



WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMMISSION  
SUSTAINABLE FUNDING  
WORKGROUP

FINAL REPORT AND  
CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING  
OPTIONS

Adopted December 4 2020



# SUSTAINABLE FUNDING WORKGROUP

# FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DECEMBER 4, 2020

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Workgroup Charge	7
Sub-Committee	
Overview	9
Final Reports –	
Summary of Foundational Efforts	10
Summary of Common Messages and Theme	14
Wyoming State Needs	16
Sustainable Funding	19
Summary Reports to The Governor and Legislative Committees	27
Prior Meeting Agendas	34

# Executive Summary

## Overview

On January 10, 2020, the Joint Appropriations Committee requested the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) convene a Sustainable Funding Workgroup to study the current system of funding and governance, evaluate best practices across the country, and produce a report that includes proposals for more sustainable funding solutions for the Wyoming Community College system. In February 2020, the WCCC convened the Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup and established a charge statement and requested funding recommendations. The Workgroup enlisted the help of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and State Higher Education Executive Officers to serve as facilitators ensuring the work proceeded efficiently and with a high level of expertise reviewing funding approaches from all 50 states. The Workgroup implemented four sub-committees to conduct work focused on specific topics: Foundational Efforts, Common Language and Terminology, State's Needs, and Funding Strategies. The culmination of the work resulted in a cohesive set of final recommendations including funding options for legislative consideration.

## Charge Statement, Sustainable Funding and Deliverables

The Wyoming Community College Commission and Community Colleges remain dedicated to providing the citizens of Wyoming with affordable, quality access to higher education, even in times of state budget shortfalls. We look forward to working with the Executive and Legislative Branches to develop a path forward.

### *Charge*

The Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup (CCSF) is a workgroup of the WCCC comprised of commissioners, WCCC staff, presidents, and trustees. The purpose of the workgroup is to develop up to three, but no more than four recommendations/proposals for sustainable funding of the state aid (block grant) for the community colleges as administered/allocated through WCCC rules promulgated to administer HB 80.

### *Sustainable Funding*

Wyoming's community colleges are constantly searching for established, consistent, non-volatile funding sources which provide a level of support to sustain and build service to students and the communities the colleges support. Sustainable funding includes inclusion of external cost adjustments in order to manage multiple increasing cost factors such as inflationary pressure and increased compliance and regulations as well as other aspects related to modern operations and technology.

The current funding of Wyoming CC's includes 60% state support, 20% local revenue, 20% from tuition and fees. Adjusting any of the three levels will require adjustments in the other levels in order for Wyoming's colleges to maintain the current standard of service.

### *Deliverables*

Outline 3-4 potential proposals for recommendation of sustainable funding options for community colleges that results in a net addition to allow for ongoing increases in both fixed and variable costs related to inflationary pressure, increased compliance/regulations, and modern operations and technology. The recommendations should include implications and consequences (both intended and unintended) of implementation. Consideration should also be given to strategies for moving any proposal forward in the approval process.

## **Governance**

Wyoming's current college governance structure has evolved significantly since 1946, incorporating positive contributions by educators, administrators, and legislators. The current system as established by the legislature maintains local control and is coordinated at the state-level ensuring location-appropriate programming and economic development for students, business, and communities with capturing system-wide efficiencies and opportunities. Gained system-wide efficiencies include combining programs, building consortium agreements, comprehensive technology systems, instructional equipment, physical facilities, transfer and educational initiatives, and services for state wide educational access.

Changing commission and college governance structure does not address funding shortfalls and distracts from far more important college issues. The minimal possible efficiency gains of consolidating campus governance into a single structure would result in significant declines in local control and institutional ability to service local community needs.

## **Guiding Principles**

The Workgroup confirmed the current state-level governance structure and coordinating commission role and established the Guiding Principles for this workgroup as:

*Community Colleges and Higher Education Must:*

- *Provide Return on Investment*
- *Increase post-secondary educational attainment per the state priority*
- *Consider and incorporate external cost adjustments and inflationary pressures*
- *Be responsive and efficient to the state's need for post-secondary education*

## **State's Needs Outlining Legislative Requirements and Making Recommendations**

Based on Wyoming's Foundational Efforts, Common Language, and current statutory and session laws, the purpose and role of the Wyoming community college system is laid out and rather prescriptive.

Wyoming **Mission** for Community College system: *(1991 Omnibus Act with revisions over time including the current 2009 version)* The mission for the Wyoming system of community colleges represents the diverse services and opportunities that the colleges offer to their communities, individuals, and the state.

*Wyoming community colleges provide dynamic lifelong learning environments through higher education, workforce development, innovative partnerships, and civic and global engagement that lead to responsible citizenship and economic, social, and cultural prosperity.*

**State's Interests:** *Based in the statutory state mission for the Wyoming Community College System and the colleges. These state's interests were identified in the 1991 Act, 2000/2008/2009 Legislation, and other session legislation. The current state's interests were legislatively developed as a re 2009 HEA121 and remain intact as prescribed by the session laws.*

- Educated citizenry: Increase the educational attainment of Wyoming residents by offering them access to a wide range of educational, training, and cultural programs.
- Diversified economy: Contribute to the diversification of Wyoming's economy by supporting the expansion of business and industry into new areas.

- Workforce development: Respond to the needs of existing and emerging industries by providing a well-prepared and well-trained workforce.
- Efficient and effective systems: Maximize return on investment by implementing system-wide efficiencies to enhance community college operations.
- Accountability and improvement: Improve the educational success of Wyoming residents by measuring outcomes and responding to findings, whether negative or positive.

## **Final Sustainable Funding Considerations with Options/Alternatives**

In order to meet the statutory obligations, state’s interests, legislative priorities, and foundational efforts of the WCCC, community colleges, and higher education, the following recommendations emerged from the Sustainable Funding Workgroup:

1. Sustainable Funding for community colleges is imperative for operations, programs development, facilities including major maintenance, IT, and staffing.
2. Sustainable Funding for community colleges must include provisions for external cost adjustments in order to avoid inflationary pressure and to meet compliance requirements.
3. Constitutional recognition or recognition through statutory language of the importance of community colleges as “necessary institutions” in the education pipeline would provide the community colleges state-level protections.

### **Funding Strategies Options/Alternatives for Legislative Consideration**

The recommended Funding Strategies serve as a series of options within a framework to create sustainable funding mechanisms for the community college system. Prior to the Workgroup effort, the community college proportion of funding through State Aid had been eroded and cut by \$53.8 million over the past 10 years. In addition, the existing shortfall for Health Insurance reimbursements has increased by \$7.5 million. Due to the impacts of state budget shortfalls, the 2020 state budget cut process resulted in Step 2 cuts of an additional \$22.9 million and Step 3 Governor Recommendation of an additional \$9.8 million cut per biennium. The impact is a total budget reduction since 2010 of approximately \$94.0 million.

