

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WORK GROUP ON TECHNOLOGY
DRAFT MEETING NOTES
August 20, 2008**

Work Group Members Present: Cheryl Dickson, Chair; Trustees: Duane Benson, Scott Thiss, and James Van Houten; Staff – Vice Chancellors Laura King and Ken Niemi

Other Board and OOC Staff Members Present: Trustee Jacob England, Staff – Chancellor James McCormick, Vice Chancellor Linda Baer, and Linda Kohl

The Work Group on Technology held its meeting on August 20, 2008, 4th Floor, World Trade Room, 30 East 7th Street in St. Paul. Chair Dickson called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Approval of the June 18, 2008, Committee Meeting Minutes

The June 18, 2008 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

Trustee Van Houten inquired how the budget cuts were taken into consideration.

Chair Dickson responded that the prioritization was brought to the board in July. The board is aware of how the cuts were prioritized and this information is included in the July Board report.

Trustee Benson requested clarification on the purpose of the Board Work Group.

Chair Dickson responded that this was discussed at the last meeting. This work group will be enacted for one year, after this the charge can be renewed. The initial charge was to be an overview Work Group for the Finance Technology Committee. Since then, the Board Technology Work Group has assumed the goals of assisting in the development of: a communication plan, project reporting materials, and assisting in planning for budget cuts as they affect both initiative and strategic Information Technology plans.

Chancellor McCormick responded that with the economic constraints everyone should anticipate a difficult year ahead. Minnesota State College and University representatives need to be able to explain the budget.

Chair Dickson replied this committee will help by being prepared to speak about the importance of technology. This committee will make a commitment to communicate and ask for clarification as needed.

FY 08 TECHNOLOGY ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT PROJECTS OVERVIEW AND PROGRESS UPDATE

Vice Chancellors King and Niemi presented the FY 08 Technology Enterprise Investment Projects Overview and Progress Update. Discussion and clarification of the update included:

- Disaster recovery and back up systems. These major components allow quick recovery of data and keep the system functioning, which reduces the risk for system failure. In the past, a full system failure without back up would mean that the system would be down for weeks, now it would only take days to restore.
- Fail-over is like the back up tank on a truck. The truck never stops running and is able to keep going. Disaster recovery, on the other hand, is like running out of gas. The truck stops operating and before it can be up and running again, the user needs to go get gas and restart the truck.
- REGIS is in the planning stage, this project will impact student registration and payment. Vice Chancellor King requested that more information on the functionality of the REGIS Project be presented to the Work Group at a later meeting.

Vice Chancellors Baer and Niemi will be presenting information on Action Analytics at the 2008 National Educause conference. Action Analytics enables the use of data to help make decisions for the future.

Trustee Benson requested that the Board Work Group Technology Committee be prepared to address two thoughts about technology. One is that technology is a means of providing support to the students and system. The other perspective is that technology is used for online learning.

The committee recommended developing communication talking points, and reports that focus on what services are provided and how this benefits the students. This should communicate the importance of how the different projects are important not just to the system but to campuses and students.

Trustee Van Houten recommended that the communication talking points include the message that the statutory charge to eliminate any unnecessary spending has been followed.

Chair Dickson recommended changes in the way technology reports are presented so that there is a focus on how the users benefit. If reports focus is on the user, the Board will be able to explain how different projects benefit faculty and staff so that they may better serve students. This report should use public speak, so that the definitions are not needed.

Vice Chancellor King stated that a different approach could be used to create the reports.

Chancellor McCormick inquired if there has been a study of how students do with online compared to traditional classes.

Chair Dickson stated the faculty has expressed concerns about the integrity of the students taking tests on line.

Vice Chancellor King responded that there is data at the national level that looks at the issue of online teaching and assessments. This may be a way to make the changes in technology real to the public. Staff will look into this and report the results to this committee.

Trustee Van Houten requested the report be changed from a listing of projects in alphabetic order to a critical path listing. This will allow an easier understanding of the interdependencies between projects.

Vice Chancellor King responded that the report would be reformatted and something would be sent out before the next meeting. The committee would then be able to make suggestions and a more complete discussion would take place at the December Work Group on Technology meeting.

2. FY09 TECHNOLOGY ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT PROJECT PRIORITIES AND BUDGET OVERVIEW

Vice Chancellor Niemi presented the FY09 Technology enterprise Investment Project Priorities and Budget overview.

Chair Dickson recommended that the members review the information and suggested that there was no need to discuss the report at this time, as it had been reviewed by the Board in July.

Trustee Benson inquired if Information Technology had developed relationships with Minnesota corporations or is there a need to bring in someone from the private sector to discuss their best practices (from Target for example).

Vice Chancellor Niemi responded relationships with broader CIO groups have been developed. These relationships provide information on the strategies being used by the private sector. Relationships with individuals that have the ear of the legislature and governor have been developed and have proven to be critical in both past funding acquisitions and current budget discussions.

3. TECHNOLOGY ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING-PRIOR ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

Linda Kohl presented a one page sheet to the Work Group that describes the Communication strategies used in the last year to make the case to legislators and other leaders. Many of the same strategies will be used again this year.

Vice Chancellor Niemi responded that ITS attends meet and confer meetings, and has also made efforts with the two year and four year institutions to highlight the practical effects of technology infrastructure investments. For instance, St. Paul College has presented to the legislature on their Second Life implementation and how technology helps them better serve students.

Vice Chancellor King replied that in addition, the Cross-Functional Advisory Group was formed to help communicate with faculty, students and staff and gather their input on investment decisions.

Vice Chancellor Niemi stated that part of the discussion will be the real consequences that IT budget cuts have on the technology users.

Trustee Van Houten stated that the second paragraph discusses informing internal constituencies of the consequences of not investing in technology. Does this line up with the user focus being recommended? Linda Kohl responded that the material will focus on the users and will discuss both the benefits and the consequences or hazards.

Trustee Van Houten suggested this communication include information on how technology benefits the rural user. For instance, how the use of online classes keeps students in rural communities.

Vice Chancellor King responded that campus representatives have expressed the benefits of online learning for the rural community. Online learning allows users to work and continue with their education.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Dickson directed Vice Chancellors King and Niemi to work on the project report and suggest changes in format. The revised report should be sent out well in advance of the December meeting.

Trustee Van Houten requested research on project tracking.

Chair Dickson responded that a one sheet report of talking points that is easily understood would be welcome.

5. NEXT MEETING

Chair Dickson stated that the next meeting will take place in December.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Benner, Recorder