

## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

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Missouri Higher Education System Review  
Coordinating Board for Higher Education  
June 9, 2016

### DESCRIPTION

The recent completion of *Preparing Missourians to Succeed: A Blueprint for Higher Education* has established the needed foundation for the Coordinating Board to resume its responsibilities for mission review and address the rapidly changing landscape of higher education in Missouri. The intent of this agenda item is to provide background on this issue and seek action to begin the next phase.

### Background

The Coordinating Board's statutory authority includes multiple references to its responsibilities relating to system coordination and mission review. The specific powers enumerated in statute include:

*“The coordinating board for higher education shall establish admission guidelines consistent with institutional missions;” (Section 173.005)*

*“The coordinating board shall collect the necessary information and develop comparable data for all institutions of higher education in the state. The coordinating board shall use this information to delineate the areas of competence of each of these institutions and for any other purposes deemed appropriate by the coordinating board;” (Section 173.005)*

*“The coordinating board shall have the responsibility within the provisions of the Constitution of the State of Missouri for: developing arrangements for more effective and more economical specialization among institutions in types of education programs offered and students served, and for more effective coordination and mutual support among institutions in the utilization of facilities, faculty and other resources;” (Section 173.020)*

*“The coordinating board shall have responsibility, within the provisions of the constitution and the statutes of the state of Missouri, for: conducting, in consultation with each public four-year institution's governing board and the governing board of technical colleges and community colleges, a review every five years of the mission statements of the institutions comprising Missouri's system of public higher education.” (Section 173.030)*

Based on these responsibilities for the board established by legislative action, it is clear the General Assembly expects the board to take a leadership role in system coordination.

In addition, during the process of gathering the information that provides the underpinning of the *Blueprint for Higher Education*, the steering committee received multiple comments about the

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need for the state to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of its education system. Those comments led in part to the inclusion of Strategy 3.3 in the final document.

*Support the appointment of a blue-ribbon third-party panel to review Missouri's postsecondary education system – including governance and regulatory structures, efficiency, missions, adequacy of funding and selectivity policy – to assess how effectively the system is meeting the needs of stakeholders and made recommendations as appropriate.*

This call for a comprehensive review of the state's system of public higher education and recent legislative interest in revising degree parameters across all four-year institutions provide both the impetus and a basic framework for beginning this process. Admittedly, the task force and charge described below do not exactly match the language of the coordinated plan strategy highlighted above. However, the current political environment and a growing call for system strengthening compel action to initiate the first phase of this conversation. While the MDHE has the statutory responsibility for conducting the review, its success depends on collaboration and engagement of all parties. This makes essential the development of a mechanism and structure to ensure all voices are heard.

### **Higher Education System Review Process**

#### **System Review Task Force**

The April 22, 2016, presidential summit began laying the foundation for this important initiative. One of the primary outcomes of that meeting was an agreement to establish a task force to be the managing entity of this process. While advisory in nature, this task force, as the recommended charge describes in more detail, will be responsible for overseeing a data driven review of current and emerging higher education needs and opportunities, development of recommendations for a mission framework reflecting current and future system configuration, and suggesting changes to CBHE/MDHE policies relating to program review and approval to ensure program actions are made in a logical and fact-driven manner. As needed, this group will make recommendations to the CBHE for a legislative package that reflects a revised mission and program approval structure.

Recommendations for membership on the task force, which is composed of 14 formal members, were solicited from each public education sector. The task force members are as follows.

#### Missouri Department of Higher Education

- Rusty Monhollon - Chair

#### State Technical College of Missouri

- Shawn Strong

#### Missouri Community College Association

- Mark James – Metropolitan Community College
- Jeff Pittman – St. Louis Community College
- Joanna Anderson – State Fair Community College

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- Jennifer Methvin – Crowder College
- Jeff Jochems – Ozarks Technical College
- Jon Bauer – East Central College

#### Council on Public Higher Education

- Six members – To Be Determined

In addition to these formal taskforce members, MDHE staff proposes the establishment of an auxiliary group of stakeholders who would also be invited to task force meetings. While this group is still under formation, it is currently envisioned to include at least the following groups.