The Sustainable Funding Workgroup considered an entire menu of options under the guidance of SHEEO (available in the appendix). In absence of comprehensive tax reform, the options to consider become limited when reviewing sustainability. In order to keep this executive summary concise, the below framework was identified as the most likely successful outcome under the current Wyoming taxing structure and capacity.

#### *Role of Tuition within Funding Policy Framework*

An important consideration is the role of tuition in the total budget calculation. The WCCC adopted a Tuition Policy in October 2018 and has already moved to increase tuition twice since adoption. In October 2020, the WCCC considered a wide variety of tuition options including tuition rate, comparison to other community colleges and universities, tuition caps, and differential tuition. The WCCC approved a tuition increase of 6% and removed the tuition cap, both of which are effective for the Fall 2021 Semester. For 2021, this change in tuition rate and cap for consistent enrollment results in \$2,508,996.

### **Funding Framework Considerations with Option/Alternatives Total Budget \$304 million**

Total Budget is recommended to total \$304 million beginning 2023. Resolution after 2023 would need to be adjusted with an ECA in with the below amounts updated to reflect the impact of external costs after 2023. The total \$304 million is based on the 2020 adopted budget with the already existing

deficits since 2010 and the 2020 budget cuts remedied. The suggested amount supported by State Aid would reduce from \$242 million (2020 Adopted Budget) to \$212 million, resulting in a recapture of \$30 million in State Aid and remedies the 2020 budget cuts. The balance left of \$91.2 million could then be funding through a combination of mill levies and sales and use taxes as described below. Finally, the Workgroup recommends that some portion of the LSRA be used to fund the colleges until changes can be implemented.

***I. Total State General Fund Target 45% (\$212.7 million pre-2020 budget cut)***

The Funding Strategies focused on the total college general fund appropriation as distributed through State Aid. The impact would reduce the total general fund appropriation from approximately 60% down to approximately 45% state funding based on the Approved 2020 Budget using a more sustainable funding mechanism and preserving the existing allocation model as created by 2015 HB80. The State Aid funding at the 45% level may be achieved with the below two-pronged approach to make up the balance.

*\*Note that this amount does not include the funding for Major Maintenance and Capital Construction since the request from JAC was to consider the State Aid for operational purposes. Further, the Legislature intentionally separated the Major Maintenance and Capital Construction funds from various agencies as a matter of reviewing Major Maintenance and Capital Construction in a holistic statewide perspective.*

***II. Funding Strategies Two-Pronged Approach (\$91.2 million)***

Everyone in the State of Wyoming should be supporting the community college system as a State benefit. This can be achieved by combining two prongs together: prong 1 mill levy plus prong 2 proportion of 1 penny sales and use tax. Note that both prongs have the benefit of providing ECA based on prevailing economic conditions.

*Prong 1: Imposing an ad valorem (property) tax in the form of some amount of mill*

Imposing additional mills on all counties. The suggestion is not to single out the currently 16 untaxed counties, but rather to impose a uniform number of mills statewide. For the 16 currently untaxed counties, that would be a new base amount, for the seven currently taxed counties that would be added to the minimum 4 mills already being imposed. The current district taxing counties would retain the mills directly to the colleges as is the current approach. The mills for the currently 16 untaxed counties would be received by the WCCC and allocated along with State Aid through the allocation model per HB 80. Board approved and voter approved additional mills for taxing districts would simply move up the numerical list as appropriate or could be expanded further for additional local mills. A 1 mill statewide levy will generate approx. \$45,000,000 biennially and a 2 mill statewide levy will generate approx. \$90,000,000 biennially.

*Prong 2: Imposing a proportion of a new additional 1 or more penny sales and use tax*

If a decision is made to impose additional mill levies, the remaining balance of the unmet revenue could be made up with a proportion of a new 1 or more penny sales and use tax. Exactly what proportion is again dependent on what a mill levy would generate. A 1 penny sales and use tax would generate approximately \$323 million biennially. The Workgroup did not recommend sole consideration of a 1 penny sales and use tax given the varying and critical needs of the state. The Legislature must balance multiple needs and may need to braid various funding sources together to meet a multitude of needs. However, the Workgroup does suggest the Legislature consider designating the funds for the community colleges and directed to the commission to allocate in combination with the State Aid and additional 1 mill funds through the allocation model.

### **III. *Funding Strategies Two-Pronged Approach with Options/Alternatives***

**Alternative within Mill Levy:** 1 mill statewide levy increase would generate approximately \$45 million biennially. Recognizing our tax structure assessments are not the same across sectors, a simple increase would disproportionately burden industries paying the most property taxes. If constitutionally permissible and if the Legislature wishes to avoid this additional burden to the higher taxed entities, an increase of 3.7 mills to the residential property tax might be considered to generate the same funds. Any number of options could be created in this alternative.

**Alternative within 1 or more penny sales and use tax:** 1 penny sales tax will generate approximately \$323 million biennially. Since a limited number of industries contribute disproportionately of approximately 50% of sales and use tax, if the Legislature wishes to avoid additional burdens to specific industries, an alternative the Legislature could consider would be removal of sales tax exemptions (except on food) and the addition of sales tax on services as identified in the August 2020 Department of Revenue report. This change would generate approximately \$376 million biennially in revenue, which could be dedicated to higher education or other uses depending on how the Legislature proceeds.

#### **Consideration of LSRA as Stopgap Measure**

In addition to the possibilities listed above, the Workgroup and WCCC ask the Legislature to consider including a recommendation that an appropriate amount of the LSRA be used to stabilize community college funding for the 2020 enacted cuts and some portion or all of the existing deficit until the sustainable funding measures are enacted by the Legislature.

Commissioners  
Mr. Gregg Blikre, Gillette Mr.  
Dennis Boal, Evanston Ms.  
Katherine Dooley, Powell  
Dr. Craig Frederick, Guernsey Dr.  
Jackie Freeze, Rock Springs Ms.  
Julia Newman, Torrington Ms.  
Ember Oakley, Riverton



Ex-officio Governor Mark  
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## Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup

### CHARGE

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The Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup (CCSF) is an informal workgroup of the WCCC comprised of commissioners, WCCC staff, presidents, and trustees. The purpose of the workgroup is to develop up to three, but no more than four recommendations/proposals for sustainable funding of the state aid (block grant) for the community colleges as administered/allocated through WCCC rules promulgated to administer HB 80.

