

ITEM 143-107-R0509

Adoption Of Recommendations Resulting From The Review Of Montana's Policy Framework For Two-Year Education

THAT:

The Board of Regents of Higher Education adopt the recommendations resulting from the review of Montana's policy framework for two-year education, as presented at the conclusion of the attached report on the review.

EXPLANATION:

As part of the Making Opportunity Affordable initiative funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education, Montana has advanced a "productivity agenda" focused on increasing two-year college enrollments, degree completions, successful transfer, and cost-effectiveness. To plan for change, Montana has engaged in an in-depth "opportunity analysis"/policy audit of its policy framework for two-year education. Over 40 individuals, representing such stakeholders as the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Office of Public Instruction, the Board of Public Education, the Board of Regents, MEA/MFT, community colleges, tribal colleges, and various campuses of the Montana University System, participated in the review.

The policy framework for two-year education in Montana includes all state-level policies, administrative rules, court decisions, statutes, and tax provisions affecting two-year college enrollments, degree completions, and cost-effectiveness. These documents were compiled and analyzed with respect to how well they support Montana's two-year college productivity agenda in five critically important areas:

- Readiness
- Access/Capacity/Retention
- Curriculum and Transfer/Job Placement
- Affordability
- Efficiency

The attached report summarizes the analysis and concludes with recommendations to advance Montana's two-year education productivity agenda. The recommendation requiring the most immediate action is Section III.A, recommending the integration of information systems at selected Montana two-year colleges to create a unified web-based enrollment system. The 2009 legislature allocated \$2 million in economic stimulus funding to this project through the Montana Recovery Act. To accomplish project objectives, work must begin in June.

ATTACHMENTS:

Making Opportunity Affordable: Report on the Policy Framework for Two-Year Education in Montana