

President Hensrud's Fall Startup Breakfast Remarks – August 20, 2019

Thank you, Dr. Peffer -- and thank *you all* for being here this morning.

Boozhoo – a very warm welcome -- to all our new employees, and to everyone for the start of the fall 2019 semester and to our second century at Bemidji State University.

I hope you would agree that the weather we had this summer in Bemidji has been exceptional. We deserved it after the frigid wind chills and temperatures of the polar vortex. The winter cold may have helped us to appreciate this summer so much more. (Not that we need a polar vortex to help us appreciate summer.)

It seems as we gather for the start of another academic year, the common question is “How did you spend your summer vacation?”

For those who are new to the area, I am sure it involved packing and unpacking boxes, while also becoming acquainted with all the area has to offer. For others...there may have been time on the lake, a family trip, or some quality “alone time.”

My summer began with a trip to Eastern Europe on a Danube River Cruise that was hosted by Beverly Everett, Director of the Bemidji Symphony Orchestra. Neil and I had an amazing adventure as we traveled from Budapest to Nuremberg with a side excursion to Prague in the Czech Republic.

The river cruise was quickly surpassed by spending quality time with family, while cruising on the pontoon boat at the lake cabin.

I hope your summer was equally enjoyable.

As much as we cherish our summers, it is invigorating to feel the energy in the room when we gather together on campus, sharing stories, ideas and dreams.

I think you will agree with me (aside from the partially demolished Hagg-Sauer) the campus buildings and grounds are looking fabulous.

For those of you who have been affected by the Hagg-Sauer project, I trust you are finding your new offices to be quite spacious, and the new furniture to meet your needs. If you have questions, VP Karen Snorek is hosting a session tomorrow afternoon, and she is sure to address any remaining concerns.

As I walk through the newly renovated areas, I am impressed with the quality of work being done and the efforts to get everything completed on time.

The renovations and upgrades to many of our spaces, and finally to build a new Hagg-Sauer, will have a profound impact on our student's success, as well as own work environment.

Our focus at BSU is on the success of our students. That is the reason we are here...we are all committed to their success. Regardless of your job title, what matters most is how each one of you, in your daily work...make an impact on the lives of students, by connections you make when you interact or engage with them.

Your positive support for our students, affects whether or not they return for a second semester, or second year. I want to thank you for keeping that in mind each day.

Today's higher education climate is highly competitive. Focusing our attention on student success, retention and graduation rates, and closing the educational equity gap is more critical than ever. Recruiting new students is more challenging; therefore, we must emphasize retaining those we do recruit.

We have been entrusted by the founders of Bemidji Normal School, and all who walked these buildings and hallways before us, to provide quality learning experiences for all students. Today, much more so than it was early in our campus history, parents trust us to take care of their sons and daughters as if they were our own.

While doing that, we provide our students with an education that broadens their understanding of the world and prepares them for careers and further education. And, we inspire our students to make a significant impact on the greater communities where they will live and work.

At the same time, our students hold high expectations for the quality of their experience. And as faculty, staff, and administrators we set high expectations for ourselves, and for one another.

Overall, we do all of this quite well at BSU, and we expect this will continue for generations to come.

Last August, as I stood here before you, I let you know that we are in a very strong position as we complete our first century and prepare to begin our second. The same holds true one year later.

Each of you has so much to be proud of as we begin our second century in a time when the world is changing.

Today, colleges and universities across the country are facing significant challenges that impact the health and safety of students, and their ability to succeed.

Each year, we read stories about the consequences of the choices college freshmen make regarding alcohol when they are away from the influence of their family. These choices can and have led to serious accidents and even death.

There are numerous reports of sexual violence, harassment and predatory practices by those who are in positions of authority or by other students. And we have only to hear the news to learn of yet another school shooting.

While we are aware of these things happening across the country, and at other colleges and universities, we at BSU are not immune to them. We have experienced some of these.

When these situations occur, the impact goes far beyond the individuals involved. These events also alter the lives of family and friends, as well as faculty and staff. They affect learning that occurs in the classroom, and they damage the reputation of an institution that has taken generations to develop. And each incident affects an institution's ability to recruit and retain students.

When any of these types of incidents occur at Bemidji State University, it is essential to increase efforts to demonstrate our commitment to the success of our students in the classroom, as well as to their health, safety and well-being.

We know that all members of our campus community seek to provide a caring and supportive environment with an unwavering focus on the education and well-being of our students. By providing a safe living and learning environment we help each student reach his or her full potential.

