

Sept. 16, 2019

Dear UA Community,

In today's [VIDEO](#) message University of Alaska President Jim Johnsen recaps the Board of Regents actions last week and responds to public testimony.

In its Sept. 12 – 13 meeting, the Board of Regents:

- approved a budget with a \$25 million reduction, and about \$9 million dedicated to strategic investments and market-based compensation adjustments;
- clarified it wants to see plans for both single-accreditation and maintaining three separate accreditations;
- directed administration to conduct 13 expedited program reviews, to work with the Chancellors and governance in forming the review teams, to allow some flexibility in the timeline, and ensure the opportunity for public review and comment; and
- reviewed the results of a public opinion survey with more than 3,900 participants. There was a high level of agreement that having a world-class higher education system in Alaska is important, and that the university needs stable funding. Other areas were evenly split, with about 50 percent who believe it's important for each campus to have its unique identity, and about 50 percent who believe it's important to have increased integration throughout the system.

The Board heard hours of public testimony – written, statewide audio and in-person testimony. Thank you to all that participated and shared your views.

President Johnsen provides his perspective on the common themes voiced during public testimony:

- 1.) Slow down, use this glide path – Completely agree. Helped negotiate compact for slower funding reduction. Agreed to cancel declaration of financial exigency. Moved decision on accreditation and university structure back to November.
- 2.) Value campus identity – Confident we will be able to honor and value the unique identity of each of our campuses regardless of the accreditation structure.
- 3.) Need more input – We have public testimony and lots of opportunity for public review and comment on the plans and reports that will be developed over the next month.
- 4.) We need the Consortium model – We have many “consortium” elements in our current structure with shared services providing cost-effective administrative support.
- 5.) Focus on accreditation – Totally agree. We meet weekly with our accrediting agency Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. We absolutely will not do anything that will not be fully accredited by the NWCCU. Period.

Thank you. As always, it takes a great university to make a great state.

#UA Strong