

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE PLANNING TASK FORCE**

**Final Report to the Joint Appropriations Committee  
and  
Joint Education Committee**

**November 2009**

The Community College Planning Task Force November 2008 report to the Joint Appropriations Committee and the Joint Education Committee contain the major portion of Task Force recommendations responding to the mandates of 2008 Wyoming Session Laws, Chapter 48, Section 327. This 2008 provision contained within the 2009-2010 biennial budget bill established the Task Force and specified those issues to be addressed by Task Force study efforts. The majority of recommendations contained within this report were subsequently adopted by the Legislature in enactment of 2009 Wyoming Session Laws, Chapter 211, legislation forwarded by the Joint Education Committee in response to Task Force report recommendations.

This report documents recommendations of the Task Force, those recommendations subsequently adopted by the Legislature, and recommendations which will be submitted to the Joint Education Committee for introduction in the 2010 Budget Session, and attaches these recommendations and enactments to specific study requirements contained in the 2008 budget bill.

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Provisions within the 2008 law which specify Task Force study requirements were contained in subsection (b) of Section 327 of the budget bill. Each legislative study requirement specified by law is followed by Task Force action and subsequent legislative response. Task Force action and subsequent legislative response are italicized.

**2008 Wyoming Session Laws, Chapter 48, Section 327(b).**

(b) The task force shall review and evaluate the existing community college system and in conjunction with the statewide college system strategic plan required under 2008 House Bill 0017, if enacted into law, develop recommendations to:

*2008 Task Force report recommendations established a process to develop and implement a statewide system strategic plan focusing on state interests in the post-secondary education programs. (2008 Task Force Report, pages 5-7.) 2009 legislation incorporated a detailed, step-by-step process leading to plan development by 2010. (2009 Laws, Chapter 211, Section 4.) 2009 interim activities of the Task Force involved in large part, and in conjunction with the Community College Commission, the development and forwarding of the systemwide strategic plan. The final plan will be presented to the Legislature at the commencement of the 2010 Budget Session.*

(i) Conduct a statewide study on the current capacity level of the college system based upon established student population projections and projected state academic and workforce needs and provide estimates on recommended future capacity needs;

*As stated above, 2008 Task Force report recommendations called for the creation of a biennial strategic planning process to maintain an integrated statewide community college system strategically planned, attached to statewide interests and serving as a basis for budgeting state dollars addressing college system operational and facility needs. (2008 Task Force Report, pages 5-7, 8-9 and 12-14; 2009 Laws, Chapter 211, W.S. 21-18-202(h) as amended in Section 2.) Through recommendation of the strategic planning process and college system operational budget and capital construction programs, the Task Force implemented a system focusing on and requiring consideration of the identified parameters specified by this paragraph; i.e., system capacity based upon student population projections, academic and workforce needs and future systemwide capacity AS DEFINED BY THE STRATEGIC PLAN.*

(ii) Create a system which evaluates and prioritizes community college capital construction;

*The Task Force recommended the establishment of a capital construction process within the Community College Commission which evaluates and prioritizes college projects. (2008 Task Force Report, pages 12-14.) The Legislature subsequently adopted the recommended process in statute. (2009 Laws, Chapter 211, W.S. 21-18-225 as created in section 1.)*

(iii) Identify options for funding of community college capital construction;

*The Task Force did not consider revenue options in the 2008 interim preceding the 2009 general session in order to narrow study focus to governance, operational funding and capital construction. The rationale for limiting study focus at that time was that this approach would enable development of more comprehensive and concrete recommendations. Following the 2009 session, the Task Force devoted three separate meetings to discussion and consideration of revenue options for supporting community colleges. No consensus was developed for recommending any specific revenue source as a means to fund both community college operations as well as capital construction needs.*

(iv) Allocate programming to meet the needs of students in the most cost effective manner;

