



## **TOMORROW'S STUDENT**

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### **Team Members:**

**Tim Alvarez**

*Vice President of Student Affairs*  
**North Dakota State University**

**Levi Bachmeier**

*Policy Analyst*  
**Office of the Governor**

**Larry Brooks, Facilitator**

*Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs*  
**Dakota College at Bottineau**

**Sol Jensen**

*Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Services (former)*  
**University of North Dakota**

**Jason Trainer**

*Director of Admissions*  
**University of North Dakota**

**Tamara Uselman**

*Superintendent of Schools*  
**Bismarck Public Schools**

## Tomorrow's Student Goals:

- 1) Improving engaged learning through technologies and innovative learning systems
- 2) Making college more affordable
- 3) Increasing the number of first generation, low income, and other diverse and underrepresented student populations
- 4) Grow attainment to meet SBHE/Lumina goals

### Goal 1: Improving engaged learning through technologies and learning systems

In North Dakota, K-12 is currently using a standards-based system, but some schools are exploring competency-based systems and awarding badges or incentives for achievement. Hurdles and barriers to a competency-based system include: 1) gaining acceptance of a “new” system, 2) placing students into grades (i.e., Grades 9-12) based on credits earned, 3) creating a system that supports GPA, class rank, and other metrics used for college admissions, and 4) teacher licensure (i.e., teachers are only licensed to teach in certain discipline areas). To overcome some of these hurdles, there needs to be: 1) educational campaigns and pilot projects, 2) a methods to track credentials through a badging system, competency portfolio, or e-portfolio, 3) alternative methods of delivery and instruction (i.e., flipped classrooms, blended online and classroom experiences, internships, job shadowing, online classes), 4) an emphasis on technologies (i.e., use of cell phones to access information).

With regard to an emphasis of online delivery, concerns were raised about more first generation, low-income students being admitted to colleges and universities and how to increase the likelihood of these students succeeding. For many of these students, technology can be a barrier to learning. For many students, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are an important part of the college experiences. Time in college should be a time for discovery and experiential learning. The key is to provide students with flexible delivery methods and scheduling while, at the same time, maximizing instructor efficiency and effectiveness.

Some examples of alternative models include the following:

- Some graduate programs focus on a hybrid model of delivery involving a combination of online instruction and F2F discussion and hands-on group projects.
- Northern Cass is piloting a model where HS students complete graduation requirements by the end of their sophomore year and use the junior and senior years for job shadowing and internships.

The bottom line is we need to do the right thing for students and society. Teachers need opportunity to learn new instructional strategies, and new tools are needed to accommodate the learning styles of current students. For example, today's students are less willing to sit in traditional lectures. They want more choices, group collaboration, hands-on experiential learning and they need something to motivate them. Not only do students demand these learning experiences, the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy demands them. In order for these changes to

be successful, educators must provide clear learning outcomes and expectations to students and structure programming around those expectation and specific objectives.

## Goal 2: Making college more affordable

### K-12 Strategies

- 1) Increase the number of dual credit/college-level courses students complete while they are in high school. This would likely increase the confidence of students making them more likely to enroll in college and successfully complete a college plan of study. The end result would be an increase in college retention and persistence, a decrease in time to college completion, and ultimately a decrease in cost to the student.
  - a. Strategy could include advocating for a specified amount of courses completed while in high school, which could be furthered through K-16 conversations between DPI and NDUS
- 2) Increase the number of AP courses students are completing while in high school. AP prepares student for the rigors of college-level courses and is widely accepted for college credit as long as students obtain a “passing” score on the AP exams. The biggest drawback of AP courses is students must receive a minimum score in order to receive college credit, whereas student receive college credit for an early entry course as long as they pass the course. AP classes must also better incorporate skill development in addition to traditional knowledge transfer.
- 3) AVID is a rigorous program that provides students with the necessary skills and confidence to be successful in high school and college. It should continue to be supported.
- 4) There needs to be a focus on preparing all high school graduates for entry into college-level courses and reducing the need for remedial or developmental courses in college. Not only do remedial courses add time and cost necessary to complete a certificate or degree, but students who are required to complete developmental courses have a lower risk of persistence and completion.
- 5) There needs to be a focus on career education counseling for middle school and high school students and allowing them to explore different career pathways in order for them to be “choice ready.” Although progress is being made, more emphasis is needed on career and technical education (CTE) and the high-wage, minimal completion time for CTE programs. Continuing efforts needs to be made to break the stigma surrounding CTE educations and careers. A recent N.D. jobs report indicated about 75% of job openings require some post-secondary training/education below the bachelor’s degree level.

- 6) Although required in high school, more emphasis could be placed on financial literacy especially concerning planning for college. More effort also needs to be placed on educating students and parents on financial aid.
- 7) Whether a student is the class valedictorian or a “CTE completer”, they need to be recognized for their achievements.
- 8) Seek expansion of loan forgiveness programs to include general graduates who stay in the state and work for a minimum of three years post-graduation.

### Post-secondary Strategies

- 1) A concerted effort needs to be made to assure financial aid (i.e., PELL, student loans, scholarships, waivers, etc.) is available to all students. In addition, more data is needed on the distribution of financial aid to determine if it is effective in providing support of all segments of the student population, or if certain student populations have more of a financial burden than others.
- 2) Give students the flexibility to access courses through a variety of delivery methods (i.e.; online, hybrid, accelerated, etc.).
- 3) Explore ways to increase the efficiency of course delivery. Such efficiencies would result in reduced costs to institutions who would, in turn, pass those savings onto students through reductions in tuition and fees.
- 4) Place emphasis on prior learning and allow students to earn credit for work experience and business and industry credentials they’ve received.
- 5) Reduce the number of credits required to complete certificates and degrees to the minimum.

In closing and in order to make college more affordable, there needs to be a multi-pronged approach and partnership between K-12 and higher education. Numerous strategies were discussed during the conference call to address this topic.

### **Goal 3: Increasing the number and success rate of first generation, low income, and other diverse and underrepresented student populations**

- 1) Implement programs (i.e., AVID) designed to provide student with the skills and confidence they need to be successful at the post-secondary level.
- 2) Explore opportunities to expand high school exposure to career and technical educations.

- 3) Study expanded access to career exploration earlier in academic careers.
- 4) Address disparate demographics in AP and College Prep classes, with more focus provided toward career exploration and leadership.
- 5) Increase financial literacy and access to programs as they relate to higher education through systemwide approach and comprehensive marketing plan.
- 6) Provide specific mentoring opportunities for target student populations.

#### **Goal 4: Grow attainment to meet SBHE/Lumina goals**

Lumina goals: 60% of the population will hold a degree/postsecondary credentials by 2025.

SBHE goals: 65% of the ND population will hold a degree/postsecondary credential by 2025. Currently ND is at 45%, which includes Associate Degrees (47% if including credentialing). This should go up significantly when reverse transfer practices begin taking place within NDUS

Explore expanded opportunities with “stacked credential system” such as that currently in place for BSC Cybersecurity program.

What credentials/certifications should count for this? Completion should be based on educational objectives, so we might have to look at how we package the certificate/credential that will count towards Lumina’s goals. Formalize definitions of differing credentials/certifications within system office for easier tracking.

Define both systemwide and institutional goals, including cost, delivery and prioritization.

## References

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