



Building New Mexico's Future:

A Master Plan for Higher Education in New Mexico

New Mexico Higher Education Department Concept Framework

Presented to the New Mexico Government Restructuring Task Force

by Dr. Vi Florez, Cabinet Secretary of Higher Education

June 22, 2010

Highlights of the Plan

The vision for the State Master Plan for Higher Education presents ambitious goals of the state governing boards, institutions, and the New Mexico Higher Education Department to achieve important and overdue changes in higher education in our state:

- Expand educational opportunities for students
- Increase accountability for performance
- Enhance efficiency in operations and policies
- Develop funding mechanisms to provide quality improvement in education programs, student services, and capital facilities
- Enhance the effectiveness of instruction and student learning
- Define the roles and missions of New Mexico's public universities, colleges, and community colleges in ways that will contribute significantly to New Mexico's economic development, competitive position, and the quality of life for our citizens.

The State Master Plan will serve as a roadmap to develop a postsecondary plan for higher education for the state of New Mexico and to provide a foundation for the strategic planning efforts of our public and independent postsecondary education institutions. The process incorporates the active participation of New Mexico colleges and universities in the development of **Building New Mexico's Future: A Master Plan for Higher Education in New Mexico**. This vision for higher education moves us toward being more aligned with twenty-first century goals and objectives.

Planning Process

For the development of the State Master Plan, the New Mexico Higher Education Department identified key leaders of the beneficiaries of postsecondary education, such as college and university presidents, faculty members, undergraduate and graduate students, and members of college and university governing boards and boards of regents. To obtain a broad perspective, emphasis has been placed on soliciting input from persons outside of the postsecondary education community, such as policy makers and leaders in business and industry, government, healthcare, social work, and K-12 education. As the plan is being developed,

opportunities for public hearings and additional means of input from individuals in all educational sectors as well as other interested persons are being provided. The process for input is open to all.

In the spring, the individuals and key constituents identified above were contacted by the New Mexico Higher Education Department leadership to comment on these issues:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of our current postsecondary education?
2. What changes are required?
3. How can higher education make greater contributions to the citizens of our state?
4. What issues, educational and otherwise, have paramount importance as New Mexico moves to create a Master State Plan for higher education?

These questions were made available on our website for individual input from as many constituents as possible. We have experienced a high level of response from diverse sectors in the state: thus far, more than 1,800 individuals have completed the survey. From the results of the online survey and the responses to the questions above, NMHED staff is developing issue papers that outline top-level concerns and provide context for discussion. These issue papers will be presented to the New Mexico Higher Education Advisory Board and other key affiliates (Formula Task Force, Council of University Presidents, New Mexico Association of Independent Community Colleges, New Mexico Association of Community Colleges) who will review and discuss these issues, thus identifying solutions to some of our challenges and solidifying broad participation and investment in the creation and eventual implementation of the plan.

It is anticipated that major areas will surface as the roadmap for the plan, such as governance, P-20, access, workforce, and funding. To broaden input and expand awareness, a series of hearings will be held in cooperation with colleges and universities in August/September during which testimony related to the major issues identified will be discussed. Upon completion of the public hearings, a draft of the State Master Plan will be developed and shared with key stakeholders in higher education for further review and input.

The following components are examples of what could surface for the development of the State Master Plan once the issues from the public hearings are gathered and prepared for review and discussion.

Introduction:

- Challenges to New Mexico - Planning Context
- Vision
- Mission
- Statewide Goals/Strategic Priorities

Governance:

- Creating a New Mexico System of Higher Education
- Mission Differentiation

- Governing Boards and Boards of Regents

Access:

- Affordability and Productivity
- Diversity
- Technology
- Interdependence – a Seamless P-20 System:
 - Preparation for Postsecondary Education
 - Academic Excellence
 - Degree/Credential Attainment/ College Completion
 - Educational Partnerships
 - The Preparation of K-12 Professionals for New Mexico

Outcomes:

- Workforce Preparation
- Economic Development
- Research and Education
- Funding:
 - Accountability/ Performance Funding
 - Formula Funding for Instruction and Research
 - Infrastructure/Capital Outlay
 - Tuition and Financial Aid

The Department anticipates crafting a near-final draft of the State Master Plan in November, to be presented and endorsed by the State Board of Finance. The final plan will be approved by the Cabinet Secretary of Higher Education in December. In this way, the new administration will have a strong foundation upon which to build New Mexico's higher education future.

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