

Outcomes of the February 20 SDI Meeting

Attending: Chancellors, Provosts, Community Campus Directors, and Leadership involved in advancing initiatives related to Strategic Direction

Outcomes:

- Summarized the progress to-date on Phases I and II of SDI (President Gamble)
- Confirmed areas of consensus on critical themes (Five Themes)
- Came to agreement on important areas still under consideration (Topics and Questions)
- Committed to clear expectations for performance and achievement (Effect Statements discussed) [The Effect Statements are currently in production and will be discussed by President Gamble at the BOR meeting.]
- Outlined the next steps in Phase III to fully implement SDI

Achieved:

1. Continued agreement on the Themes, Topics, and Questions related to SDI initiatives that would contribute to student success
2. Additional input from the group on the Themes, Topics, and Questions Table (Up-to-Date Handout revised)
3. Board of Regents emphasis areas and possible major SDI-specific goals were discussed including the following:
 - a. Increasing certificates, licenses, and degree completion rates
 - b. Accelerating remedial/developmental education for students
 - c. Expanding E-Learning
 - d. Establishing a common set of General Educational Requirements (GER's)
 - e. Raising the profile of research and development to advance Alaska's communities and our economy
4. Another important breakthrough occurred: Discussion at the February 20 meeting identified a need for us to expand the conversation outside of the University on the topic of raising the bar for education in the State of Alaska.....We need to hold conversations with external groups, committees, and enterprises about investing in our Higher Education system to develop broader support to achieve our SDI initiatives. In other words, we need to move outside the University to involve a wider constituency of stakeholders such as the Department of Education, the Commissioner of Education, School Superintendents throughout Alaska, the Board of Regents, Native Corporations, and the newly-formed Alaska Teacher Educational Consortium that was established to provide guidance on the continuous improvement of teacher education. The broader dialog is needed to engage those entities that can assist us in achieving the effects we see in our future. Examples include: greater broadband services to our rural communities and community campuses, a more effective and unified system of E-learning for our students, the reduction of remedial and developmental instruction for new high school graduates through a more robust schedule and curriculum.

Opening words of the February 20th Meeting:

“We must not only focus our work on the greatest needs of our state, but we must find the courage to change the way we do business.” – Pat Gamble

Those words were used to introduce Phase III of SDI to the meeting.

Phase III: The doing part of the strategic direction where we work on enhancements and improvements to our system, innovations that will advance the delivery of programs and the achievements of students, supporting attainment of academic goals leading to student success, trying new things out to advance the University.

Our next steps include:

1. Our Chancellors and Provosts at our 3 MAUs identifying their targeted SDI initiatives
2. The MAUs select outcomes for UA’s advancement (The Effects we want to achieve: the production of Effect Statements)
3. Building a communications plan for internal and external engagement and support (completed)
4. Preparing a report of progress to the Board of Regents and to the University; we anticipate that at the June BOR meeting, the Chancellors will each be able to present a current status on accomplishments and their plans for FY14.

Ultimately, we want to achieve the Final Effect: The University of Alaska’s new direction!

At this point in SDI, we are seeking to report our success beyond University walls. Our external communications plan is built and ready to implement. We want to extend our conversation to the public media: radio, public television, and print publications. Phase III involves showing the state and the public what we are doing to raise the bar in Higher Education in Alaska. We will be emphasizing the following performance behaviors as we work on SDI initiatives: doing, action, staying relevant, moving deeper into system Improvements, and asking “why” questions about what we are doing and planning. Our emphasis will show both the changes we have made, and the effects that these changes are delivering to the University. Our ultimate plan is to show how investment in improving our higher education system results in raising other areas as well: Examples: the job outlook, university-private enterprise partnerships, more Alaskan teachers teaching in our schools and remaining in the State, filling high demand jobs with Alaskans who are trained and responsive to workforce demands, etc.

All three MAU’s are already working on academic advising, aligning common education requirements, and building stronger research and development ties to the Community. What we need to understand, and what we need to have others understand and believe, is that when we raise the bar in Higher

Education, we raise the standards of learning in Alaska, increase business initiatives, enhance the economic engine of the state, and advance opportunities for our citizens and communities.

The SDI Team has built a strong communication front for SDI. A list of the various types of outreach we have already produced for internal communication and for external communication is attached. The handout is comprised of a publication history of 11 pages of print and video communications. Our University website (ShapingAlaskasFuture.com) contains Updates, Reports, and Insights that have captured an extensive amount of innovations and advancements that are already occurring. We are found on YouTube as UATV, and we have produced a number of video vignettes through Chas St. George, our communications coordinator. The video vignettes highlight achievements and advances in topics such as The Middle College, EPSCoR activities, workforce development advances, academic advising, arctic research & development, a conversation about SB-241, drones (Unmanned Aerial Systems Research), and CAEPR research. We have had preliminary conversations with Patrick Yak, Chief Content Officer of PBS in Alaska (who is also Adjunct Faculty of Journalism at UAA), about a series of panel discussions around SDI initiatives. We have placed SDI in the Journal of Commerce twice; one story is staged for publication and the link to the published story follows:

<http://www.alaskajournal.com/Alaska-Journal-of-Commerce/August-Issue-3-2012/UA-embarks-on-improvement-plan-before-centennial>

Overall, the consensus was, at the final analysis of the February 20th meeting, SDI would:

- Provide leadership for this new direction that we must take
- Provide support for the MAU efforts in advancing their efforts
- Convene meetings that highlight improvement and success and take our advancements beyond the walls of UA
- Communicate our progress to the State of Alaska

Phase III will not be easy, but it contains great potential for both short and long term higher education opportunities for Alaskans. If we do nothing, our relevancy is at risk and we are doomed to mediocrity, which is not acceptable. Phase III will allow us to build a strong coalition of support among agencies, Community groups, private enterprises, and any stakeholders we partner with. Phase III will allow us to achieve the effects or outcomes we need to stay relevant and viable.