The meeting was opened by John Cech, Deputy Commissioner for Two-Year and Community College Education. Introductions were made and John welcomed the group. John stressed the importance of service, communication and respect. We need to work together to reach mutual goals.

The purpose of this meeting was to revisit and discuss the goals for identifying and creating the concept of two-year college’s regional hubs. Recap from recent meetings: There is agreement that the regional hubs should see themselves as service centers, reaching out to the regions, but that their boundaries should be informal, allowing existing relationships across regions to continue, and permitting students to take advantage of opportunities outside their regions.

At the previous November 4, 2010 meeting, a Department of Labor and Industries Job Service, five region model was discussed, allowing overlap and lack of a clear service region for each campus. John stated that there wasn’t a lot of support for this particular model.

Agenda Item: The Hub Model – Questions, Comments, Recommendations

The group started with the basic questions: Why? What will be accomplished? How do we get there? The ensuing discussion resulted in the identification of many additional questions including:

How do we maximize course enrollment capacity at each campus?
How do we coordinate among/between all the 2-year entities, particularly when that campus is at capacity and cannot offer additional course seats, or when a particular course is desired that is already being offered at another campus?

How do we handle unnecessary duplication? Do we remove it? Do we allow some duplication where it makes sense based upon campus discussion and collaboration?

How do we serve isolated communities that have traditionally not been viewed as being in any particular institution’s regular service area, or that simply have not been served well in the past?

Do COTs that are part of the MSU four-year institutions also carry the land-grant mission?

Is the hub model more philosophical than the actual need?

Is there logic to having regions for clarification?

How can we create more transparency for our users in our educational opportunities?

How does branding play into the clarification and communication of two-year college roles?

How do we get comprehensive and helpful two-year college program information into the hands of the public, the school counselors, and the Job Service?

It was previously stated that all two-year colleges would adopt the community college mission. Are we still reaching for the comprehensive community college mission?

1) Two year programs
2) Full transfer mission
3) Two year colleges of Developmental Education
4) Partnerships with business, high schools, industry as well as ABLE
5) Community education and economic development – both credit and noncredit

Recommendation: It is important to clarify each institution’s mission before moving forward on the hub model. This includes presenting a concise summary of the degrees, certificates, workforce development programs, business and industry partnerships, tribal college partnerships, agency partnerships, dual credit, and secondary to postsecondary pathways offered by each two-year college. The hubs should be seen as an opportunity for the serving campus to focus on marketing and meeting local needs, rather than as a constraining fence to prevent further outreach.
**Recommendation:** Be aware of funding of specific programs (e.g. federal grant for Montana Tech UM) and the implications for extending reach into another campus’s hub. When events such as this unfold, have a process in place to facilitate the timely communication of need, as well as to open the opportunity for collaborative discussion on delivery.

**Recommendation:** Based on the great confusion in Montana about what opportunities exist, it was determined it would be beneficial to identify the educational academic and workforce services offered in each region. With the goal of creating stronger regional partnerships, a web-based clearinghouse of information should be created. (Need to know what we’re doing, where we’re doing it, if it’s offered via distance ed, etc.)

**Recommendation:** Understand how accreditation and funding for colleges of technology is tied to the four-year “mother” institutions.

**Recommendation:** Use promotion, pricing and policy to get the job done. Promotion (branding) is key; price is still too high at the two-year level for some campuses; policy must change to accomplish the hub concept (need to engage the presidents at the two flagship campuses; need to engage the Board of Regents)

**Recommendation:** With tribal colleges, we need to build relationships face-to-face and come to the table as equal partners. Understand what is currently being offered via the tribal colleges. Ask tribal colleges what they would like to see offered via a partnership. (Note: tribal colleges only get funding for native students.)

**Follow Up:** A committee consisting of John Cech, David Hall, Jane Karas, Tom Gibson and Susan Jones will review the use of the earlier template to compile information needed to get a full understanding of all that is offered by the two-year colleges. This would include partnerships, grant funded offerings, whether the course is taught by licensed faculty, whether the course has been previously taught online, whether the course faculty member has received specific training in online course development and delivery.

The group concluded that there needs to be additional face to face meetings and the suggestion was made the next meeting be held on a tribal college campus if possible.