### TASK

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The workgroup will review the information and outcomes of the 2009 Community College Taskforce, strengths of HB 80 including equitable distribution of state aid funds and predictable funding over a four-year period, and limitations of HB 80 including the lack of an external cost adjustment for both fixed and variable costs. External cost adjustments for both fixed and variable costs will include multiple factors such as inflationary pressure and increased compliance and regulations as well as other aspects related to modern operations and technology.

### CONSIDERATIONS

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The workgroup will look at mechanisms to provide for resources to support costs increases for both fixed and variable costs that are not enrollment dependent such as materials, supplies, utilities, facility operations, and salary increases. The workgroup will focus upon identifying equitable mechanisms for funding the community colleges and uniformly serving the higher education needs of students throughout the State.

The workgroup shall consider all potential sources of funds including, but not limited to tuition, general fund, local revenues including mill levy, in-district and out-of-district counties, BOCES/BOCHES, and bonds. The workgroup shall identify implications and consequences of adopting, eliminating, or expanding any source of funding.



## ASSUMPTIONS

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The workgroup shall work under the assumption that a net increase in funding is possible based upon external cost adjustments and strategic investments. Consideration will only be given to mechanisms that provide for the overall ability to include external cost adjustments and strategic investments. While some exchange of funds from the general fund to another funding source may occur, consideration will only be given to exchange of funds predicated on the final net add to college overall funding to address external cost adjustments and strategic investments.

## MEMBERSHIP

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- 2) WCCC Commissioners (1 Chairman; 1 out-of-district) *Chairman Dr. Jackie Freeze, Rock Springs  
Commissioner Gregg Blikre, Gillette*
- 1) WCCC Staff (Executive Director) *Dr. Sandy Caldwell*
- 2) Community College Presidents (1 with a BOCES and 1 without a BOCES)  
*Dr. Brad Tyndall, CWC Dr. Joe Schaffer, LCCC*
- 2) Trustees (must be from a different college than the college presidents)  
*Dr. Judith Bartmann, EWC Steve Degenfelder, CC*

WCCC and college staff will provide support staff and information for the workgroup.

## MEETING DATES

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The workgroup shall work for a short period of time of less than one year. Proposed meetings are as follows and may change depending on WCCC meetings/workshops.

- April 2020 in conjunction with WCCC meeting
- June 2020 in conjunction with WCCC meeting
- July/August/September 2020 in conjunction with a special meeting or workshop on tuition

## DELIVERABLES

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Outline 3-4 potential proposals for recommendation of sustainable funding options for community colleges that results in a net addition to allow for increases in costs due to external costs adjustments for both fixed and variable costs related to inflationary pressure, increased compliance/regulations, and modern operations and technology. The recommendations should include implications and consequences (both intended and unintended) of implementation.

Consideration should also be given to strategies for moving any proposal forward in the approval process.

## Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup Guiding Principles and Sub-committees

<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLES</b>	<p><i>Community Colleges and Higher Education Must:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide Return on Investment</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase post-secondary educational attainment per the state priority</i></li> <li>• <i>Consider and incorporate external costs adjustments and inflationary pressures</i></li> <li>• <i>Be responsive and efficient to the state's need for post-secondary education</i></li> </ul>			
<b>Sub-committee</b>	<b>Common Language</b>	<b>State's Needs</b>	<b>Funding Strategies</b>	<b>Foundational Efforts</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	Research of definitions, common use of language, and best practices.	Balancing education deliverables and meeting the needs of the state, regions within the state, counties, and communities with available education funding.	Identifying a select number (three or four) funding strategies that other states have implemented to augment higher education funding including tuition, mills, special taxes, etc.	Consolidating the evolution of governance and state funding history beginning in 1984 to today resulting in a one or two page executive summary.
<b>Chair</b>	Rob Dennis, WCCC Chief Operating Officer	Dr. Sandy Caldwell, WCCC Executive Directors	Larry Buchholtz, WCCC Chief Financial Officer	Dr. Ben Moritz, WCCC Deputy Director
<b>Members</b>	Dr. Brad Tyndall, CWC Erin Taylor, WACCT Commissioner Julia Newman, WCCC Commissioner Kay Dooley, WCCC	Dr. Joe Schaffer, LCCC Dr. Ben Moritz, WCCC Commissioner Ember Oakley, WCCC Commissioner Gregg Blikre, WCCC Trustee Judith Bartmann, EWC Lachelle Brant, Governor's Office Dr. Demi Michelau, WICHE	Commissioner Dr. Craig Frederick, WCCC Commissioner Dr. Jackie Freeze, WCCC ASC Members, WCCC/colleges Dr. Kim Dale, WWCC Dr. Stefani Hicswa, NWC Trustee Steve Degenfelder, CC Dr. David Tandberg, SHEEO	Commissioner Dennis Boal, WCCC Dr. Lesley Travers, EWC Dr. Walt Tribley, NWCCD Dr. Darren Divine, CC Lachelle Brant, Governor's Office

# Summary of Foundational Efforts

## *A Review of Prior Studies on Community College Funding and Governance*

### **Overview**

On January 14, 2020 the Joint Appropriations Committee requested the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) to convene a Sustainable Funding Workgroup to study the current system of funding and governance, evaluate best practices across the country, and produce a report that includes proposals for a more sustainable funding model. At the Workgroup's June 3, 2020 meeting it was decided that a Foundational Efforts Sub-committee would be established to consolidate the evolution of governance and state funding history from 1984 through today, and create a brief executive summary. This report reflects the efforts of that sub-committee, and includes a brief overview of the reports and studies on the topic carried out over that time period.

### **Summary**

During the time period in question there were four primary examinations of community college funding and governance:

1. 1984 LSO Audit Report
2. 1990 Management Audit and Resulting 1991 Omnibus Act
3. 1999 Community College Governance Study
4. 2009 Community College Taskforce

This report summarizes the most impactful and salient outcomes of each report, and provides a brief synopsis of the recommendations' relevance in the current budgetary and governance context.

### **1984 LSO Audit Report**

*Structural Inconsistencies* – The report identified the disconnect between Commission duties to disperse State funding and coordinate programming to meet the State's needs, and the local control that each college maintained. They concluded that the WCCC should hold more oversight in terms of reallocation and withholding authority, and that WCCC leadership adopt a more formal, consistent and engaged attitude to its coordinating responsibilities

*Administrative Changes* - To achieve the goals laid out above, Commission duties were amended to include the approval of academic and vocational programs, promulgate rules, review and approve all new districts, establish standardized accounting tools for FTE and allocation purposes, and to be the state authority for receiving federal (not only state) funds. It also established the WCCC as the conduit between the colleges and most state agencies (A&I, DOT, etc.).