*Task Force recommendations direct systemwide prioritization for purposes of state funds through the establishment of statewide interests defined by the strategic planning process. Additional program review authority granted to the Community College Commission in establishing a systemwide budget based upon identified state interests was recommended by the Task Force and adopted by the Legislature. (2008 Task Force Report, pages 8-9; 2009 Laws, Chapter 211, W.S. 21-18-202(d) as amended by Section 2.)*

(v) Address the needs of industry in the development of a trained and skilled workforce;

*Task Force recommendations included career-technical education and training programs as a component of systemwide strategic planning, to the extent necessary to develop a workforce with the requisite skills meeting the needs of new and existing business and industry. Business and industry also comprise one of several sectors designated as college system stakeholders in strategic plan development and maintenance. (2008 Task Force Report, pages 5-7.) Enacted legislation included Task Force report recommendations. (2009 Laws, Chapter 211, W.S. 21-18-202(h) as amended in section 2.)*

(vi) Restructure the governance of the community college system to provide for unified oversight and accountability;

*The Task Force recommended the role of the Community College Commission be strengthened relative to system oversight and accountability in executing statewide interests identified through the strategic planning process. Performance benchmarks and indicators were established and course completion is being considered as a factor in state operational fund distribution in addition to student enrollment. Enacted legislation incorporated Task Force recommendations in this regard. (2008 Task Force Report, pages 5-6, recommendation #4 and pages 8-9; 2009 Laws, Chapter 211, W.S. 21-18-202(c), (d) and (h) as amended in section 2.)*

(vii) Explore a statewide community college system in respect to governance, revenue generation and representation on the commission; and

*Task Force college system governance recommendations essentially continue the existing structure under which the Community College Commission functions as a state coordinating agency for the seven community college boards of trustees. Commission membership is statewide, with at least three but not less than four of seven members representing counties in which colleges are located. However, Task Force recommendations expand the role of the Commission with respect to the allocation of state funds by tying fund distribution to state interests as defined by the strategic plan. This includes both operational funds distributed under a fund allocation model as well as capital construction funds distributed pursuant to a needs prioritization process reflecting state interests defined by the strategic plan. Legislation enacted Task Force report recommendations. (2008 Task Force Report, pages 8-9 and 12-14; 2009 Laws, Chapter 211, W.S. 21-18-203(a) and 21-18-205(c) and (e) as amended by section 2, and W.S. 21-18-225 as created by section 1.) Not addressed by Task Force recommendations were consideration of any statewide revenues attached to the college system, nor the impact of statewide representation in light of any recommended statewide revenue contribution. As noted above, 2009 Task Force meeting deliberations failed to achieve consensus on any one approach. Further, current economic conditions limited options available to the Task Force for consideration and discussion.*

(viii) Create a seamless educational system between K-12 to post secondary education.

*2008 Task Force recommendations specified dual and concurrent enrollment programs, under which students are provided the capability of receiving post-secondary education course*

instruction while attending high school, as a statewide interest for system accessibility. Further, the Task Force identified college outreach programs and distance education technology as a mechanism to achieve statewide access to post-secondary education. Due to the complexity involved in addressing statewide distance education technology, the Task Force requested the Governor undertake necessary study through executive branch agencies in developing legislative recommendations. Enacted legislation incorporated Task Force recommendations. (2008 Task Force Report, page 5 at recommendation #1 and #2; 2009 Laws, Chapter 211, W.S. 21-18-202(h)(ii).) 2009 Task Force interim study included refinement of the identified outreach efforts, resulting in specific recommendations forwarded to the Joint Education Committee which ensure statewide access to outreach programs and result in seamless education. A component of the recommendations forwarded to JEC include coordination with the P-16 Council, which group is currently developing a uniform statewide approach to dual and concurrent enrollment programs. Task Force recommendations are based upon information generated through data collected on college and high school dual and concurrent enrollment programs, as well as data pertaining to post-secondary education programs provided to high school students through BOCES.