1. **State and team personnel changes**

Project Director Mary Sheehy Moe announced her plans to retire effective November 1. Commissioner Sheila Stearns will begin the search for Mary’s replacement immediately. Mary has identified the following priorities for her activities in the next three months: listening tour, dual enrollment guidelines, Regents’ Transfer Core, related instruction alignment guidelines, roll-out of university system community colleges in July 2011.

Other leadership transitions: UM President George Dennison is retiring this summer. The search for his replacement is well underway. MSU Billings Chancellor Ron Sexton retired, and VP Rolf Groseth is serving as interim chancellor during the search for a new leader. The impact of these transitions will depend on the successors chosen. Regents Chair Clay Christian is leading the UM search, and regents sit on the Billings search committee. In other news, MT Tech Chancellor Frank Gilmore informed his staff in July that he is being treated for lymphoma, and expects to resume his normal activities.

2. **Upcoming activities and events related to the initiative.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>Regents Conference Call Meeting—Mary and Sheila will provide an update on the Digital Academy, dual enrollment, and community tours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2</td>
<td>Tribal college mtg on dual enrollment and other COLLEGE!Now issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 15-16</td>
<td>Adult-Friendly Services group reps attend WICHE NTNM conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 22-23</td>
<td>Regents Meeting will include COLLEGE!Now items</td>
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COLLEGE!Now community tours are scheduled for September and October:

| Sept 28    | Glendive and Sidney                                                   |
| Sept 29    | Poplar and Glasgow                                                    |
| Sept 30    | Havre legislative session                                             |
| Oct 7-8    | Billings and Harlowton                                                |
| Oct 13     | Great Falls                                                           |
| Oct 14     | Lewistown and Miles City                                             |
| Oct 25     | Bozeman                                                               |
| Oct 26     | Helena                                                                |
| Oct 28     | Pablo and Kalispell                                                   |
| Oct 29     | Missoula and Hamilton                                                 |

**Summary of recent activities:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 29</td>
<td>Regents Workgroup</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 3</td>
<td>Leadership Council (Montana University System CEOs, CAOs, CFOs)</td>
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<td>August 4-5</td>
<td>Chief Academic Officers Retreat</td>
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<td>August 11</td>
<td>Workforce Responsiveness Workgroup meeting #2</td>
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<td>Implementation Team Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>NGA-supported Governor’s forum on adult credentialing</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>Dual enrollment discussion with Montana Digital Academy board</td>
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3. Activities and progress this month, as they relate to the following (taken from the scope of work):

   a. **The goals for overall project coordination:**

      At the Board of Regents Retreat in July, the COLLEGE!Now agenda once again was a high-priority item. The regents provided further guidance on dual enrollment guidelines and expressed continued interest in the roll-out and rebranding of colleges of technology as university system community colleges.

      The state advisory team met June 30 and weighed in on several key issues including approach to ABLE services and dual enrollment, integration of the full community college mission especially at co-located campuses, and the need for business models which may include changes to mill levies. The implementation team continues regular conference calls.

   b. **The goals for communications and engagement:**

      Activities this period included:
      - Planning for Aug. 12 Governor’s Forum and Sept./Oct. listening tours
      - Preparing RFP for new communications and engagement consultants

   c. **The goals for bringing the community college mission to all two-year campuses, including activities of the four work groups:**

      i. **Developmental**

         The Developmental Workgroup, chaired by OCHE’s Dr. Jan Clinard, is identifying new approaches to developmental education to explore, and the data points that could drive decision-making. The group is newly energized by the July 12 event (held jointly with the ABLE work group) with Bruce Vandal and Treva Berryman from Tennessee, where approximately 50 workgroup members and faculty engaged in a highly interactive session on developmental education.

      ii. **Adult-friendly**

         The Governor’s Forum on Adult Credentialing has been the major focus of COLLEGE!Now activities for August. (See workforce responsiveness section.) Evaluation consultant Anne Clark and work group members will attend WICHE’s Non-Traditional No More conference in Denver in September.

      iii. **Adult basic literacy education (ABLE)**

         The state advisory team discussed alternative approaches to bringing ABLE to all two-year campuses. They expressed a strong preference for relying on collaboration (rather than statutory changes), although some of the two-year campus leaders feel they need legislation to make it happen in their areas. There are some good models around the state already, including one in Great Falls where public education still runs the programs but they have moved onto the COT campus, and the faculty is integrated into departmental meetings. An innovative program in Helena puts GED completers on the COT
campus, but has a separate program off-campus for basic skills. A meeting of
the workgroup in the same week provided focus for future activities.

iv. Workforce responsiveness

President Karas and Dean Cech facilitated the August 11 meeting of business,
industry and economic development representatives in advance of the
Governor's Forum. The meeting included many new participants. The group
plans to identify how to determine responsiveness to local needs, what the
obstacles are, and how to overcome them.