This commitment includes both prevention and education. As part of this ongoing education, today we provided two handouts on your tables that you may take with you.

The first is a student resource for reporting [Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence](#). This is shared with all students annually and includes definitions and information as to where a student can go for help.

Included inside that document is another one titled: [Resources for faculty and staff](#). These handouts are provided so you may understand how to report anything that is inappropriate. I ask that you take the time to read them and keep them as a resource.

This morning, I will take more time than I have in the past, as I share a number of topics and set our direction for the year through the theme: BSU's Promise for our Second Century.

As we begin the journey together that takes us into our second century, it is a journey that holds great promise, and for which we together take on tremendous responsibility. We commit to excellence in all that we do to educate, lead, support and ensure the health, safety and well-being of our students.

Within that promise is our commitment to the highest levels of conduct when it comes to the ways we show respect for one another...and for our students.

Bemidji State's promise for our second century, includes five commitments. Each one will contribute to our success as we embark upon our second century.

BSU's Promise includes our commitment to....

1. Our future - Strategic priorities
2. Quality – HLC Accreditation – demonstrates our commitment to our mission and meeting the needs of all of constituents
3. Student success – retention, safety and well-being
4. Financial sustainability
5. To each other and to the BSU community

As we begin this new century...we have many successes upon which we can build. You will soon hear about the progress we are making related to our strategic plan, and the positive impact our strategies have on student retention.

We can celebrate the progress we have made to increase our graduation rates overall and also for our students of color, and our American Indian Students.

This fall, we wrap up our centennial, and we celebrate the ways we demonstrate our commitment to quality through our accreditation review.

As we reflect upon our past successes, we owe it to each other, and our students to strengthen our promise to fulfill our Vision that states "We educate people to lead inspired lives."

I urge each of you to take your responsibilities very seriously, and as we begin this year, I ask you to join me and my administrative team in taking to heart BSU's promise for our 2nd Century.

The promise lives within Bemidji State's mission. Like all missions, ours underscores our very reason for being. It guides us, and keenly focuses us on our strategic priorities. I have noted the mission here as well as on your handout at the tables. Please take a moment to read our Mission.

- ***We create an innovative, interdisciplinary and highly accessible learning environment committed to student success and a sustainable future for our communities, state and planet.***
- ***Through the transformative power of the liberal arts, education in the professions, and robust engagement of our students, we instill and promote service to others, preservation of the earth, and respect and appreciation for the diverse peoples of our region and world.***

In 2018, our strategic plan was developed with the goals of financial sustainability, and student success clearly in mind. The plan is titled "Inspired by PLACE, Enriched by Diversity," and it seeks to elevate our service to the state of Minnesota and its people.

This five-year plan (2018-2023) includes five institutional priorities that will help ensure BSU's continued development aligns with and advances the system-wide priorities of student success; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and financial sustainability. I remind you of our five priorities.

PRIORITY 1: Build university capacity through distinguishing themes of place.

PRIORITY 2: Increase engagement with American Indian communities to become a destination university.

PRIORITY 3: Increase student engagement in campus life.

PRIORITY 4: Strengthen BSU's academic identity by infusing its Shared Fundamental Values into all academic programs.

PRIORITY 5: Create a university culture in which diversity is embraced and all members are safe, welcome, and validated.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 2023

Our priorities emphasize retention and enrollment growth, and expansion of efforts toward equity and creating an inclusive environment for employees and students. Our priorities call for us to better reflect the global society that our students will live in, by attracting and graduating many more American Indian students, other students of color, and international students.

In order to do this, we must become more diverse – and develop a culture of respect for all, where we provide a welcoming environment for both our student body and our faculty and staff.

Our priorities call for investments in positions and people to help move forward these initiatives. We are still early in our implementation. We recognize we did not move as quickly as initially planned to hire some positions, but we are still moving forward.

I will highlight a few items related to each priority.

Our **first Priority** focuses on themes of place. It stems from a broad definition of place that encompasses BSU's location on a lake in northern Minnesota, its connections with American Indian peoples, and its culture of caring for individual members of the university community.

The Goals seek to maximize the value of these place-related assets within academic programs, branding and marketing, and in the experience of students and employees.

Priority 2 establishes the expectation to Increase engagement with American Indian communities to become a destination university. Several activities related to this goal have been accomplished.

