At the May 2008 Board of Trustees meeting Chair Olson asked for an update on the four priorities selected by the Board at its October 2007 retreat.

Scheduled Presenter(s):
Leslie K. Mercer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Planning

Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues:
The four issues are:
- Reaching the underrepresented
- Increasing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) enrollments
- Engage in a tuition study
- Succession planning

Background Information:
These priorities have been incorporated into the FY09 Action Plan along with one additional item, “Building the Workforce of the Future”. The Action Plan was approved at the May 2008 meeting.
BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees at its October 2007 retreat selected four priority items for planning and some action during the remainder of FY 08 and incorporation into the FY09 Action Plan. The Action Plan was approved at the May 2008 meeting and progress to-date on each was reported in the respective committees- Finance, Facilities and Technology; Human Resources; Academic and Student Affairs and Diversity.

These four initiatives build directly from, Designing the Future: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Strategic Plan, 2008-2012. This update is intended to recap and update the progress to date in one single report in response to a request by Chair Olson. No action is requested.

Strategic Plan Goal 1.1 Raise Minnesota’s participation and achievement rates

**Hard to Reach:** Also called Reaching the Under-represented, this priority item builds on current initiatives at institutions to recruit and retain students from low-income families, students of color, first-generation college-goers and students from immigrant families.

In addition to updates on current spending for recruitment and retention efforts, a preliminary report on recruitment and retention strategies for students in underrepresented groups was delivered during the May 2008 board meeting focusing on TRIO and Trio-like programs. Campus staff from admission and diversity offices in the metropolitan area reviewed current recruitment programs and activities focused on new Americans and other underrepresented groups. Findings and recommendations are scheduled for presentation to the Metro Alliance in July 2008.

The work on revamping and updating the "Make College Part of Your Future" brochure is underway. The brochure will be translated into eight languages appropriate to the population demographics of Minnesota: Dakota, French, Hmong, Ojibwe, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Introductory system Web pages also will be translated into these languages. Fourteen focus groups of middle-school-age students from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education have been convened to learn how they prefer to get information about colleges and what types of messages appeal to them.

The System has established three college access and opportunity centers resulting from a competitive RFP process. The institutions are St. Cloud State University, Minnesota State Community and Technical College and Century College with Inver Hills Community College. The goals are improved high school graduation readiness supported by rigorous college preparatory and/or college-level courses; student advising and parent engagement/support, professional development for K-12 teachers and partnerships with K-12 school districts.
Strategic Plan Goal 1.3 *Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents*

**Tuition Study:** Staff were charged to conduct a study of tuition policies that includes an assessment of price of attendance and cost to educate students. The study will inform the FY2010-2011 biennial budget and the FY2010 operating budget.

A white paper outlining the key issues and approach of the study will be presented to the Finance, Facilities and Technology committee this month. The final report is scheduled to be completed and presented to the Board in September and after discussion with the Board it is expected that the recommendations will become a part of the 2010-2011 biennial budget planning.

Strategic Plan Goal 2.2 *Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable and flexible skills*

**STEM:** The system has pursued two primary courses of action to increase STEM course taking. The first is to fund projects at colleges and universities that are designed to both improve student learning and increase course-taking in STEM fields. The Center for Teaching and Learning awarded $250,106 in 13 grants to six colleges and five universities -- an average award of roughly $19,200 per project. Each project was required to achieve two goals: improving student learning and increase course enrollments in STEM disciplines.

The second is to use a relatively small portion of STEM funds ($100,000) to leverage large-impact partnerships with respected national STEM organizations. We are participating in Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL), the premiere STEM faculty professional development organization, in an NSF-funded pilot project to develop systemwide networks of STEM faculty leveraging best practices and expertise in STEM teaching from across the country. We have purchased a systemwide subscription for MentorNet, the premiere e-mentoring program in the country. As a result, in FY09, every student in the system will have the opportunity to receive one-on-one mentoring through email with a corporate professional working in a STEM field.

To increase and improve STEM teacher preparation and K-12 outreach, $340,000 has been distributed to the seven state universities under the “More and Better Mathematics and Science Teaching and Learning” initiative. This funding, awarded through a competitive grant process, is supporting projects designed to achieve progress toward the Board/Action Plan goal to more than double the number of new science and mathematics teachers prepared within the system by 2011. The state universities have submitted two proposals to National Science Foundation that build on the initial work. Planning is underway to expand professional development opportunities for science teachers through a statewide network built collaboratively by the system’s Teacher Center in partnership with the Science Museum of Minnesota.

Strategic Plan Goal 4.3 *Hire and develop leaders who will initiate and support innovation*

**Succession Planning:** The Human Resources Committee reviewed and discussed materials related to succession planning for the position of Chancellor. They reviewed a timetable for the search process and the make-up of a search advisory committee. These two basic documents provide the board with a process which they can revise as appropriate when they are needed. There was considerable discussion about the selection of a consulting search firm, determination of qualifications and procedures for background and reference checks. The succession planning work for the position of Chancellor is substantially complete until such time as a transition to new leadership is imminent.