

PENNSYLVANIA'S STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Dear Friends,

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the four public hearings held last week in connection with the Board of Governors' consideration of potential university integrations. We are cataloging the comments received and will use our regional and statewide evaluation process to assess how we could incorporate what we've heard into the plans before they come back to the Board in July. We will provide an initial overview of our thinking at a public Board workshop that has been scheduled for June 30. Details about the workshop will be made available on our website in advance.

It is important to emphasize what these integrations seek to accomplish in addition to meeting the financial imperatives that the System faces:

- Enabling all our institutions—including our smaller schools—to offer the comprehensive breadth of academic programs that their students and their communities demand and deserve while maintaining their historic names, identifies, and reputations;
- Retaining on-campus, in-person education at all of our universities (no institutions will be closed in this process), thereby enabling students to enjoy the benefits of a residential educational experience and to take most of their classes in person—without travel between campuses;
- Reaching new student populations—including adult learners—through industry-recognized short-term certificates, pathways from certificates to degrees, and flexible program delivery models; and
- Preserving the positive economic, cultural, and other impacts in the communities and regions where our institutions are located.

These plans are important, but—if approved by the Board—are just the early steps in integrations processes that are multi-phased by design and will take years to complete with the six universities. Throughout all potential phases, we remain committed to learning continually and improving upon the consultative and transparent nature of the work. We intend to remain engaged with all university stakeholders and with the General Assembly.

Public higher education is a partnership between public institutions and the state, and we remain equally committed to both transforming the System and advocating aggressively for additional support from the Commonwealth. The result must be a System that provides pathways to success for students while also achieving financial sustainability.

Thank you for your commitment to our students and our Commonwealth and for taking time to provide input to the integration project. We hope you will remain engaged in this process, which you can follow online at www.passhe.edu/integrations.

Cindy Shapira, Board of Governors Chair

Dan Greenstein, Chancellor