- In our AIRC – we hired an Assistant Director and Outreach/Recruiter
- Developed American Indian Recruitment plan and Retention Plan
- Our Native nursing program – Niganawenimaanaanig is highly successful at attracting and retaining native nursing students
- We intend to expand recruiting efforts in 2020
- And our Focus on reducing the educational equity gap is showing promising results.

Priority 3 includes our focus on student engagement.

We seek to increase student attendance at university events and participation in organizational leadership, expand student-faculty engagement outside the classroom, and improve the quality of all employee-student interactions.

- Our Beaver Success program is showing positive results and we have a continued emphasis on this work this year; and,
- Our Academic Advising efforts will expand to focus on faculty development and student support.

Goals within **Priority 4** seek to ensure that the university’s Shared Fundamental Values are addressed by the Master Academic Plan and included in the learning of all students, regardless of major. The Shared fundamental values are included on your table handout.

Progress here will be shared by the Provost when he updates academic departments on the Master Academic Plan later today. And tomorrow, you will hear more about Civic Engagement in our BSU Today program.

Priority 5 seeks to create a university culture in which diversity is embraced and all members are safe, welcome, and validated.

We are making progress on this priority in a number of ways:

- We opened our Center for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in 2018 and hired a new Coordinator last spring.
- We hired an International Director/Recruiter; and hired an Out-of-State Recruiter
- We are expanding our visiting scholars’ program; and, later this year,

- We will search for a permanent Campus Diversity Officer; and add an Affirmative Action/Title IX Investigator.

Related to Financial Sustainability: We hired a grants writer; we maintained appropriate year-end balances; and invested in our priorities.

With all these efforts...we are showing progress related to diversity, equity and inclusion...both in student retention and in employee diversity. And through this work we will better prepare students to go out into a state, nation, and world that is more diverse than ever, and to find success and contribute for the good of all.

As we strive to meet the goals of our strategic plan, the progress we measure is related to our second commitment: Commitment to Quality and Continuous Improvement.

On **October 14 and 15** we will host our **Higher Learning Commission** peer review visit for accreditation where we are seeking reaffirmation of accreditation for another 10 years.

Most of you know, accreditation is critical for our continued operation. It gives us the chance to prove to our students and the public that we have quality programs and the means by which to support them.

We see accreditation as our opportunity to examine what we do and seek continuous improvement by making changes where needed to ensure we are living out our mission. And it allows us to provide federal financial aid to our students.

Thanks to our co-directors for accreditation: Dr. Marty Wolf and Dr. Randy Westhoff. And thanks to all members of the criterion teams who are engaged in this very important work.

I am going to mention others who have been involved as leaders of the various committees. While some individuals are no longer here, their contributions should be acknowledged.

- Criterion One (Mission): Rick Koch and Bill Blackwell
- Criterion Two (Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct): Virgil Bakken and Jesse Grant
- Criterion Three (Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support): Andy Hafs and Jim Barta
- Criterion Four (Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement): Nancy Hall and Colleen Greer
- Criterion Five (Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness): Jeff Ueland and Lynn Johnson
- Data Team: Doug Olney and Julian Licata
- Publicity Team: Andy Bartlett
- Federal Compliance: Michelle Frenzel

- And thanks, again, to Randy Westhoff and Marty Wolf for your leadership and oversight of the entire process.

Please join me in thanking everyone for your exceptional efforts to prepare the campus for our reaffirmation of accreditation.

I also want to thank other staff members who on a daily basis contribute to our efforts. Whether you are Maintenance Workers, Office Support, Student Support and Student Life, Athletics, Business Office, Campus Safety, IT, and countless others, your commitment to BSU's mission, vision, and shared fundamental values make BSU a wonderful environment for student learning.

While we have an accreditation visit every 10 years, it is true that the campus work on continuous improvement is, by definition, on-going—and is never “done.”

The Assurance Argument that we developed for our visit highlights institutional plans, accomplishments, and areas for improvement that reflect a point in time, but this work is something that continues and transcends the HLC review.

The expectation is for EVERY ONE of us to participate in, and be informed of, our progress toward gaining reaffirmation of accreditation.

So, this morning, I will share with you just a few of the areas where we are making progress, and have seen solid outcomes, and also where we have more work to complete over the next month.

- There is strong evidence that our mission, vision and fundamental values are being incorporated into operations throughout the campus
- We have seen solid improvement in student persistence—a direct result of institutional initiatives that have been implemented
- And faculty staffing levels have increased over the past several years – exceeding levels from before our 2011 recalibration.