The August 12 NGA Governor’s Forum on Postsecondary Credential
Attainment by Adult Workers had excellent turnout, with about 140 business
and education leaders in attendance. Jim Applegate's keynote address and the
break-out sessions were very well-received. Especially popular were two
standing-room-only sessions on Western Governors University. The Governor
was not able to attend due to weather-related problems. Partly as a result, the
event did not generate press coverage. Nevertheless, organizers feel they
succeeded in priming the pump for initiatives targeting adult learners.

d. The goals for making two-year colleges regional hubs:

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.
That said, the expectation will remain that the regional campus is the
primary point of contact for high schools and businesses in the area. The
advisory team discussed overlaying the service areas with those of Dept. of
Labor and Industry and Office of Public Instruction, and coordinating to the
extent possible. The MUS Leadership Council discussed identification of the
broad regions at their meeting on August 3.

Including activities of the two work groups:

i. High School/College transitions

Sheila and Mary presented proposed operational guidelines for dual
enrollment (and other opportunities for high school students to earn college
credits) to Board of Public Education, and continued discussion with
implementation team. At the BPE presentation, MEA-MFT endorsed the
guidelines, the Board’s Executive Director expressed appreciation for being
consulted, and the Board praised the inclusive process and the clarity of the
product. There is now broad agreement in nearly all areas, the exception
being whether high school students taking dual enrollment courses must
take them for college credit. Mary has asked for advice from two tribal
college leaders on how to invite tribal college participation and plans to
convene the tribal college leaders to discuss participation. OCHE plans to
seek approval from regents in September, raise awareness/promote the new
guidelines at fall teachers and administrators conferences, and implement
the guidelines through a statewide template for interlocal agreements in
February 2011 for the next academic years. As the Montana Digital Academy rolls out dual enrollment online, these guidelines will be followed as well.

Several administrative, financial and operational issues proved too tall a hurdle for fall 2010 implementation of online dual enrollment. Implementation team members believe they can get these issues resolved in time for a spring launch. As a fall-back option, the Montana Digital Academy may decide to contract with one or two two-year colleges to provide online dual enrollment opportunities through the MTDA, and the issues could be worked out for a statewide, multi-campus approach for fall 2011. The Leadership Council also discussed pricing consistency at their August meeting.

ii. **Curriculum coordination and alignment**

The regents transfer core and aligned general education were discussed at an August 4-5 Chief Academic Officers Retreat with the General Education Faculty Council. The CAOs and faculty members also reviewed the related instruction alignment guidelines. The group has some remaining concerns about the transfer core—namely wanting to expand the variety of offerings, rather than maintain a more limited and structured curriculum—and OCHE continues to work toward resolution. There is agreement that colleges will award a certificate for completion of the transfer core. The Regents will see a first pass of the RTC this fall, after further review by campuses.

A WICHE planning committee for a Two-Year Education Academic Alliance has identified a mission and goals for its members, many of which align with the productivity agenda. WICHE submitted a FIPSE grant proposal for development of an interstate “transfer passport.”

e. **The goals for technology infrastructure, including activities of the two work groups:**

i. **Technology for efficiency**

Banner implementation at Miles and Dawson community colleges, and integration for MUS campuses, remain on schedule for going live spring 2011.

ii. **Virtual community college**

To reduce confusion between the Montana Digital Academy and VCC, dual enrollment for high school students will be offered by colleges through a link on the MTDA site. (See information under high school-college transitions.) This suggests a different role for the VCC, most likely focusing on adult learners.

f. **The goals for outcomes-based funding:**

Mick Robinson, Associate Commissioner for Administration and Fiscal Affairs, continues to work through the model with campus fiscal officers, assisted by Dennis Jones of NCHEMS.