

Agenda Item 3.17 Regents' statement on providing service to underserved areas of the state and the creation of new institutions of higher education

WHEREAS, citizens of Ohio increasingly appreciate the fact that their economic future depends on their access to and success in higher education; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio Board of Regents recognizes the importance of serving citizens in all areas of the state and is deeply committed to the goal of increasing access to affordable, quality higher education for all Ohioans; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio Board of Regents is committed to working with communities to design creative and cost-effective strategies to meet this goal, including such innovative ideas as consortia of existing institutions of higher education, increased use of distance learning opportunities, and the creation of county higher education advancement boards; and

WHEREAS, more and more citizens in underserved areas of the state are petitioning state leaders to create new community colleges, but are generally unaware of the resources and time needed to become an accredited community college, and are unaware of the array of existing educational resources already available throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, state operating and capital funding for higher education has been flat or reduced in the past four years, and state resources are not available for the construction of new facilities and creation of new institutions; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio Board of Regents is committed to using the state's resources in an effective and efficient manner to serve communities without further weakening funding to existing institutions of higher education.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Board of Regents strongly supports the goal of providing more Ohio citizens access to higher education through creative and cost-effective strategies that maximize the use of existing institutions of higher education and other educational providers, and the Board of Regents is committed to working with communities on such ventures; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that until such alternative strategies are exhausted, the Board is opposed to the creation of new institutions of higher education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the Board of Regents and its staff will make active efforts to contact institutions and citizens of underserved areas of the state to facilitate access to higher education in these communities.