

OHIO BOARD OF REGENTS

MONTHLY MEETING

CHANCELLOR'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

APRIL 19, 2001

I. INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION OF GIFT TO DEAN RIEDL

A. Thank you, Madam Chair.

B. It is always a pleasure to hold our meetings at Ohio's campuses. This month, we are grateful for the kind hospitality of The Ohio State University-Mansfield Campus; the Ohio State University Board of Trustees; the OSU-Mansfield Board of Trustees; Dean John Riedl; Ohio State University President Brit Kirwan; and the Mansfield Campus faculty, staff and students. Special thanks also go to our presenters today:

1. Dean Riedl, of course, who will discuss how Ohio State's regional campuses fit in the Ohio State University Academic Plan
2. Eileen Smith, director of OSU-Mansfield's Center for Corporate and Community Education
3. Rhonda Stannard, program manager of the Center for Corporate and Community Education

4. Eileen and Rhonda will talk to us about the campus's partnerships with local schools in workforce development

C. Before I get to the rest of my remarks, I'd like to make a brief presentation...

D. Dean Riedl, on behalf of the Ohio Board of Regents and our staff, it is my pleasure to present to you and your colleagues, Shelly Minck and Laura Grimm, with small tokens of our appreciation for hosting us here at The Ohio State University-Mansfield Campus. We sincerely appreciate the time and efforts you, your Board of Trustees and your faculty, staff and students put into hosting us and making us feel welcome and comfortable. Our stay here has been productive and stimulating.

II. THE HIGHER EDUCATION BUDGET: A CALL TO ARMS

A. Alas, reports of the state's budget discussions indicate that the future of the state of Ohio is now at a crisis stage.

B. As we discussed in our meeting of the Committee of the Whole on the Budget this morning, yesterday at a special cabinet meeting Governor Taft called in Columbus, he reported on a proposal come to by the legislative leaders and himself. That proposal would cut the proposed funding of state agencies by the more than \$600 million dollars in cuts from the Governor's proposed Executive Budget for Fiscal Years 2002-2003. Higher education was not exempted from this cut.

C. If this plan is implemented, it will diminish the quality of life that Ohioans enjoy. Ohio's economic development will be sacrificed

through reducing the state's already mediocre investments in higher education.

D. If Ohio's leaders insist on funding primary and secondary education at the expense of higher education, Ohio's high school graduates – and future leaders – will find a higher education system offering reduced opportunities for their development to meet the challenges of the 21st century Knowledge Economy.

E. The Regents' higher education budget request was crafted to create Ohio's 21st century economy with an educated and technologically competent workforce.

1. The budget request includes investments in cutting-edge research, development and commercialization in biotechnology, nanotechnology and information technology, and bold moves to begin building technological skills in our state's entire workforce, to create new economic opportunity for all Ohioans
2. Other initiatives focused on building partnerships in which colleges and universities would work with the K-12 community to produce real improvements in teacher development and student achievement in Ohio's elementary and secondary schools

F. Instead of these major advances forward, the state's biennial operating budget is shaping up to throw Ohio backwards

G. Although the specific cuts to the Regents' budget have not yet been revealed, let me give you some idea as to the implications of cutting some of the elements of the higher education budget, as some have suggested

1. If Access Challenge funding were eliminated, as some are reported to be advocating:
 - a. **Tuition at Ohio's access campuses could increase by as much as 40% just to maintain current operational levels**
 - b. **Two-year college tuition is already 5th highest in the U.S. Such a change could make us #1 – a dubious and ominous distinction**

2. If Success Challenge were eliminated:
 - a. **Services and programs to assist at-risk students graduate on time will be decimated**
 - b. **Hence, fewer of Ohio's at-risk and low-income students will graduate from Ohio's universities**

3. If Jobs Challenge were eliminated:
 - a. **Workforce development training programs provided by Ohio's community and technical colleges will be cut, setting Ohio back in alleviating the shortage of technology-skilled workers at that the state's businesses so desperately need**
 - b. **Governor Taft's commitment to retrain steel industry workers highlights the critical importance of these training programs for all transitional industries**

4. If Research Challenge were eliminated:
 - c. **Ohio will likely lose more than 10 dollars in federal/industrial funding for every dollar cut in Research Challenge – that is the leverage that Research Challenge has generated during the**

state's 15 years of investment in university research through this highly successful program

H. In summary, reductions in higher education will seriously damage Ohio's campuses' abilities to provide students with the instructional resources they need and deserve to be effective contributors to the economy of our state

I. Our college and university presidents, trustees, students, businesspeople, and average citizens have worked extremely hard in making the case to the public about adequately funding higher education – and I thank each and every one of you. But much more needs to be done!