We have also demonstrated our commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates.

- Our second fall semester retention rate for first year, full-time students increased to 71.6% for the fall 2017 cohort.
- Educational Equity Gaps for Students of Color and American Indian students compared with our majority population are improving! The gap is getting smaller.

There are a number of areas where we must continue to focus to be better prepared for our accreditation review:

4A: We are behind schedule on program reviews and the annual assessment cycle in academic departments.

- We have five programs that are completing their five-year reviews this fall rather than last year. But we expect to catch up by the time of the HLC visit.
- And 11 of 24 academic departments or programs are behind in their annual assessment cycle.
- All departments/programs should have their assessment findings and action plans entered into Taskstream by September 30.

In criterion 4C, there is reference to the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, but we learned there is limited evidence included in our assurance argument.

We must better articulate what we accomplished; what we tried and did not work; and what we intend to do differently. It is apparent that progress on the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan must be communicated more broadly.

In criteria 5A: Some concerns exist on campus about the ratio of budget allocated to student services vs. instruction, in comparison with other MinnState universities.

An example of how we are addressing this is shown in the investment we have made in our faculty.

- The number of faculty FTE was reduced to 171 as a result of recalibration.
- For 2019-20 we stand at 205 faculty FTE, well above the recalibration level.

As I wrap up this section on our commitment to Quality and Continuous Improvement, I will remind you our HLC peer review team will be on campus October 14-15.

- There are a few areas where we must focus our efforts over the next month to complete any work that is outstanding.
- When you see the HLC peer review team on campus in October, be sure to welcome them. And be prepared to participate when requested.
- Recognize also that we have an ongoing commitment to quality, to our mission and to student success.

Now that you have a greater understanding of our commitment to quality, I want to turn to our 3rd Commitment to fulfilling BSU's promise for the 2nd Century. And that is our commitment to Student Success.

I have asked Michelle Frenzel to provide you with an enrollment update and to also share some data related to student retention and our educational equity gap.

This past academic year, the MN State Board of Trustees and Chancellor Malhotra focused the Board on Reimagining Higher Education in Minnesota State. Phase I of Reimagining ended in June of 2019, and Chancellor Malhotra presented his ideas to the Board at their June meeting.

There he shared what he sees as the next steps as we move into the second phase of this process to Reimagine MN State and to position our System to meet the needs of the state by providing well-educated individuals from all backgrounds.

The Chancellor shared the following goal:

- By 2030, Minnesota State will eliminate the educational equity gaps at every Minnesota State college and university.

To achieve this, we must enhance access and increase student success by the 4 activities listed here:

- Increasing student retention, persistence, and graduation;
- Increasing the percent of Minnesotans, age 25 to 44, who have attained a postsecondary certificate or degree (goal is 70% by 2025)
- Increasing market share of high school graduates and the transfer rate from our two-year colleges to our universities: and
- Increasing the number of (adult) learners

If we ensure equitable educational outcomes for all, it is expected all student success metrics will rise, and we will be on a financially sustainable path.

With this context I mind, I will now turn it over to Michelle so she can share some specific information about how we are doing with enrollment and retention and closing the equity gap. This is of critical importance as we focus on our 3rd commitment -- Student Success.

Michelle Frenzel's remarks:

Good morning and welcome to the start of a new academic year. I will be providing an enrollment update for undergraduate and graduate students – both new and returning student segments as well as speak to some new initiatives for this fall that focus on 2nd year students and will conclude with an overview of Minnesota State system metrics for student success.

We will start with looking at our overall fall enrollment.

All numbers are from August 15th. We are currently at 4513 students enrolled for fall semester. In headcount, this is 4% below where we were at last year at this time. This date to date information is represented by the short, two-point line on the graph. The darker blue line represents our fall 30-day headcounts from 2005 to 2018.

After a few years of modest growth, this is our second year where we will be down in student headcount. While we aspire to grow, we have seen declines last year and will this year. As we head

into this year, our work continues to emphasize student success. We see evidence of this in the Strategic Plan, the Master Academic Plan, and Strategic Enrollment Plan.

Next, I want to talk about returning undergraduate degree seeking students.

When we look at all returning undergraduates, we are down 4% in returning students who previously started as freshman students and down 1% in returning students who previously started as a transfer student.

