



April 30, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I have a short update this week.

Legislative activity on the merger proposal had been in a bit of a lull following cross-over of the budget bills (HB 1 and 2) from the House to the Senate in mid-April. But this week activity resumed with both CCSNH and USNH testifying before the Senate Finance committee on April 27. In our presentation we described our mission, structure and strategies to serve our regions. We highlighted how CCSNH remains agile in meeting demand and responding to changing demographic trends and circumstances. I also reiterated why we are concerned about the idea of a merger undertaken without exploring the many questions that arise from the idea.

One model we did note exists in some states is that of a coordinating council, with leaders from both systems who meet regularly (potentially along with elected officials) to address pertinent agenda items such as collaboration and student pathways. This is a step short of a merger that offers a structure for coordination and accountability – similar to our current “synergies” efforts but more formalized. I do not know if this idea will resonate with legislators or not. Here is an article that was written following our testimony.

Along with the presidents, I continue to be in touch with Legislators as they consider options for funding levels and policy language. Everything is very fluid until June, when the process ends in a committee of conference in mid-June.

I will close by thanking you all for your work under circumstances that remain challenging. That said, Spring is here and we look forward to fewer limitations on the activities we enjoy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan D. Huard".

Susan D. Huard

Interim Chancellor

Community College System of NH