

Resolution on Higher Education Funding Challenges in New Mexico

Whereas, through this resolution, we formally request our legislators and state administrators to consider New Mexico State University's proactive cost saving measures as state appropriations for each higher education institution are individually formalized; and

Whereas, New Mexico State University (NMSU) has been on a path to improve its fiscal condition based on the challenges posed by dropping enrollments throughout New Mexico and the Nation; and

Whereas, we have over the past three years reduced our I & G spending while focusing on student success and efficiency measures; and

Whereas, one of our priorities is to have students "graduate on time", which we define as 4 years; and

Whereas, we want graduates to "get a job", preferably in New Mexico; and

Whereas, we define "giving back" as not only being an engaged alumni, but giving back to New Mexico through community engagement and leadership; and

Whereas, we understand that there will be further decreases in state appropriations that may affect institutions of higher education in our state; and

Whereas, we believe that those institutions who have already embarked on a path to efficiency will be reviewed for progress and not subject to a universal percentage reduction; and

Whereas, NMSU has proactively engaged for three consecutive years in "right-sizing" our institution through careful planning and analysis; and

Whereas, in response to the downturn in enrollment and reductions in state funding, NMSU has decreased I & G budgets as follows:

- FY 15 decreased by 7.5 million
- FY 16 decreased by 11.9 million
- FY 17 will decrease by 12.7 million
- Total \$32.1 million dollars

Whereas, these reductions have been achieved through a number of strategies to include a moratorium on hiring put in place in March 2015, salary savings, reduction in utility expenses, and reducing operating expenses; and

Whereas, NMSU was the only New Mexico institution that did not raise tuition for FY 17; and

Whereas, our 4-year graduation rate has increased by 4% during this same period we have been reducing costs; and

Whereas, getting students educated and into the market quicker not only impacts New Mexico's economy, it also helps them graduate with less student debt; and

Whereas, improving these student success outcomes is our greatest priority, and

Whereas, New Mexico State University is a high quality, great value institution; and

Whereas, NMSU has achieved the highest entrance requirements statewide while not limiting access; and

Whereas, the “Aggie Pathway to the Baccalaureate” allows our students who are not quite ready for a four year institution to start at one of our community colleges; and

Whereas, Dona Ana Community College has seen over 280 students access the program. It is our belief these students will be retained at a higher rate, achieve better grades, and graduate on time; and

Whereas, NMSU Chancellor Garrey Carruthers and HED Secretary Barbara Damron are providing leadership to ensure all New Mexico college courses articulate appropriately; and

Whereas, NMSU Provost Dan Howard is chairing a task force on general education requirements to ensure students are getting what they need but not taking more than they need.

Whereas, NMSU has instituted meta-majors and have significantly reduced the number of credit hours required for many baccalaureate degrees and

Whereas, when the “Transforming NMSU for the 21st Century” initiative is finalized, NMSU will be poised to become even more efficient and serve students better; and

Whereas, we want to express our support for the proactive approaches NMSU has taken in dealing with the state’s budget situation and its impact on higher education; and

Whereas, as a leader amongst New Mexico’s institutions of higher education, we hope to work collaboratively with the state in finding the best path for stabilizing funding for higher education while seeking efficiencies and focusing on student success.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved in the official session that the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University that this resolution be sent to the Governor, Secretary of Higher Education, Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration, and the Legislative Leadership in the State of New Mexico

Resolved this 29th day of September 2016 at Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Debra Hicks, Chair
Board of Regents

Mike Cheney, Vice Chair
Board of Regents

Jerean C. Hutchinson, Secretary-Treasurer
Board of Regents

Kari Mitchell, Member
Board of Regents

Amanda López Askin, Member
Board of Regents