



Board of Governor Meeting: President's Report December 2, 2016

Good morning.

This has been a difficult week for our University, especially the North Carolina Central community, as we mourn the premature loss of Chancellor Deb Saunders-White.

Deb brought a wealth of experience and unmatched passion to the job, and during her time in Durham, she made students and their success her laser focus. She grew enrollment, improved retention and graduation rates, and launched well-designed transfer and dual-enrollment programs.

Deb also brought a renewed sense of pride and possibility to NC Central, leaving the university stronger than she found it. We are all better people for knowing her.

Please continue to keep Deb's family and the NCCU community in your thoughts and prayers. I hope many of you will plan to attend the memorial this afternoon.

Second, a note to say how thankful I am to Chancellors Anderson, Cummings, and Staton for the tireless work they have put in during the weeks following Hurricane Matthew. Your schools weren't the only ones affected, of course, but you bore the brunt of it.

And it's been inspiring to see each of you help rally and lead your communities and the whole region in recovery. You kept your students safe, kept your campuses secure, and got back on your feet incredibly quickly.

And you did exactly what good public institutions ought to do — you rolled up your sleeves and helped your neighbors. I've visited Pembroke and seen firsthand the goodwill and genuine care that faculty, staff, and students have shown for the communities around them.

I know it'll be a long time before eastern North Carolina fully recovers, but I also know we're in it for the long haul.

My thanks, as well, to all of you who pitched in during the days and weeks after the storm. Across the system, our campus leaders reached out to one another to offer both immediate and ongoing support.

Groups of students and faculty from across the University have arranged service trips to participate in clean-up and recovery efforts, with more planned. It's brought out the very best in our system, and I'm proud of that.

As usual, we've had a very full and robust set of meetings. I'm always impressed at how much discussion we're able to pack in such a short period of time, and I appreciate all of the prep work from you all and from the GA staff that makes it possible.

I know you've heard me say it a thousand times already, but I want to ensure we're getting the very most from your time, and keeping our meetings focused on big-picture issues where Board guidance and debate can be most meaningful.

The strategic planning process has been a great example of that, and yesterday's presentation was no exception. We've heard a lot of fantastic feedback and ideas in recent weeks during our public listening sessions, and from the thousands of people who have weighed in through our online survey.

And I think we all share the goal of giving our University a broad framework — a set of overarching priorities — and letting our campus leaders and trustees find the right paths to getting there.

What we heard yesterday was the fundamental importance of having measurable outcomes tied to real incentives, so everyone is on the same page when it comes to achieving a more effective, more accessible University.

This is not about managing or tinkering with the day-to-day affairs of our institutions or second-guessing the very capable leaders we've hired to run them. It's about putting our money where our mouths are, making sure that we're paying for the kind of performance we want and need from this great University.

I appreciate all the work you're doing to help get us there — we have right sized the governance, regulation, and oversight of the place.

We'll be building on that strategic framework as we head into the next legislative session. Our message to lawmakers is clear — we've done our homework, and we're ready to move forward. We've listened, we've set clear and measurable goals, and we're asking for the trust and the tools needed to get the job done.

We're going to be asking for greater flexibility for our campus leaders to make the tough decisions and targeted investments required to reach our ambitious goals for the University.

And we'll be asking for some strategic investments to help spur innovation across the system.

Legislators have shown a clear commitment to having a university that is affordable and accessible for all North Carolinians, and I'm confident that we'll be able to use this strategic plan to emphasize those shared goals.

We had a good conversation in the budget and finance committee meeting yesterday, and based on that feedback, my team is going to continue to refine our agenda, and we'll have significantly more detail on that agenda when we reconvene in January.

I look forward to working with all of you in making our case during the long session. Now, for a few other updates:

Tech Task Force

The task force on the future of online learning has met eight times since I convened the group in July. They have worked diligently, guided by the highly capable leadership of Chancellor Mary Grant, to assess what other systems are doing, examine our current status, evaluate business models, and reflect on how technology can help us further our goals of access, affordability, and degree attainment.

I am looking forward to reviewing many possible options to strengthen our efforts they have identified, and sharing those findings with you in the near future. And I thank Peter Hans for his role in this work.

Vidant Health/East Carolina University

You may also recall that back in August, leaders from UNC-Chapel Hill, the UNC Health Care System, East Carolina University, and Vidant Health gathered to discuss medical education in the university system and health care delivery throughout the state.

With the assistance of BCG, we have engaged in a deliberate process of gathering relevant facts, interviewing key thought-leaders, and analyzing potential steps we might take to better serve the people of North Carolina.

