General Cross-State Questions

1. Please highlight state and team personnel changes and how they might impact the work of the team and the initiative.
   Project Director Mary Sheehy Moe announced her plans to retire effective November 1, 2010. Commissioner Stearns plans to begin the search process for Moe’s replacement as soon as possible. Mary has identified the following priorities for her activities in the next three months: listening tour, dual enrollment operational guidelines, identification of the Regents’ Transfer Core, implementation of the related instruction alignment guidelines, and planning for roll-out of the university system community colleges in July 2011.

2. Do you have any questions, or are you in need of any specific assistance from any of the initiative partners?

   We have an immediate need for consultants on the concurrent enrollment model for dual enrollment, particularly to identify best practices aligned with NACEP standards, and data collection. Less immediate, but of great importance, is the need to strategize around the challenge of innovation for adult learners, and more information on the ALFI Survey used in the WICHE study, “Nontraditional No More.”

   As Dr. Moe transitions out of project direction, it will be helpful for the new director to have some assistance in keeping the project high-profile and sustaining its momentum.

3. Please list upcoming activities and events of the team/state that are relevant to the initiative.

   | July 29 | Regents Workgroup |
   | August 3 | Leadership Council (Montana University System CEOs, CAOs, CFOs) |
   | August 4-5 | Chief Academic Officers Retreat |
   | August 11 | Workforce Responsiveness Workgroup meeting #2 |
   | August 12 | Implementation Team Dinner |
   | August 13 | NGA-supported Governor's forum on adult credentialing |
   | Aug 26 | Dual enrollment discussion with Montana Digital Academy board |
   | (Any others between now and then?) | Biweekly implementation team teleconference (even-numbered Thu.) |
   | Sept-Oct | COLLEGE!Now community tours |
Follow-up on activities from last month:

June 28  ABLE workgroup meeting provided focus for future activities.

July 8-9  WICHE planning committee for a WICHE Two-Year Education Academic Alliance has identified a mission and goals for its members, many of which align with the productivity agenda. A FIPSE grant proposal for development of an interstate “transfer passport” has been submitted.

July 12  Joint Developmental/ABLE Meeting with Bruce Vandal, Treva Berryman brought approximately 50 workgroup members and developmental faculty to engage in a highly interactive session on developmental education. The Developmental Workgroup is particularly interesting in developing new models for delivery of developmental education, based on Tennessee’s experiences.

July 15  At the presentation of Operational Guidelines for Dual Enrollment to Board of Public Education, MEA-MFT endorsed the guidelines, the Board’s Executive Director expressed appreciation for being consulted, and the Board praised the inclusive process and the clarity of the product.

July 20  At the Board of Regents Meeting/Retreat, the College!Now agenda once again was a high-priority agenda item. The Regents provided further guidance on the dual enrollment guidelines and expressed continued interest in the roll-out and rebranding of the COTs as university system community colleges.

State-Specific Questions

1. Please summarize the team’s activities and progress this month, as they relate to the following (taken from the scope of work):

   a. The goals for overall project coordination?
      Implementation team continues with regular conference calls, and state advisory team met in person on June 30 and weighed in on several key issues including approach to ABLE services and dual enrollment, integration of full mission especially at co-located campuses, and need for business models which may include changes to mill levies.

   b. The goals for communications and engagement?
      Activities this month include:
      - Planning for August 12 Governor’s Forum and September/October listening tours.
      - Preparing RFP for new consultants on communication and engagement.
c. The goals for bringing the community college mission to all two-year campuses? Including activities of the four work groups:

i. Developmental

The Developmental Workgroup is newly energized by the July 12 session with Bruce Vandal and Treva Berryman. Chaired by OCHE’s Dr. Jan Clinard, they are identifying new approaches to developmental education to explore and the data points that could drive decision-making.

ii. Adult-friendly

The Governor’s Forum on Adult Credentialing is the major focus of College!Now activities for August.

iii. Adult basic literacy education (ABLE)

State advisory team discussed alternative approaches to bringing ABLE to all two-year campuses. There is a strong preference for relying on collaboration, rather than statutory changes, to bring this about, although some of the two-year campus leaders feel they need legislation to make it happen in their areas. There are some good models around the state already, including one in Great Falls where public education still runs the programs but they have moved onto the COT campus, and the faculty is integrated into departmental meetings. An innovative program in Helena puts GED completers on the COT campus, but has a separate program off-campus for basic skills.

iv. Workforce responsiveness

Evaluation consultant Anne Clark is working with workgroup leaders to develop a feedback tool for employers regarding the workforce responsiveness of two-year campuses. President Karas and Dean Cech will facilitate discussion on survey content, sampling, and methodology at the August 11 meeting of business, industry and economic development representatives in advance of the Governor’s Forum, and the instrument will be further refined based on their feedback.

d. The goals for making two-year colleges regional hubs?

There is agreement that the regional hubs should see themselves as service centers, reaching out to the regions, but that their boundaries should be informal, allowing existing relationships across regions to continue, and permitting students to take advantage of opportunities outside their regions. That said, the expectation will remain that the regional campus is the primary point of contact for high schools and businesses in the area. The advisory team discussed overlaying the service areas with those of DOLI and OPI, and coordinating to the extent possible. This subject will be an agenda item for the Montana University System Leadership Council on August 3.

Including activities of the two work groups:

i. High School/College transitions

Presented proposed operational guidelines for dual enrollment (and other opportunities for high school students to earn college credits) to Board of
Public Education, and continued discussion with implementation team. There is now broad agreement in nearly all areas, the exception being whether high school students taking dual enrollment courses must take them for college credit. Dr. Moe has asked for advice from two tribal college leaders on how to invite tribal college participation and plans to convene the tribal college leaders to discuss participation. Plan to seek approval from regents in September, raise awareness/promote the new guidelines at fall teachers and administrators conferences, and implement the guidelines through a statewide template for interlocal agreements in February 2011 for the next academic years. As the Montana Digital Academy rolls out dual enrollment online, these guidelines will be followed as well.

Several administrative, financial and operational issues proved too tall a hurdle for Fall 2010 implementation of online dual enrollment. Implementation team members now believe they can get these issues resolved in time for a spring launch. As a fall-back option, the Montana Digital Academy may decide to contract with one two-year college to provide online dual enrollment opportunities, and the issues could be worked out for a statewide, multi-campus approach for Fall 2011.

ii. Curriculum coordination and alignment

Both the regents transfer core and aligned general education are on hold until faculty return in August. Both will be subjects for discussion at the August 4-5 CAO Retreat.

e. The goals for technology infrastructure?
Including activities of the two work groups:

i. Technology for efficiency

Banner implementation at Miles and Dawson community colleges, and integration for MUS campuses, continue on schedule for full implementation Spring Semester 2011.

ii. Virtual community college

To reduce confusion between the Montana Digital Academy and VCC, we hope to collaborate to get a single portal to dual enrollment online through a link on the MTDA site. This suggests a different role for the VCC, most likely focusing on adult learners.

f. The goals for outcomes-based funding?

Mick continues to work through model with campus fiscal officers, assisted by Dennis Jones of NCHEMS.