III. UNPRECEDENTED SUPPORT FROM MEDIA AND PUBLIC

A. This is a defining moment in Ohio's economic history and higher education has received what I believe to be unprecedented support by statewide media.

B. Since the Regents introduced the higher education budget proposal in September, more than 35 editorials have appeared supporting higher education because of its relationship to building a strong workforce and economy for Ohio. The Cleveland Plain Dealer, the Akron Beacon Journal, the Columbus Dispatch, the Dayton Daily News, the Toledo Blade, the Cincinnati Enquirer, the Ohio State University Lantern, and smaller daily newspapers from around the state have been heartily supportive

1. In addition, the Regents, your colleagues in higher education and I have made numerous appearances on radio and television talk shows

pointing out the indisputable link between the state's future prosperity and higher education

2. We all must continue and enhance our public information efforts on behalf of the future of Ohio

C. Unlike past years, when we could look forward to enhancements in our budget in the House, and then the Senate, and then the Joint Conference Committee, that is not the case now. It is not “business as usual” at the Statehouse.

D. The discussions currently underway between the Governor and legislative leaders will set the final framework for the amount allocated to higher education.

3. At best, we have a small window of opportunity to influence changes to the budget the Governor and General Assembly are contemplating

E. It is crucial that higher education's stakeholders, including students, faculty and staff, but most importantly, business and community leaders and K-12 educators, unite and immediately make their views known to Governor Taft and our legislators. Higher education must remain accessible and affordable to all Ohioans, and our elected policy makers must fuel the economic engine that we all know higher education is to create Ohio's 21st century economy – or be held accountable for the dire consequences to Ohio's future.

F. Before I provide the final section of my report, regarding these concerns, Madam Chair, I note the special resolution you may wish to consider. I will read it as it is being distributed. (See attached.)

IV. KUDOS

A. In the face of these disturbing announcements, Ohio's colleges and universities continue to focus on serving their students, communities and the taxpayers. Among the notable milestones ...

B. Congratulations go to:

1. The University of Rio Grande, which is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year; Rio Grande Community College also shares in the celebration
2. As I am the recipient of an honorary degree from the University, and hence, an alumnus, I'm honored to note that the university and its president, Barry Dorsey, take great pride in the fact that Rio Grande was one of the first institutions of higher education in the U.S. founded by a woman; Permelia Atwood promised her husband on his deathbed that she would start the college, a dream the two of them shared along with a Baptist minister, the Reverend Ira Haning, for 25 years
3. A number of special events will be held this year, culminating in the dedication of a new Alumni Memorial Bell Tower on September 13th, the date that classes began in 1876.

C. Congratulations also go to:

1. The University of Akron's Graduate Outreach Program and Shawnee State University's Graduate Center, which recently received the Award for Excellence/Creative Credit Program Award from the University Continuing Education Association, Region Four
2. The award, bestowed jointly upon the two universities, recognizes innovation, longevity, quality, contributions to adult/continuing education, program cost effectiveness and partnerships between Akron and Shawnee State

3. Akron and Shawnee are currently offering a master's degree in educational administration, based at Shawnee State, and hope to offer a Ph.D. in education beginning this fall on the SSU campus, an Ed.D. in educational administration beginning in Spring 2002, and to restart SSU's master's program in educational administration this fall.

D. Finally, congratulations go to:

1. All of Ohio's community colleges, which are celebrating April as "National Community College Month"!
2. The month recalls the contribution community colleges have made across the country in educating and training people for the future
3. Each fall, 47% of the nation's freshmen attend a community college and 48% of all minority students attend a community college
4. There are currently 10.4 million students enrolled in 1,132 community colleges in the United States
5. Ohio's two-year campuses – and all of higher education, for that matter – should be proud of the work they do every day in educating Ohioans. I personally am full of pride for all of Ohio's colleges and universities – two-year, four-year, public and private – especially now, at this critical time in our state's history.

E. Madam Chair, that concludes my report for this month.