Where we see the largest decline is in our new students, specifically the freshman cohort. The top line represents our fall freshman students since 2005. This also includes those that start in the summer. We are down 16% in new freshman point in time, which also basically represents the difference compared to last year's class of 756. This decline in freshman was anticipated when we were down 600 applications last October. As we plan for the future - we will have a better understanding where we will be at for Fall 2021 in early November, after free application month in October.

The bottom line represents new transfer students since 2005. We are currently down 3% point in time and when we compare to where we ended last fall, we are only down 25 students.

In terms of graduate enrollment – we have seen modest growth and have for the last 4 year. Point in time headcount numbers are trailing only slightly from last year at this time, however credits generated by this population are ahead point in time.

One area of recruitment I wanted to highlight was our out of state recruiting. This initiative is part of Strategic Priority 5 to increase the diversity of our campus and is also present in the Enrollment Plan, specifically under goal 1.2 for freshman students. Our out of state recruiter, Muriel Kingery, started last October, and visited the states represented with the blue color during her first year.

The states highlighted in red represent the states that are being explored to add this academic year.

Her work encompasses high school visits, visits to other post-secondary institutions for transfer students and graduate students, and international students transfer fairs for international students looking to transfer within the US. In addition to these visits she has engaged with one-on-one student visits and continues to look for alumni connections in these states.

BSU's enrollment plan has two enrollment themes – one for recruitment and one for overall student success. One of the goals for student success include a

- 75% 2ndfall retention rate,
- a 56% 3rdfall persistence rate, and a
- 50% 6-year graduation rate,
- keep in mind – these goals are for our population of students that start as freshman.

As we think about the upcoming year, we have much to celebrate in terms of our 2nd-fall retention rate for freshman students.

The top line represents the retention rate of our freshman students through the fall 2017 cohort.

Our preliminary rate for the Fall 2018 class is at 71.4%. Some would say it is too soon to share this number and I will add that our retention rate doesn't become official until after the 30th class day

One thing is certain — we have many best practices in place to support students during their first year. This success extends to reducing the educational equity gap, as outlined in our October 2018 President's Leadership Council round table on student persistence, retention, and completion.

The next line is our 3rd-fall rate — this is the percent of new freshman students who return their 3rd-fall. This is where we see a drop and since we know students who return their 3rd-fall are more likely to graduate — I'd like to share a couple of examples where we will be focusing on the 2nd-year of enrollment during this academic year.

First, I'd like to talk about Starfish. Starfish is a communication tool we use at BSU to update students on areas they are excelling and areas they need improvement, primarily as it relates to their courses.

Planned for this year is what Starfish calls a progress survey. We will be asking faculty with high populations of 2nd-year students to participate in a progress survey. The survey will be sent the 5th week of the semester, which allows an early check-in for our students when there is ample time to connect to resources and have a successful outcome in the course.

This was one best practice shared by Dr. Tiffany Mfume, who was a speaker at one of the Reimaging Minnesota State forums and was a guest on our campus last May.

Early in the semester, we will be sending out invitations to participate to faculty with high populations of 2nd-year students. If you want to participate, please respond and we'll include you in this enrollment initiative.

I also wanted to acknowledge the Starfish usage from last year. In addition to adding a new feature to query students who have not registered for the upcoming term, we had:

- 405 kudos
- 922 flags
- 128 faculty submit kudos/flags
- 1460 appointments scheduled in Starfish

All of these areas are up from the prior year. While I know this isn't the only way these interactions happen across our campus – I'm happy we have this tool available for those who find value in using it to connect students with additional resources through the partnerships with other across campus.

The next initiative I want to talk about is the Beaver Success Program – this program is also part of our strategic plan and represents continued orientation to BSU. This program is BSU's mentorship program. There are three prongs to the program. The original program is for our new students. Students opt-in to this program and are matched up with coaches across campus. The call for coaches is currently open and if you are interested, please respond to the fac/staff e-mail outlining how you can sign up to be a coach.

The 2nd prong is a student mentorship program started in Nursing, as part of a project sponsored by the students in the President's Student Commission. This program matched senior Nursing students to freshman nursing students.

New this year, is the addition of a mentorship program for 2nd-year students. This initiative was chosen based on research done by the Educational Advisory Board, call the Murky Middle, that analyzed GPA trends of students. They found that over half of all students who drop out of college do so in their second year or later and that these students primarily had a first year GPA between 2.0 and 3.0. Further analysis of BSU data completed by Russ Dahlke and Spriha Pradhan, a student intern in Enrollment Management, confirmed that BSU students' trends were similar.