- Joint Committee on Education (staff)
- Missouri Community College Association
- Council on Public Higher Education
- Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri
- Others not directly represented on the Task Force.

The intent of this additional group is to ensure broad involvement of and input from all components of the state's higher education system.

#### Scope of Work and Task Force Charge

According to Missouri statutes, the review of institutional missions should “be based upon the needs of the citizens of the state as well as the requirements of business, industry, the professions and government. The purpose of this review shall be to ensure that Missouri's system of higher education is responsive to the state's needs and is focused, balanced, cost-effective, and characterized by programs of high quality as demonstrated by student performance and program outcomes.” The Speaker of the House and Chair of the House Higher Education Committee requested the Coordinating Board conduct a review of and develop recommendations about the “overall structure of public two- and four-year institutions, varying institutional missions, and degree review and approval processes.”

Based on these directives, this discussion cannot be limited to process issues related to the approval of academic programs by the Coordinating Board. Instead, it must address the context and framework for Coordinating Board decisions regarding new and revised programs at public institutions if it is to provide meaningful guidance for the future. Consequently, MDHE staff recommends the following charge for the Task Force.

1. Conduct a systematic and thorough review of the overall structure of Missouri's system of higher education, which will include but not be limited to institutional missions, admissions selectivity, academic program review and approval, and geographic service regions.
2. Conduct a review of the demand for and supply of postsecondary education including occupational, geographic and student perspectives.
3. Assess the relevance and functionality of the Coordinating Board's current mission approval structure and recommend changes to or replacement of that model.

4. Recommend revisions to the Coordinating Board policies both as they relate to future mission reviews and for program approval.
5. Recommend statutory changes as needed to enable the implementation of the revised system of institutional missions and program approval processes.

### National Expertise

MDHE staff believes the inclusion of national expertise to provide additional perspective and knowledge on the higher education issues under review is essential to the success of this review process. Staff is currently seeking proposals from consulting firms to provide these services.

MDHE staff expects the external consultants to conduct an environmental scan to help determine state and regional educational needs by discipline or occupational category. The consultants will also provide assistance as the task force develops a proposed structure for differentiation of institutional missions across individual institutions and institutional sectors. Their assistance will also be valuable in identifying existing and emerging best practices for addressing the identified gaps with regard to educational disciplines, program level, and geography. Because research is such an integral component of a dynamic and responsive postsecondary educational system, this process must also assess the state's capacity for basic and applied research and identify where research investments should or could be made.

This process should provide for a comprehensive review of the congruence of baseline information with CBHE approved/statutory institutional missions and current institutional profiles and performance. Finally, the staff expects the consultant to assist with facilitating meetings and discussions with higher education officials to identify needed changes, including areas in need of strengthening and of elimination

### Conclusion

The process described above is clearly a major undertaking by the Coordinating Board, MDHE staff, and the higher education community in Missouri. Given the rapid changes in the higher education environment, both from a state and national perspective, it is essential that we begin this process now if we are to ensure the dynamic and responsive higher education system needed to ensure Missouri is a national leader in providing high quality postsecondary education that will equip Missourians with the personal and professional skills to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **STATUTORY REFERENCE**

Section 173.005 – Department of Higher Education created, Coordinating Board duties

Section 173.020 – Responsibilities of the Coordinating Board

Section 173.030 – Additional Responsibilities

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

**It is recommended that the Coordinating Board confirm the establishment of the Missouri Higher Education System Review Task Force and direct the task force to fulfill the charge described above.**

**It is further recommended that the Coordinating Board direct the task force to submit an interim report to the Board containing preliminary recommendations for statutory revisions by December 1, 2016 and submit its final report to the Board by July 1, 2017.**

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

None