*Role of State Funding* – Reaffirmed that state funding is intended to supplement local resources, rather than replacing local resources. State funding had greatly increased (9000%) over the previous 25 years, and the Audit held that this represented an unintended change in the definition and purpose of state funding.

### **1990 Management Audit and 1991 Omnibus Act**

*Clarification and Expansion of WCCC's Budgetary Oversight* - Community College Commission shall include in its budget request funding for the newly established small business development network; Wyoming community college computer consortium, Public television project, and Adult basic education, graduate equivalency diploma and English as a second language instruction.

*Establishment of Telecommunications Planning Team* - UW, community college commission and department of education shall designate two members to serve on a six- member planning team to develop and maintain a state plan for telecommunications-based distance learning.

*Facilitating Transfer* - UW shall establish an accrediting committee to determine credit granted for work taken at the community colleges.

### *WCCC Administrative Updates*

- Create the Wyoming Post-Secondary Education Planning and Coordination Council to continue studying postsecondary education
- Implement standardized tuition structure within the community college system.
- Review participation by a community college in a board of cooperative educational services or with a board through an agreement to ensure consistency with the mission of the community college.
- Develop and maintain a common course numbering system to improve articulation among the community colleges and among the community colleges and UW. This involved setting aside budget funds to coordinate these efforts through UW.

### **1999 Community College Governance Study**

*Overall Findings* – The audit found that many of the issues identified in the previous audit still existed, primarily as a result of the “tentative” approach taken by the WCCC. Although over 60% of the colleges’ funding came from the state, there was little coordination around statewide goals and initiatives. The data provided by the colleges was inconsistent and was not effective for informing policy decisions.

*Outcomes* – It was suggested that statute more clearly delineate responsibilities across the colleges and the Commission, and that statewide planning be emphasized. Improvement to data systems, reporting, and consistencies were necessary.

*Legislative Changes* – As a result of the audit, the 2000 Legislative session included three bills: a Revisor’s Bill, SF21, and HB26. The Revisor’s Bill removed inconsistencies in language and clarity in existing statutes. SF21 brought all of Adult Education within Commission oversight, clarified administrative computing and coordination expectations, and specified specific functions and reports that would be required on a stated schedule. HB26 addressed many of the same issues, and required that allocation of State Aid be based on

Commission rule, thereby strengthening the authority of the WCCC. It also allowed the WCCC to request additional State funding (exception request) and allowed the colleges more flexibility in regards to managing their allocated funds through retaining carryovers and use of additional mill levy funds.

### **2007 Governor’s Blue Ribbon Commission**

*Purpose* – Governor Freudenthal created the Blue Ribbon Commission to establish recommendations to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the colleges’ administration and granting of degrees and certificates that aligned with economic needs.

*Funding Recommendations* – The State should set aside \$15M/year for workforce training and development start-up costs. Several funding approaches were suggested, including a trust being established to fund this in perpetuity, a statewide one mill levy being added (except for CC districts), a regularly allocated general fund appropriation, or a short-term (four-year) general fund appropriation.

*Other Recommendations* – The Blue Ribbon Commission issued an extensive report that included almost three dozen recommendations. Many of them focused on increasing the colleges’ ability to offer workforce training programs, to align workforce training efforts across state agencies, and to ensure that statewide strategic plans be established to align the efforts of the colleges and the WCCC.

*Legislative Changes* – Following the Blue Ribbon Commission’s work, the 2008 Legislative Session implemented some of the recommended changes that included:

- WCCC responsibility to create a biennial strategic plan
- Ongoing review and reevaluation of college service areas
- WCCC responsibility for review of existing programs and the authority to withhold state funding from consistently low enrolled programs
- Revised capital construction processes and increased full-time positions at the WCCC

*Failed Legislative Changes* – Notably, a bill to introduce a statewide mill levy to support the colleges failed introduction in the 2008 session.

### **2009 Community College Taskforce**

*Purpose* – It was asked to review the community college system and chose several areas to review in particular details. These included enrollment capacity for anticipated student populations and workforce needs, creating effective funding streams for construction needs, improvement of system governance and statewide alignment, and reducing barriers between K-12 and higher education.

*Recommendations* – The Taskforce reasserted the need to establish an effective state- wide strategic plan and mechanisms for engaging the colleges in its execution, separating out fixed and variable costs in the allocation model, establish a capital construction process that is prioritized by the Commission according to the strategic plan, and establish limits on state funding for major maintenance to foster a more sustainable system.

*Outcomes* – The 2009 Legislative session implemented some of these recommendations, including HB 114. This implemented the capital construction and major maintenance recommendations, aligned the strategic plan with budgeting requests, restricted the use of State Aid for special purposes, required the development of performance benchmarks, and established an every four-year process for adjusting state funding depending on enrollment fluctuations. Notably it did not include inflationary tools.

### **Synopsis of Prior Reports and Studies**

Although the economic conditions of Wyoming varied considerably across the time periods in which these reports were issued, several issues and concerns have consistently appeared. These recurring themes are as

follows:

1. *Balancing local concerns of the community colleges with state-wide goals and budgets.* Many of the recommended and implemented changes addressed improvements in communication, alignment, and effective translation of state-level goals to college-level instruction and policy. Policies to affect these changes were frequently implemented within the WCCC, and the succession of recommendations and implementations has fostered a gradual evolution of the Commission and the overall relationships between the colleges themselves as well as the colleges and the relevant State institutions. The WCCC has inherited greater budgetary oversight, and has improved the level of collaboration and communication within the system, leading to increased efficiencies and more cohesive strategic planning across the state.
2. *Alignment of workforce training programs to state-wide needs.* Several reports have suggested additional funding for the rapid “standing up” of workforce programs. This acknowledges the fact that industry needs may change quickly and workforce programs frequently require extensive capital. While the funding itself has varied according to budgets, a culture of industry-responsiveness and focus on workforce needs has become entrenched.
3. *Data reporting and effectiveness.* The reviewing task forces have repeatedly identified the need for accurate, timely data to make effective policy decisions. Several rounds of legislative updates have sought to improve the effectiveness of state-wide college data reporting, and most of these efforts have focused on increasing the WCCC’s capacity and authority to request, analyze, and report this data.
4. *Cross-institutional alignment.* The drawbacks of siloed state agencies have been repeatedly identified, and several recommendations have been made to require communication and alignment between the colleges and UW (around CCNS, transfer and workforce), the colleges and industry, and the colleges and DWS and WDE. Improvements in WWDC relationships, collaborative projects across the WDE, UW and the colleges, and the work of the EAEC have made progress in breaking down those barriers.
5. *Funding.* While funding was discussed in all the reports, no wholesale additions or restructuring of revenue has resulted. Efforts have included changes to the allocation model, one-time allocations for specific projects, and increases/decreases to the flexibility allowed in the expenditure of state funds.
6. *Unvoiced Concerns.* A review of themes present throughout the prior reports and studies would be incomplete without highlighting an issue that is strikingly absent. Unlike the University of Wyoming and the K-12 system, the community colleges exist through statutory mandate rather than constitutional mandate. This results in a level of budgetary uncertainty and reliance on each biennial allocation. This Foundational Efforts Sub-Committee concludes that much of the need for regular studies and reports by Blue Ribbon, Legislative, and other esteemed Committees is the inherent impermanence of the community colleges’ funding stream and resulting tension felt by both the colleges and the Legislature.