For this program we will start by inviting 100 2nd-year students with GPAs between 2.0 and 3.0 to participate. These students will be assigned coaches who will be a resource to them as they navigate their 2nd year.

Every other spring, we administer the National Student Survey of Engagement, referred to as the NSSE. This spring the survey was administered to students classified as freshman and as senior.

We're happy to report that we exceeded our goal of a 20% response rate for each population and we're happy to report that we exceeded this goal. The results are available for analysis and we will share a summary in October. This work is important since they were the benchmark used to develop strategic priority 3.

As a reminder, strategic priority 3 focuses on increasing student engagement in campus life with goals to increase several areas measured in the NSSE to the Carnegie Class, a premier classification.

The last thing I want to talk to you about is the Educational Equity Gap. This was reference by President Hensrud in her opening remarks and will be discussed further at an October discussion focused on student persistence, retention and completion.

The system office has several metrics they use to measure student success. I'm going to share four specific measures that relate to student success. The chancellor's goal to eliminate the Educational Equity Gap by 2030 helps focus our work in these areas.

First, we have 2nd Fall Retention and Completion Rates. Keep in mind the system office includes new freshman (regular) and transfer students in the entering cohort so if you are comparing numbers from a slide I shared earlier – the system office expands the definition for the cohort.

When we look at this for white students and students of color, the educational equity gap is 9.6%, this represents 18 students of color in the 2017 cohort.

The next metric is the 6–year completion rate. You’ll see from the definition that this also includes freshman (regular) and transfer students.

When we look at this for white students compared to students of color, our educational equity gap is 16.8%, which represents 23 students of color in the 2012 cohort.

The third metric is the Developmental Education One-Year Completion Rate – Our gap between white students and students of color is only 6.7%, which represents only a couple of students.

The last metric I’m going to share is the Related Employment Rates for Graduates –There is no gap between our white students and our student of color. Our goal would be to continue to have not gap in this metric.

The last thing I want to leave you with is this summary of our 100th Commencement ceremony. Andy’s team put this together for another presentation and I love that it captured so many great things, but especially the culmination event where we see student success cross the stage one student at a time.

When we admit students – we admit them to graduate. That is our goal for them and why we strive to be the best at supporting them along that journey. Thank you for the work you do. Best wishes on a successful academic year.

Thank you, Michelle. You can see that we have more work to do, but we are beginning to make progress in a number of areas related to our commitment to student success.

Our 4th commitment to BSU’s 2nd Century is to our Financial Sustainability.

When I talked about strategic planning early in this presentation, I mentioned how we are investing in our strategic priorities. We will continue to do this while ensuring we manage our resources responsibly. Our resources include our physical infrastructure. We must provide a physical learning environment that supports our mission and our emphasis on student success.

In spite of our decline in enrollment both this past year and this fall, we have some good news to share about the budget.

I have asked VP Karen Snorek to provide an update on our 2019 fiscal year end, as well as some thoughts as to what 2020 holds.

She will also give you some information on the Hagg-Sauer project, and some other things happening in Administration and Finance. All of these items contribute to our 4th commitment, our commitment to Financial Sustainability.

Karen Snorek's Remarks:

Summer - wow where did it go.

The Hagg Sauer Project consumed our entire summer and will continue through this fiscal year.

First, I want to thank all the academic programs for packing up all of their office contents and then packing up classrooms. Everyone was out by the deadlines that were established. I want to thank the GMWs and the IT staff for making sure that everything was removed from all the remodeled areas and Hagg-Sauer. I want to thank Jean Lanners and Rosanne Erickson for processing many of the purchase orders and organizing keys and many other extra work that this project has created.

The construction started in Sattgast, Bangsberg, Bensen and Clark during the summer months, every day there was progress in the construction, however every day there were also many decisions that had to be made and every day there was something that went had to be changed or went wrong.

Furniture was finalized, IT equipment was ordered.

Slowly the construction was completed, a temporary occupancy was granted, and facility started to slowly move back the boxes, the contractor punch list was completed, and the last-minute fixes were done. Furniture started moving in and permanent occupancy was granted, and the notice was given that people could move back in.

Of course, we were still waiting on doors, carpet, lights just earlier this week, but hopefully everything is now done.

August 5th was a day in history when we saw the first piece of Hagg-Sauer coming down. Even though I never "lived" in Hagg-Sauer, I stood there watching the crane take pieces of Hagg-Sauer down with very mixed feelings, I knew that this had to be done, but at the same time history was being taken down.

