

The CSN Chronicle

Welcome to *The CSN Chronicle* for April 2009. Most of this Chronicle discusses CSN's budget for the next biennium.

Campus Update 2009 Legislative Session

The Nevada Legislature has about 35 days left in the 2009 Session. Over the past couple of months the Nevada System of Higher Education both System Office staff and representatives from each of the institutions have had opportunity to participate in hearings related to operating and capital funding. Late last week on Thursday, April 16th capital project funding was reviewed and on Friday, April 17th the latest discussions on operating budgets were conducted. Many critical milestones are quickly approaching.

State revenue figures continue to fluctuate as reflected in the most recent release of projections. The budget shortfall is projected to increase for the upcoming biennial. A major discussion continues to be the application of stimulus funding for the state and in particular how the state can satisfy the "maintenance of effort" to meet the qualifications to receive these funds. Maintenance of effort centers purely on educational funding for the next two years.

The issues of available revenue and stimulus funding are not yet resolved. These are critical elements that must be addressed prior to CSN's budget being finalized. On May 1st the Economic Forum will meet and release revenue projections that will dictate the amount of funding that the legislature and governor may appropriate for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 fiscal years. These projections do not include any tax increases that may be proposed to address the state's budget/revenue shortfall.

Over the past several weeks, we have reviewed and in some instances provided impact assessments on a wide range of potential funding levels including the Governor's original 37% decrease; reductions ranging from 5%-9%; in excess of 12%; and scenarios that yield funding formula levels between 79% to a low of 60% of the formula. We have often said the permutations are endless, and we can now prove that. It is important to note that there is considerable dialog between NSHE and Legislative leadership; however, until the May 1st release of the Economic Forum numbers and resolution of the stimulus funding, we have no precise information, just a lot of conjecture.

We know that issues related to salaries and benefits are of concern to our employees. We remain optimistic that the legislature will continue to explore solutions that will minimize the proposed cuts recommended by the Governor. However, this remains an unresolved issue, impacted by final revenue numbers. As information is known we will, of course, share it with you.

The first hearing of the Capital Budget Request for new buildings, renovation projects, and planning was on Thursday, April 16th. While only a limited number of NSHE projects were included in the Governor's Recommended Budget, the Board of Regents priorities were provided to the committee for consideration. We understand that the projected funding available for capital projects has been reduced from original projections and that only a limited number of projects may be supported. CSN continues to focus on two Cheyenne Campus Projects which includes replacement of a fire suppression system and campus revitalization, with a second project identified to remodel and upgrade the Cheyenne science labs.

At the April meeting, the Board of Regents approved a \$1.50 per credit hour technology fee that will provide revenue to implement the student information module of a new administrative computing system. Migration to the new system is in process and will take another year to fully implement. We anticipate "going live" in spring 2010.

Legislative and CSN Dates

- May 1: Economic Forum—final revenue numbers will be determined for the 2009-2011 biennium.
- May 8: Closure of the budget for higher education
- May 12: Special meeting of the Board of Regents
- May 14: CSN campus forums on each campus
- May 18: Commencement

Please do not let up on your legislative contacts. Critical decisions are being made in the next three weeks. Enrollment needs to be funded, compensation levels preserved, and equity for CSN needs to be addressed. PLEASE LET YOUR LEGISLATORS KNOW YOUR FEELINGS.

Best,

Mike Richards