## Summary of Common Messages and Themes

Topic	Message
Who are the students served at Wyoming's community colleges?	The majority of students served are seeking a local solution to their educational needs. Students are typically place bound and constitute an array of interests and backgrounds including: working adult, traditional, nontraditional, lifelong learners, high school degree completion, noncredit (professional development /life enrichment), concurrent enrollment, and additional career preparation.
The Need For Sustainable Funding	<p>Wyoming's community colleges are constantly searching for established, consistent, non-volatile funding sources which provide a level of support to sustain and build service to students and the communities the colleges support.</p> <p>The current funding of Wyoming CC's includes 60% state support, 20% local revenue, 20% from tuition and fees. Adjusting any of the three levels will require adjustments in the other levels in order for Wyoming's colleges to maintain the current standard of service.</p>
Comprehensive Community College	Colleges are the glue keeping many of Wyoming's communities together. In addition to providing regular academic and technical instruction, colleges are key providers of cultural resources, events, facilities, social services, and activities.
Return On Investment	<p>No one indicator truly measures institutional effectiveness, efficiency, or productivity. Readily available measures, such as cost per FTE, do not accurately reflect the comprehensive nature of Wyoming's community colleges. Comparability issues are pronounced when evaluating Wyoming's unique rural community colleges against peer institutions located in urban settings in other states.</p> <p>Perceived online learning efficiencies are typically not realized. Online learning provides less effective learning outcomes when compared to traditional delivery modes, especially for at-risk community college students. Increased technology costs, access, and limited infrastructure eliminate any gained efficiencies. Offering online student services such as tutoring, mental health, and mentoring make online instruction more costly. Additionally, online courses are typically underfunded.</p> <p>Wyoming ROI analyses reveal very positive returns on investment in education relative to four areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the student as return on paid tuition and fees.</li> <li>• To the tax payer in developing future state revenues.</li> <li>• To everyone in terms of reduced need for social services and incarceration rates.</li> <li>• To regional and statewide economic development initiatives</li> </ul>
Constitutional Mandate For Educational Funding	Wyoming's community colleges, unlike the constitutionally protected K-12 sector or the University of Wyoming, do not receive block grant funding secured by a constitutional provision. Funding is allocated to each college based on a complex formula detailed in statute. The allocation model focuses primarily on for-credit activities in three areas: Participation, Progress, and Performance. The current

	<p>funding formula should include incentives for the colleges to reduce programmatic costs, reward additional consortiums, fully reimburse distance education, develop industry specific program and apprenticeships, and address non-credit aspects of the colleges' mission.</p>
<p>Wyoming Student Absorption of Educational Costs</p>	<p>There is significant price inelasticity with student tuition. A demonstrated increase in tuition has a limited potential impact on student enrollment. In Wyoming when price goes up, there is little loss of demand as students absorb the additional cost.</p>
<p>Impact of Changing Governance Structures</p>	<p>Changing college governance structure does not address funding shortfalls and distracts from far more important college issues. The minimal possible efficiency gains of consolidating campus governance into a single structure would result in significant declines in local control and institutional ability to service local community needs.</p> <p>Wyoming's current college governance structure has evolved significantly since 1946, incorporating positive contributions by educators, administrators, and legislators. The current system maintains local control and is coordinated at the state level ensuring location-appropriate programming and economic development for students, business, and communities with capturing system-wide efficiencies and opportunities. Gained system-wide efficiencies include combining programs, building consortium agreements, comprehensive technology systems, instructional equipment, physical facilities, transfer and educational initiatives, and services for state wide educational access.</p>



# Wyoming State Needs

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS and SESSION LAWS

Wyoming **Mission** for Community College system: *(1991 Omnibus Act with revisions over time including the current 2009 version)* The mission for the Wyoming system of community colleges represents the diverse services and opportunities that the colleges offer to their communities, individuals, and the state.

*Wyoming community colleges provide dynamic lifelong learning environments through higher education, workforce development, innovative partnerships, and civic and global engagement that lead to responsible citizenship and economic, social, and cultural prosperity.*

**State's Interests:** *Based in the statutory state mission for the Wyoming Community College System and the colleges. These state's interests were identified in the 1991 Act, 2000/2008/2009 Legislation, and other session legislation. The current state's interests were legislatively developed as a re 2009 HEA121 and remain intact as prescribed by the session laws. Other laws such as the 2019 SEA68 as well as 2018 HEA48 and HEA96 further emphasize the enacted state's interests. The WCCC is statutorily required to establish priorities that further explicitly provide direction.*

- Educated citizenry: Increase the educational attainment of Wyoming residents by offering them access to a wide range of educational, training, and cultural programs.
- Diversified economy: Contribute to the diversification of Wyoming's economy by supporting the expansion of business and industry into new areas.
- Workforce development: Respond to the needs of existing and emerging industries by providing a well-prepared and well-trained workforce.
- Efficient and effective systems: Maximize return on investment by implementing system-wide efficiencies to enhance community college operations.
- Accountability and improvement: Improve the educational success of Wyoming residents by measuring outcomes and responding to findings, whether negative or positive.

### **Statutory Recognition lacking Constitutional Recognition**

The Wyoming community colleges came into being after the Wyoming Constitution was written. As such, the University and K12 education entities are expressly stated within the constitution, but the community colleges are not.

Article 7 of the Wyoming Constitution states that the Legislature shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a complete and uniform system of public instruction, embracing free elementary schools of every needed kind and grade, a university with such technical and professional departments as the public good may require and the means of the state allow, and such other institutions as may be necessary (emphasis added).

