

Board of Trustees Executive Committee

October 1, 2025 | 9:30am - 11:30am
System Office Conference Room and via Zoom

Attendees: Chair Kathy Bogle Shields, Vice-Chair Edwin O. Smith, Chancellor Mark Rubinstein, Trustee Richard Ackerman, Trustee Gregory Eastman, Trustee Nick Toumpas, Trustee Tricia Lucas, Trustee Alison Stebbins (remote), Trustee Donnalee Lozeau, Trustee Sharon Harris (remote 9:30am-10:07am)

Meeting Minutes:

Chair Shields opened the meeting at approximately 9:31am. Chancellor Rubinstein also let the group know that this area of Concord has been experiencing intermittent power outages so the remote participants may be affected by that.

Approval Items:

1. Trustee Lozeau motioned to approve the meeting minutes from 3/27/2025, 6/3/2025, 6/26/2025, and 8/20/2025 public, non-public, and sealed non-public meeting minutes with the one change requested from Trustee Stebbins to be listed as a regret for the 6/3/2025 meeting as she was on vacation. Trustee Smith seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

Discussion Items:

1. Impact of Government Shutdown

The Executive Committee discussed the potential impact of the government shutdown. The short-term impact will be minimal. ApprenticeshipNH was given guidance that they can continue to spend down their grant funds as allocated. The one area immediately affected is the military students, there will be delays in how their funding is dispersed, however the colleges will ensure that those students are taken care of during this time. As this situation unfolds, they will be looking into where any future pain points may be.

2. NCHEMS & Financial Forecasting Tool

Chancellor Rubinstein provided context for the engagement with NCHEMS, noting the 2018 whitepaper ("NH's Community Colleges: Overview of Tuition and Plans for Financial Resource Allocation and Shared Services Accounting") illustrated the Board's long-standing interest in seeing the system develop more effective collaborations, both to better serve students and to capture efficiencies that would contribute to financial sustainability. Acknowledging the modest progress on those efforts over time relative to the Board's expressed ambitions, "single accreditation" was identified as a possible catalyst that could accelerate these efforts; however, consideration of such a substantial change required objective, data-informed due diligence which prompted the engagement with NCHEMS. The report by NCHEMS indicated that most of the expected benefits associated with single accreditation could be achieved without taking that structural step. The Chancellor described the key elements of NCHEMS recommendations and then tied these to the Board's motion following the April retreat, and his own subsequent presentations to the Board in June and July to illustrate the intended alignment among the NCHEMS recommendations, the Board's motion, and the proposed course of action. Predicated on the Board's April 2025 motion on the NCHEMS report that indicated

the possibility of revisiting the matter of single accreditation if progress was insufficient, the Chancellor reiterated the need for more clarity on the Board's expected measures of progress.

In conjunction with this discussion, the Chancellor referenced the financial forecast model presented by Comptroller Harrington for the September Finance Committee meeting. Discussion ensued about the underlying assumptions in that model and the degree to which CCSNH is able to exercise control over those levers. Using a set of baseline assumptions including flat State funding and modest enrollment growth, CCSNH would consume approximately half of the available cash on hand by FY29, but it was noted that this is primarily a function of the scaling up of deferred maintenance spending over the next four years. Some alternative assumptions were discussed that could alter this outcome, reinforcing the uncertainty of those factors that CCSNH cannot fully control. Notable among them is the State Appropriation that currently represents CCSNH's largest source of revenue and thus represents an area of potential risk, particularly if economic headwinds or changes to the flow of federal funds to the states result in greater pressure on New Hampshire's revenues for future biennia.

The Chancellor also drew attention to the four-year implementation timeline that accompanied the proposed recommendations in the NCHEMS report, noting that regardless of the path we are on, organizational change are likely to take longer than the time available to us for planning and execution of a complete plan for financial sustainability before we encounter the pressures reflected in the financial forecast model.

Subsequent discussion touched on the need to expedite some of the proposed changes that need to occur as well as the need for a shift in culture toward greater "system-ness." Further discussion touched on whether changes to current collective bargaining agreements might be required to achieve some of the objectives related to "system-ness." The System Leadership Team will look into those issues as we are moving forward.

The question was posed about what two key objectives were most critical at this time. The Chancellor referred back to the presentations from June and July to identify the full set of key objectives, but noted that the two he would prioritize would be to ensure consistent business practices for students, because this would have the additional benefits of operational efficiencies and the ability to leverage technology, and the ONE-NHCC project to achieve, consistent, high-quality access to well-designed, well-delivered, and well-supported online learning, noting that this would be responsive to the growing opportunity to serve adult learners, and that it would be the driver to make progress on underlying elements including course transferability, credit for prior learning, and the general education core. For that project to work, most back-office functions need to be done consistently, thus reinforcing the first objective as well.

Trustee Ackerman noted that it would be helpful to have a chart that outlines the NCHEMS recommendations and the Board of Trustees charge from April with a timeline, cost, delta/outcomes, priority and person responsible for overseeing. It would be helpful if any potential roadblocks were also noted. This is something that the Chancellor will be working on and agrees that it will be a helpful tool to show where progress is occurring and where it may be stalled. There is some concern that similar conversations have been happening over the years with little to no follow-through, however, with a tool like this there is a layer of accountability to ensure that work is being done.

Trustee Ackerman summarized the overarching objectives as growing addressable markets, reducing spending, and achieving comparable or better outcomes.

The question was posed regarding the perspective of presidents on these efforts and how best to incentivize change?

No further business was brought forward, meeting adjourned at 11:29am

Respectfully submitted,

Cassandra Hoefs
Executive Assistant to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees