeting recessed at 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 6, 2003, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Meeting participants continued discussion of the Board’s strategic plan and the mission statement draft. After receiving suggestions for further refinements, the group began discussing staff drafts of the plan’s values and culture statements.

While very few edits were suggested for the values statement, there was much discussion of the culture statement including whether to include a culture statement in the Board's strategic plan. Comments included the need to assess the Board's current culture and a suggestion that the statement be an "aspirational" description of desired culture. Board staff will consult with President Newlin and other Regents to review the culture statement concept and provide the Board with a recommendation.

The facilitator distributed the vision statement that staff had drafted. Several meeting participants indicated that it was not as "uplifting" as the vision of the Board's current strategic plan, which states the Regents' public education enterprise will become the "best in the nation." There was discussion that the vision should be aspirational but achievable and that the institutions cannot be the "best" at everything they do. Meeting participants concluded that Iowa could have the best educational enterprise, so the vision would be reaffirmed with minor edits.

The facilitator distributed the staff drafts of priority areas for the plan with examples of possible objectives. Participants determined that a preferred approach to the draft was for the key points of the vision to serve as the priorities. The group was then divided into teams of four, with each group assigned one of the priority areas.

The groups discussed the priorities with suggested refinements. Comments were recorded by staff to finalize the priorities and to draft objectives for subsequent Board review.

Ms. Ettleson provided a recap of the two-day meeting and discussed the next steps. Board staff were directed to refine the mission, vision and values statements of the plan, to consider the culture statement, and to produce new drafts of priorities and objectives.

Participants also determined that most of the plan's strategies and measures – the next components of the plan – need to be drafted with institutional input. Institutional officials need to collaborate to ensure measurements are as consistent as possible. Board staff will consult with Regents to draft strategies and measures that apply directly to the Board.

President Newlin thanked everyone for their attendance and expressed satisfaction with the high level of participation among all attendees. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.



Gregory S. Nichols
Executive Director