Although not specifically stated in the constitution, the latter statement and subsequent Legislative actions suggest a broad understanding that the community colleges are "necessary institutions" of education

for Wyoming. The community colleges have been specifically added to the Wyoming Statutes consistently since inception with the role of the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC), which serves as the representative agency for coordination, advocacy, funding, and efficiency/accountability on behalf of the State and community college education statewide. Given the community colleges are not identified within the constitution, the WCCC was expressly granted the primary advocacy role whenever two or more colleges are impacted to ensure community college education is considered a vital component of Wyoming education. Further, the community colleges were specifically included in the Wyoming Statutes (W.S. 21-17-105) to provide post-secondary education “nearly as free as possible.” Finally, local boards provide for the operation of the individual colleges ensuring that management and governance occurs closest to the citizens served.

## **Statewide College System Strategic Plan and Wyoming Postsecondary Education Attainment Strategic Plan**

Wyoming Statutes clearly charge the WCCC to develop and monitor a Statewide College System Strategic Plan that provides for the priorities and directions of the State based on the 2009 established state’s interests and mission. The WCCC is required to monitor and update the plan in advance of the biennial budget request. Further, Wyoming established statewide postsecondary educational attainment goals (2018 Executive Order 2018-01 and 2019 SEA68) that charge the WCCC and colleges with including postsecondary attainment in their respective strategic plans as means for advancing economic development and workforce development across the state.

*[Since 1984, the State has conducted a series of studies and audits related to the community colleges. The result is consistent confirmation that an educated citizenry is an economic investment with a short- and long-term ROI. The Wyoming community colleges serve as both community colleges and regional education, technology, and cultural hubs providing services that the state would be challenged to otherwise provide]*

### **Efficiencies**

While a continuing and concerted effort must be pursued to gain efficiencies, the colleges, through the coordination of the WCCC, do much together to increase cost efficiency through collaboration. This is also true for collaboration with the university and other entities like DWS and WBC. This is a statutory reference from the 1991 Omnibus Act as well with multiple points within the statute.

Examples include:

1. A joint database, which means that much state reporting takes place centrally and is not being done seven times by seven community colleges.
2. Statewide contracts for major technology systems, including Colleague, Canvas and Zoom, that leverage scale to negotiate better pricing and also allow for expertise sharing among colleges.
3. Library databases are purchased through a statewide consortium, which leverages joint funding to provide a much wider range of library resources to students.
4. UW shares facilities with most community colleges.
5. New ability for consortia for academic programs.
6. All Wyoming community colleges have many articulation transfer agreements set up with UW.
7. UW, five Wyoming Community Colleges, and many K-12 districts share the same Learning Management System, Canvas.
8. Implementation is currently underway of the legislatively required statewide transfer portal that will allow students to see a statewide unofficial transcript.
9. A statewide website ([WYCLASS](#)) lists all online classes across the state providing a simple search tool for students.

10. UW and the seven community colleges have legislatively required common course numbering, meaning that courses statewide share names, numbers, and learning outcomes.
11. Statewide consultation process consisting of multiple councils (Presidents, Student Services, Administrative Services, Academic Affairs) of leaders from all the Wyoming community colleges institutions that work on joint governance and statewide projects.
12. Work together on many statewide projects and initiatives such as SLEDS, attainment, common transcript/transfer process, CTE Teacher Prep, CapCon, Major Maintenance, CapCon.

### **Implications of Inadequate and Continuing Budget Cuts:**

With the implementation of the HB 80 and recalibration of the base period, the colleges do have the ability to plan within a known budget. The challenge has been that there has been no ability to manage external cost adjustments, which has eroded the base allocation overtime by \$53.8 million since 2010. Given the current state funding constraints, general funds budget cuts of 10% have been in enacted further eroding the budget by another \$22 million with another \$22 million budget cut on the horizon for a total budget reduction of approximately \$95-98 million in comparable dollars. The impact is often exacerbated by frequent parallel (yet delayed) reductions in assessed valuation. The consequence is the colleges are faced with reductions of both state funds and local funds.

1. **Cuts to programs including both credit and non-credit programs.**  
The impact is that the colleges will not be able to deliver on the comprehensive obligations. With the current \$97 million budget erosion and reduction since 2010 in comparable dollars, further diminution of budgets will force individual institutions to severely curtail or eliminate existing outreach, community and continuing education, and other non-revenue generating programs.
2. **The state will need to determine what it wants the colleges to do and not do.**  
Given the extent of budget cuts over the past several years, individual institutions have been pragmatically forced to operate on a trade-out basis; an operating paradigm that will only become more entrenched as additional budget restrictions are imposed. In short, as new training and educational needs arise from state or local sources, the colleges will be forced to further diminish or eliminate already existing programs in order to continue to serve the growing needs of Wyoming's citizenry. One example would be adding new and unique programs to train adult citizens in the continually evolving sphere of needed job skills will be virtually impossible without eroding or eliminating already existing programs and offerings.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In order to meet the statutory obligations, state's interests, legislative priorities, and foundational efforts of the WCCC, community colleges, and higher education, the following recommendations emerged from the Sustainable Funding Workgroup:

1. Sustainable Funding for community colleges is imperative for operations, programs development, facilities including major maintenance, IT, and staffing.
2. Sustainable Funding for community colleges must include provisions for external cost adjustments in order to avoid inflationary pressure and to meet compliance requirements.
3. Constitutional recognition or recognition through statutory language of the importance of community colleges as "necessary institutions" in the education pipeline would provide the community colleges state-level protections.

# Summary of Funding Strategies

## Commissioners

Mr. Gregg Blikre, Gillette  
Mr. Dennis Boal, Evanston  
Ms. Katherine Dooley, Powell  
Dr. Craig Frederick, Guernsey  
Dr. Jackie Freeze, Rock Springs  
Ms. Julia Newman, Torrington  
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## MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainable Funding Workgroup

From: Larry Buchholtz, Funding Sub-Committee

Date: Dec 3, 2020

Subject: Summary of Efforts – Additional Considerations

In March 2020, the Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup was created at the urging of the Joint Appropriations Committee, to develop alternatives for sustainable funding for Wyoming's Community College system, while maintaining current service levels to the state. Upon completion of the first comprehensive report to the Sustainable Funding Workgroup in October 2020, it was determined that the modeling should include the calculated amount of funding for inflation (ECA) that have not been received over the past 10 – 12 years. That amount, as presented to the Joint Appropriations Committee during the 2020 Legislative Session, is \$53.8 million.

Prior to the completion of work of the Workgroup and Funding Sub-Committee, the Community Colleges have absorbed 15% in permanent funding cuts. These cuts will further impact the colleges' budgets and widen the gap to full funding. Additionally, the Commission has already approved a tuition increase of 6% and a removal of the credit hour tuition cap, both effective with the Fall 2021 semester. This has the potential to raise approximately \$2,508,996 if enrollment remains level.

The Funding Subcommittee has continued its work under the premise of ultimately reducing its general fund appropriation to 45% of operational costs. Doing so would facilitate more sustainable funding, while maintaining engaged statewide interests and priorities through state appropriations.