Hopefully by the middle of September all the debris will be removed from the Hagg-Sauer site and the new construction will start.

During winter break we hope to keep working in the library and come summer of 2020 we hope to finish Bangsberg. By next year at this time, I hope to be able to say the new Hagg-Sauer is ready for our students.

I want to thank everyone for relocating your offices – even during spring semester, the summer and now moving into your new office.

We will be having a Hagg-Sauer Renovation meeting on August 21st at 2:45 in the Beaux Arts Ballroom and I invite anyone that was part of the renovation process to come to the meeting.

Summer is also fiscal year ends and this year there were many firsts. This was our first year that everyone was on Marketplace for purchasing and trying to close out purchase orders and process invoices. This was also our first year that we worked with the Human Resource and Payroll service center. Both of these new processes created challenges as we closed out FY19.

Even though the fiscal year is not completely done, I am pleased to state that FY19 general fund ended positive by approximately \$1.4 million. FY20 will be a challenging year, with lower than planned enrollment, unknown contract settlements and new systems. We will begin working on FY21 as soon as FY19 is finalized. FY21 will be challenging as FY21 will have little increase in state appropriation, enrollment challenges, and contract settlements, however I am confident that BSU will remain financial sustainable during these difficult years.

Now back to President Hensrud.

Thank you, Karen. You can see that there is much to celebrate here as we strive to meet our commitment to financial sustainability.

This takes us to our 5th and final commitment for BSU's 2nd Century...our commitment to one another and our entire BSU community.

For this commitment I will provide some detail around four areas:

1. Broadening Our Commitment to Sustainability Through Resilience
2. Strengthening our Culture of Care, Respect & Responsibility
3. Ensuring Safety & Wellbeing Through Emergency Preparedness
4. Recognizing Employee Achievements Through Awards of Excellence

The first component of commitment to our BSU community is focused on Sustainability Through Resilience.

Last spring, with support from our Sustainability Office, and following a resolution from our student senate, I signed the Climate Commitment for BSU. This added the community resiliency component and we joined a growing network of colleges and universities dedicated to leadership for a brighter climate future.

Under the carbon component of our commitment, we continue our journey to carbon neutrality. We achieved our interim goal of a two percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2015 and are ahead of schedule for our ten percent reduction goal set for 2020.

Yet, we have significant progress to make in order to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Members of the Environmental Advisory Committee have established a working relationship with the City of Bemidji Sustainability Committee, effectively creating the campus-community task force that will guide the resiliency process.

As next steps, the Task Force will complete a resilience assessment and ultimately update BSU's comprehensive Climate Action Plan.

If you would like to take part in this process, I encourage you to reach out to Jordan Lutz, the Implementation Liaison for our Climate Commitment.

Our second component of our commitment to our BSU community is Strengthening our Culture of Care, Respect & Responsibility.

I have been speaking a great deal about the importance of student success. But as we consider how we can best take care of our students, it is critical to understand what is needed to take care of ourselves and one another.

This includes both physical and emotional well-being, and the need to recognize when members of our community could use some help. It also includes our obligations as employees to ensure we are upholding the highest standards when it comes to personal conduct.

Last year, I asked all administrators to complete annual training on the code of conduct. And this year, we have expanded that opportunity to all faculty and staff.

Several training sessions have been held this summer, and we are offering a few more to include those who were not here on the training dates.

The reason we are asking you to do this, is to educate you on the policy so you can be better informed about what is covered, and when to ask for help.

It is also important for everyone to be aware of our respectful workplace policy. This policy provides our commitment to you, to our students, and to our community.

We are committed to building and maintaining a professional workplace that is respectful towards all employees, students, and visitors to campus.

We recognize that respect for one another is fundamental to working in an effective, efficient and innovative manner. If you ever have concerns, please work with your supervisor and our Human Resources office to come to some resolution.

In addition, we want you to be aware of a resource available to you if you have any personal or workplace concerns where you may want some confidential counseling.

- LifeMatters is our Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- It is provided at no cost to you. And it is confidential.
- The web site contains information, tools, and self-assessment instruments for all kinds of situations that may come up in your life: www.mylifematters.com

Our third component to our commitment to BSU community is Ensuring Safety & Wellbeing Through Emergency Preparedness.

You may question why we should we focus on emergency preparedness. What is the likelihood of a campus building being damaged by a fire, tornado or flood?

