

Symposium Ideas/Issues

After listening to the symposium presentations and discussions, please describe the most important items you believe Maryland should focus on in each of the categories listed below.

1. Appropriate Share of Higher Education Costs

- Students should not bear the majority of the cost, either State or federal government should provide more money. Share burden among State, institutions, students, and taxpayers/business sector.
- Various levels of formula funding/resource distribution that address the changing demographics. Model must address changing demographics.
- Reach consensus on the appropriate level of tuition and fees.
- Tie to percent of personal/per capita income or share of State budget
- Keep tuition predictable and reasonable
- Two part solution: short term=How do we solve the issue over the next few years and what is the long range funding plan?
- The share of resources needs to be looked at institution-by-institution and not generalized.
- There is no single appropriate cost sharing formula to follow; fixed ratio of tuition and State GF skews funding – State cuts and tuition cuts go hand in hand.
- Family income is a fair measure of what people can afford. Annual increases in family income plus State GF increases would have to match the annual increases in the cost of attendance (which is greater than tuition) to fix the relative cost to families at today's level.
- Debt at graduation is a fair metric of affordability.
- Need a “cost sharing policy” that we will stand behind in both **Good and Bad** times.
- High tuition – high aid is a failing policy because the aid never materializes.
- Funding models should be a combination of **Formula** (peer) based and **Base Plus-UP** incremental. Formula based supports equity, enrollment growth, quality, and competitiveness and Base Plus is more flexible and keeps the lights on for most places.

- Need a **highly visible** student aid program – look at Oklahoma or Indiana.
- Don't spend too much money on the same people.
- Virginia model makes no sense because there is no logical connection between funding and regulation. The only value is that it forces a conversation about state and university goals.
- Tuition policy, State support and financial aid **must** be dealt with in the **same policy**. Best tuition, financial aid, and appropriation policy is by WSCHE
- Tuition increases should be moderate, practical and **predictable**.
- The money is there if the State wants to spend it. A two percent increase in State support would increase higher education support more than 25% nationwide and it would be greater for Maryland.
- Stability in State support for higher education and a rational approach to determining the State's investment in need-based financial aid.
- What is the State expected to provide for higher education?

2. **Balancing Quality and Access/Affordability**

- Focus on minority and underserved populations and ensure that they can attend college
- Find the gaps and work on those only.
- Improve financial aid and need-based aid from the State level.
- Additional State support.
- Provide all MD residents with an opportunity to attend higher education institutions at a fair and manageable cost.
- Look at minorities' ability to dream of higher education and have it actually happen
- Virginia plan should be an option as a way to share quality and access between the school and state. If we are not funding the school – provide more independence.
- Should be considered equally over a reasonable period of time.

- Access without quality is a shame.
- The crisis is that access has overcome the values in quality and standards. Anyone can evaluate access; few can judge quality.
- What Maryland needs is really important! Deciding what we need is step one. How can we get more of what we need with the money we have is step two. Deciding where additional resources should be spent to get more of what we need is step three.
- Access/affordability is a legislative goal. Constituent-based reasoning. Concern about student success and program quality lag.
- Access, success, affordability and quality must be in balance over the System.
- These are 3 different concepts. All are important and should be addressed/considered in the commission's deliberations.
- Don't fall into the "access vs. quality" mindset.
- What investment should the State make in higher education to provide access to quality institutions and support a knowledge-based economy?

3. Accountability

- Uniform standards and performance indicators
- Institution and tax payers
- Fund existing base at appropriate level now. Level the playing field first.
- Tie to State goals.
- Governor should put funds in the budget so that MHEC can provide incentive funds to public colleges and universities to accomplish the goals in the State Plan.
- Reevaluate current measures (MFR and others) within the context of broad State goals
- Pledge to students/families that tuition will stay at a certain rate. State will fund X to institution/ individual student if they do what they should.
- Institutional performance must reflect State investment

- Public State needs to bring it to the forefront as a major issue. Some form of tax for higher education.
- Must play a role otherwise we are throwing good money after bad with no improvement in outcomes.
- Focus on State objectives like: State goals, shared responsibility between the State, university and business community, division of labor, State goals might be the rate of degree attainment or student success, economic development, service to underserved populations, ...
- Don't bog down on accountability and efficiency. Cost savings are not justified by the implementation costs and the loss of productivity. Accountability measures often send you in the wrong direction or give you a false measure of achievement.
- Efficiencies leading to saved resources should be distributed back to the generating institutions to incentivize further efficiencies.
- Link accountability to the Maryland State Plan
- Appropriate accountability measures will need to be part of the formula, but they may be different depending upon institutional mission.
- See that the State plan, CIP, and MFR are in synch. See that the annual budget operationalizes goals and objectives.
- Need a State goal statement: access, success, quality, affordability, capacity, sustainability – all along the pipeline. Not just a higher education goal for the State.
- The frame of reference should be State Goals.

4. Other Suggestions

- More focus on the role of community colleges
- Higher Ed Rainy Day Fund, college savings tax exemption/deduction/etc., merit-based State scholarships as well as need-based, tuition reductions or exemption for taking public need job (provided by State).
- Look at models in other states for ideas (VA, KY, CA, and others).
- Build on strength. Don't invest in weakness. People vote with their feet.

- Find the right message. A constitutional amendment expressing the value of higher education could stimulate the public conversation that is needed in the State.
- A 10-year, \$1.2 billion capital program in Connecticut was enthusiastically supported by the legislature and the governor, leveraged subsequent appropriations, was a source of pride for the state and was bond funded. It moved the state from and “**also ran**” with respect to the Midwestern public university powerhouses to an equally competitive stature. It was very effective and economically painless. It was instituted at a time of fiscal downturn.
- Demographic gaps are not just about money. K-12, socioeconomic issues, financial aid
- Typical **wrong ideas** include: 1. there is a funding formula out there, 2. just by spending more money you will solve the problem, and 3. you don’t need more money to solve the problem.
- Working with what we have in place, making necessary adjustments might be better than attempting to build a new funding model.
- Higher education institutions should stop saying that they got the short end of the stick in funding because of Thornton and look more to themselves as all State agencies and locals are being asked to do.

Please check one or more of the following categories that describe(s) you:

- 6 Commission Member
- University or College President
- Member of the State Legislature
- Member of the Business Community
- 3 University or College Faculty or Staff
- 1 University or College Student
- 4 Staff of a State Agency
- 1 Other