Based on this assumption, the Funding Sub-Committee has agreed on a two-pronged approach to reducing the community college system dependence on the state general fund and developing alternative sustainable funding. It should be noted that this approach is not meant to be a recommendation, but rather provide a series of alternatives. Additionally, it is recognized that these alternatives would require approval by the Legislative Revenue Committee.

Without comprehensive tax reform, other options were identified and discussed, such as:

BOCES/BOCHES – while this has the ability to impose mills across each county, not all of the funding is necessarily directed to a college, and it must be voted on for continuance every two years, therefore not a sustainable funding source.

Lottery Proceeds – Since its inception in 2013, the Wyoming Lottery has returned approximately \$19M to cities, towns and municipalities, therefore not a viable funding source.

Statewide Gambling – Knowing how hard the state fought to prevent gambling on the reservations, we believe a statewide initiative to allow gambling off the sovereign nation is unlikely.

Currently untaxed services – An option, and a lever that can be pulled within our listed alternatives.

Income Tax – As displayed and incorporated within the documentation created by Dean Tempte of the Legislative Service Office, and provided to the Joint Education Interim Committee on September 3, 2020, there is merit and potential to raise revenue through the creation of a state income tax. The timeline to create the tax code out-distances the more immediate needs of education, although the creation and receipt of revenue from this type of action could replace other short-term sources of revenue discussed below.

Differential Tuition – This alternative was delivered to the Commission during its' tuition review workshop and subsequent action on October 7 and 8, 2020. The final outcome was to not pursue a differential tuition rate imposed on students just from the currently 16 untaxed counties. The analysis showed that a 25% higher tuition rate for just those students only generated \$3 million annually. The alternative to assess 1 mill across that same geographic area generates \$14.5 million annually, a much better alternative that just students and their families shouldering the cost of operations.

### **Sustainable Funding Alternatives**

- **Add a Statewide Mill Levy to all non-community college district counties** A 1 mill statewide levy increase would generate approximately \$29 million biennially under the current structure. However, recognizing our tax structure valuations are not the same, a simple increase would disproportionately burden the mineral industry. If the Legislature wishes to avoid this additional burden to the mineral industry, an increase of 3.9 mills to residential property, valued at \$3,786,503,030, could be implemented to generate the same amount of revenue. The Funding Sub-Committee supports the concept of collecting sustainable funding for community colleges equitably across the entire state, not simply within Community College communities. We would propose revenue from this source be directed to the WCCC for inclusion in the funding allocation model.
- **Add an additional Mill Levy to existing community college districts.** An additional 1 mill on the current districts will generate approximately \$15.8 million biennially under the current structure. We would propose the minimum number of mills imposed by W.S. 21.19-312 be increased to 5, and all other mills allowed by statute be moved up the scale, i.e., the optional 1 mill currently available for approval by the board of trustees would be moved from the 5<sup>th</sup> mill to the 6<sup>th</sup> mill, and so on. Likewise, if the Legislature wishes to avoid this additional burden to the mineral industry, an increase of 3.5 mills to the residential property, valued at \$2,390,603,466, could be implemented to generate the same amount of revenue. We would propose revenue from this source be directed to the college district the same way the current 4-mills is distributed and this revenue be included in the funding allocation model
- **Incorporate a Sales Tax allocation to community college funding.** A One penny sales tax will generate approximately \$323 million biennially. However, since the mineral industry accounts for approximately 50% of sales tax, if the Legislature wishes to avoid additional burdens to that industry, an alternative the Legislature could consider would be removal of sales tax exemptions (except on food) and the addition of sales tax at the current 4% on services, which according to the August 2020 Department of Revenue report would generate approximately \$376 million biennially in revenue which could be dedicated to an education account.

Depending upon decisions related to the appropriate level of state funding, community college district funding and non-district funding, the resulting allocation model would reflect appropriate levels of mill assessments in community college districts and non-districts and the level and role that might be played by a sales tax allocation to education in general or to higher education specifically. While some discussion has occurred that a 34% state, 33% local, and 33% tuition model might be appropriate, the committee determined that it would be extremely difficult to get to the 33% tuition while staying true to the mandate to make “attendance as nearly free as possible.”

These sustainable funding alternatives could generate approximately \$368-376 million biennially, enough to absorb the \$91.2 million or 45% of the Community College budget funded by the general fund appropriation in future years. The structure or balance between the two sources should be determined by the Legislature. In addition to these funding alternatives, the Funding Subcommittee supports the use of the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA) to stabilize community college funding in the short term until any of these measures are enacted, and will further note there is adequate funding by adopting a combination of these measures to also fully fund college capital improvement projects and the state calculated major maintenance needs of the college system.

The Community College Commission remains dedicated to providing the citizens of Wyoming with affordable, quality access to higher education, even in times of state budget shortfalls. We look forward to working with the Select and Legislative Committees to develop a path forward.

Total Annual Operating Expenditures for Community College System		Annual	Biennial
		\$ 236,397,552	\$ 472,795,104
Annual State Appropriations	State Aid	\$ 95,594,590	\$ 191,189,180
(prior to budget cuts)	Health Insurance	\$ 24,730,792	\$ 49,461,583
	Library	\$ 1,007,830	\$ 2,015,659
	State Support	\$ 121,333,211	\$ 242,666,422
	Proportion of state support to all unrestricted operating and plant fund expenditures	51%	51%
	Objective	45%	45%
	Target	\$ 106,378,898	\$ 212,757,796.80
	General Fund	\$ (14,954,313)	\$ (29,908,625)
	Average Annual CapCon (2015-2020)	\$ 12,177,000	\$ 24,354,000
	Total Revenue Replacement to remain static before budget reductions	\$ 14,954,313	\$ 29,908,625
	Current Health Insurance shortfall (\$7.5M)	\$ 7,500,000	
	Biennial reduction from current general fund appropriations	\$ 29,908,625	
	Replacement of ECAs and prior budget cuts over last 10 years	\$ 53,800,000	
	Total 2 Year Target Revenue Replacement	\$ 91,208,625	
		1 MILL 1 Penny	2 MILL 1 Penny
		\$ 29,154,580	\$ 58,309,159
New Mill(s) to 16 Currently Untaxed Counties		\$ 15,797,812	\$ 31,595,625
Additional Mill(s) on Currently Taxed Di	Additional MILL revenue	\$ 44,952,392	\$ 89,904,784
Shortfall		\$ 46,256,233	\$ 1,303,842
	Biennial Taxable Sales	\$ 32,276,315,790	\$ 32,276,315,790
		\$ 322,763,158	\$ 322,763,158
	Percent of additional penny(s) to the system	14%	0%
		\$ 46,256,233	\$ 1,303,842
	Sales tax balance to an education account	\$ 276,506,924	\$ 321,459,316
		1 MILL 2 Penny	2 MILL 2 Penny
		\$ 29,154,580	\$ 58,309,159
		\$ 15,797,812	\$ 31,595,625
Additional MILL revenue		\$ 44,952,392	\$ 89,904,784
		\$ 46,256,233	\$ 1,303,842
	Biennial Taxable Sales	\$ 32,276,315,790	\$ 32,276,315,790
		\$ 645,526,316	\$ 645,526,316
	Percent of additional penny(s) to the system	7%	0%
		\$ 46,256,233	\$ 1,303,842
	Sales tax balance to an education account	\$ 599,270,082	\$ 644,222,474