We all understand the world we live in has changed. Gun violence is increasing, climate change is shifting weather patterns northward, and may result in floods, forest fires and tornadoes.

Last year, I shared with you the major flood event that was experienced in Duluth and Superior in 2013.

Could something like this happen here at BSU? Are we prepared for a flood, fire, tornado, or violence within our institution?

It is important for our leadership team, as well as all members of the BSU community, to know what to do in any given emergency.

Please review our BSU Emergency Procedures Guide, so you know what to do, and so you can help any students or guests who are on campus.

When we hold drills...it is important that everyone participates. We also want you to ask questions and challenge us to ensure we are all better prepared for what is most often unexpected.

Our goal this year is 100% participation for fire and tornado drills.

You all received a faculty/staff email just yesterday with the dates for all the fires drills this fall. The first fire drills begin on August 22nd.

Our Emergency Operations Team is active and meets monthly. They participated in a tabletop exercise in 2018, and we participated in the statewide tornado drill in April 2019.

Here are a few projects we are working on this year:

- There are ongoing updates to the BSU/NTC Emergency Operations Plan.
- We are engaged in relationship-building with community partners and system schools.

- This fall, Public Safety will provide New Emergency Procedure Guides.
- And in 2019-20 BSU/NTC will focus on developing our Continuity of Operations Plans.

The 4th and final component related to our commitment to our BSU community is Recognizing Employee Achievements Through Awards of Excellence.

I will first share information about our new Wellness Certificate.

In an effort to increase work-life balance for BSU and NTC employees, and thanks to the work of our Living Well-Working Well Committee, this fall marks the start of an opportunity to earn a Wellness Certificate. Once earned, it will be awarded each Spring.

The wellness program will enable faculty and staff to model the lifestyle we want our students to develop. More details will be found on our website and shared with you via email.

And finally, I want to make you aware of some new awards that will be given for outstanding achievement at the end of our academic year.

New this year, we will recognize outstanding achievement in three areas:

- Civic Engagement
- Equity and Inclusion
- And Faculty Scholarship

We will develop criteria and seek feedback from our bargaining units during the fall semester.

I recognize this is one of the longer talks I have given at fall start-up. But we only have one opportunity to begin a new century. I felt it important to lay out our priorities and to establish BSU's Promise for our 2nd Century through our Five Commitments.

Our Commitments to...

- Our Future
- Quality & Continuous Improvement
- Student Success
- Financial Sustainability, and
- The BSU Community

I will say this once again...the work of higher education is both absolutely essential and profoundly inspiring, especially as we practice it here at BSU.

Without a doubt, we change students' lives and unleash their remarkable potential to make a difference in the world.

I feel grateful to work in partnership with bright and dedicated individuals like you, who do your best to provide the highest quality educational experience for our students.

And as we do this work, we also have the privilege of wrapping up celebrations for Bemidji State University's Centennial.

Within our centennial year we will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Women's athletics this coming weekend, and the Groundbreaking for our New Hagg-Sauer Hall on September 16th.

Additional centennial activities take place around homecoming weekend and include our Honors Gala, a lighting of the homecoming hearth, and of course . . . football.

As we enter our second century, let's consider: What will our story be as we fulfill our mission? How will we use the transformative power of education to bring change to the lives of our students and their communities?

I believe, with the spirit of inspiration from the past and innovation for the future, BSU will be better than ever in our second century. Working together, we will stay focused on our goal, of educating the future generations of leaders for our state, country and the world.

Before you move to your next activity of the day, I want to remind you of some additional events this week.

- BSU today! Our 2nd annual mini conference – August 21st
- New student move-in day and convocation – August 23
- AIRC Day of Welcome – August 28th
- Community Appreciation Day – August 29th
- Reminder that on October 14-15 we have our HLC Accreditation Site Visit; and,
- On November 19 and 20 we host the Minnesota State Board of Trustees both here and at Northwest Technical College

Also, on your table handout, I want to draw your attention to dates for our Fall 2019 Campus Forums and Campus Conversations.

Topics include: Budget; Retention and Enrollment; our Diversity Strategic Plan; and, our Athletics Strategic Plan.

Thanks to all who assisted with this morning's event. We appreciate all the effort that goes into making something like this happen.

AND...Thanks for your interest and attention this morning, and for being here for our students during the years ahead.

Before you leave, I ask anyone who was listed on the new employee slides to come forward to the stage for a group photo.

I wish you all a great semester and a fantastic year!

Go Beavers!