During our January meeting, we will present to you a status update on the 2008 plan the Board of Governors approved with an eye to the future.

Elizabeth City State University

The ECSU Working Group continues to develop recommendations to promote the future success of the campus. The working group is focused on academic program planning and needed financial investments in campus facilities and operations. They expect to complete their work in January.

Work also continues on the implementation of two new tuition programs adopted by the 2016 General Assembly with the goal of improving UNC's affordability and accessibility: the Guaranteed Tuition program and the NC Promise tuition program.

Effective immediately, all full-time resident undergraduates will receive a guarantee of fixed tuition for four-year, continuous enrollment.

NC Promise

As you recall, the NC Promise tuition program will take effect in the 2018-19 academic year. Through additional state support provided by the General Assembly, tuition at three of our campuses will be lowered to \$500 per semester for resident undergraduate students, and to \$2,500 per semester for nonresident undergraduates.

This is a significant commitment to affordability and access to a UNC education. We look forward to welcoming the first class of students that will benefit in the fall of 2018.

NC Gap

As required by legislation, we are presenting a comprehensive plan to enhance undergraduate degree completion for each of our institutions as well as related system-wide programming.

The University plans are based on detailed data analyses to identify specific subgroups of students – from first-time college students to transfer students and more – who can benefit from more targeted student success programming.

System-level approaches include predictive analytics work at 11 institutions and continued/new work with the community college system.

Lab Schools

On November 1, we submitted a report to the legislature identifying the eight institutions that will establish lab schools. We are moving quickly to prepare the first wave of schools to open as early as fall of 2017. We also have met with legislators to discuss adjustments to the law that will help us deliver an even better outcome.

To date, two of those universities, ECU and UNCW, have made public announcements along with their partner districts of Pitt County and Columbus County, respectively. We expect partnership announcements by our other participating institutions to follow shortly.

Yesterday in the Ed Planning committee meeting, representatives from ECU and Pitt County shared their plans for opening a lab school on the campus of South Greenville Elementary School.

Needless to say, we have a lot of work to do in the coming year, and as we think about what lies ahead for the University and General Administration, I want to take a few moments this morning to recognize a few dedicated public servants who have helped build and strengthen this institution over many years.

Charlie Perusse, who guided this University through some of the most challenging budget years in its history, will be leaving us at the end of the year.

All of you have worked closely with Charlie during his time in Chapel Hill, and many of you knew him when he served as State Budget Director.

So you all know that he has been a steady and steadfast advocate for this place, helping oversee changes in budgeting and policy that have made us more efficient, more transparent, and more capable in our work.

We should expect no less from a man who graduated from both NC State and UNC-Chapel Hill. Charlie, thank you for all that you've done over the past six years. Your commitment to public service has left this University and this state better off.

And as many of you have already heard, our very own Leslie Boney is heading a half-hour down the road to take charge of the Institute for Emerging Issues at NC State. It's a great opportunity for Leslie to help elevate the public profile of the kind of outreach and economic development that he has spearheaded here at GA.

For more than ten years, Leslie has helped keep our research and public service missions front-and-center, emphasizing the crucial role that the University plays in bolstering economic development and the quality of life for all North Carolinians.

He has also greatly expanded the profile of our international engagement and overseas connections, a tough but important balance to strike for a state-serving institution like ours.

Broadening the boundaries of higher education to better serve all the people of North Carolina has been his highest mission, and I am confident he'll continue that crucial work in this new venue. Leslie, we wish you the best at NCSU, and I look forward to working with you in that new role.

Kate Henz will also be leaving us to head up the street to UNC-Chapel Hill. Kate has been instrumental in our strategic planning process and has worked closely with many BOG committees on a variety of visible topics. She will be greatly missed at GA, but we're thrilled for Chapel Hill to gain her talent.

I also have the bittersweet privilege of announcing that Joni Worthington, one of the most loyal and dependable public servants this University has ever had, will be leaving us at the end of the year.

Bitter because I am already nervous about all of the history, all of the context, all of the invaluable experience that we're going to be lacking come January. Sweet because I can't begrudge a well-earned retirement from someone who has served under five UNC Presidents, a record of devotion that says a lot for Joni.

She has been an indispensable part of the senior team at General Administration for as long as anyone around here can remember, acting as a steadying influence and all-around keeper of the flame.

I'm so grateful that she agreed to stick around and help me through this first year. Joni, thank you. Try not to be too hard on us as we figure out how to steer this thing in your absence.

As always, it's a pleasure to be with you. I thank you all for your time, your work, and your steadfast commitment to this University and the citizens of this state.