## SUSTAINABLE FUNDING OPTIONS MATRIX

Option	Description	Fiscal Impact	Authority	PROS	CONS
Increase Permissive One Mill Levy to Two	Statute currently allows the Board of Trustees of a Community College District to levy an additional one mill on the district's property taxes. This must be considered and approved every two years. All seven community colleges have this millage in place. Through statute change, this could be moved to a maximum of two mills.	\$15.7M	Boards of Trustees (which statutory change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows districts to raise funds as necessary</li> <li>Colleges can respond directly to local industry needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some localities may not have an appetite for increased mil levies</li> <li>Not all districts' mil values are created equally</li> <li>The role of a CC trustee might become more politicized</li> </ul>
Out of District Tuition Differential or increase tuition in general	Allow "out of district" tuition (charge a higher fee to students who come from one of the 16 non-taxing counties, or out of state.	Tuition increase (\$109) = \$31M Out of district (varies) ~\$20M-\$15M	Wyoming Community College Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fairer to in-district resident who are paying for services</li> <li>A good compromise to out of district residents paying a mil levy</li> <li>Only those enrolled pay rather than all county residents</li> <li>Targets those utilizing the services of the college</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expectation of services in service districts may increase if students are paying more for classes</li> <li>Likely insufficient to solve the funding issues alone.</li> </ul>
Non-District counties impose 1 mill	There are 16 Wyoming who are not part of a community college district, and as such are not providing any tax support to fund the colleges. This option would impose a 1 mill levy on these counties.	\$14.9M	State Legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fairer to current district resident who are paying mil levy currently</li> <li>All counties pay instead of just seven</li> <li>If residents in other counties are paying for services perhaps for services perhaps, they will be encouraged to take advantage of them</li> <li>CCs serve all 23 counties – all 23 counties could pay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May not raise enough revenue alone</li> <li>May create unrealistic expectations of service in those counties</li> <li>May inflate local politics</li> <li>Legislature would have to pass unless it could be an option to do it as a voter referendum</li> <li>Industry will bear more of the burden of the tax</li> </ul>
Non-District counties impose 2 mills	Same as above, although this option would impose 2 mills on the counties.	\$29.8M	State Legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fairer to current district resident who are paying mil levy currently</li> <li>All counties pay instead of just seven</li> <li>If residents in other counties are paying for services perhaps for services perhaps, they will be encouraged to take advantage of them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May not raise enough revenue alone</li> <li>May create unrealistic expectations of service in those counties</li> <li>May inflate local politics</li> <li>Legislature would have to pass unless it could be an</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCs serve all 23 counties – all 23 counties could pay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• option to do it as a voter referendum</li> <li>• Industry will bear more of the burden of the tax</li> </ul>
Removing the 4-year limitation on the additional 5 mills	State statute allows for each community college district to levy up to an additional five mills on the assessed valuation of the district. This must be approved by the voters of the district and may only exist for a total of four years. This option would change that statute to allow these additional mills to remain in effect for up to 10 years, providing better stability with the funding stream.	<p>Each mil is worth approximately \$7.8M</p> <p>Currently the 4 mills for operations and additional one mil equates to \$39.4M in the seven taxing counties</p>	Voters in a CC District (with statutory change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides funding stability</li> <li>• Only up every ten years</li> <li>• Revenue option would not require legislative approval</li> <li>• Gives more tools in the “toolbox” for local approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all tax districts are created equally</li> <li>• Implications of local community not approving</li> <li>• Could create inequities among the districts</li> </ul>
1% sales and use tax	This option would impose, by act of the Legislature, a one percent “stabilization” sales and use tax on the 23 Wyoming counties. The tax would only go into effect when certain revenue metrics are hit, resulting in reduced capacity for the state to adequately fund the community colleges. When those revenues would increase back to the predetermined threshold, this tax would be removed.	An additional 1% S&U tax could generate \$140M per year to state general fund and \$63M to locals	State Legislature (through statutory change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows removal when revenue thresholds are met</li> <li>• Could provide sufficient funding</li> <li>• Allows for long-term planning and hiring</li> <li>• Sufficient funding for program development and other dire college needs</li> <li>• Is a state-wide funding option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be approved by the legislature</li> <li>• Risks state appropriations being reduced further</li> <li>• Sales tax is regressive, would hurt low income residents more</li> </ul>
Allow an additional local option sales and use tax to be used for community college funding or modify current economic development optional tax to be used for workforce programming	An optional “8 <sup>th</sup> penny” or modify current economic development optional tax	Would vary by locality	State Legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows the college to embark on a local campaign to meet local workforce needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May compete with other local optional sales taxes</li> <li>• Local economic development may not want to share or give up those funds.</li> </ul>
Statewide mill levy on all levels of assessment	All 23 counties impose a certain number of mill levies to fund all of the colleges	\$45M biennially	State Legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCs serve all 23 counties – all 23 counties pay</li> <li>• Property tax is a broad-based tax and is not regressive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would increase property taxes for extractive industries – a sector that is currently in upset</li> </ul>

Align HB80 (the current funding allocation for the Community Colleges) to current state workforce needs.	Adjust HB 80 to incentivize distance education, consortium programming, consolidating in programming, non-credit and apprenticeship programs, and external cost adjustments.	Allocation adjustments would vary by institution.	State Legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would more closely align programming with needs and incentivize the colleges to meet those needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is not a long-term solution for sustainable funding</li> </ul>
Reduce state aid from approximately 58%.		\$230,577,542/ biennium to ?	State Legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces reliance on the general fund</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augments the need for additional funding sources and/or flexibility for local funding options</li> </ul>

Commissioners  
Mr. Gregg Blikre, Gillette  
Mr. Dennis Boal, Evanston  
Ms. Katherine Dooley, Powell  
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June 3, 2020

*Outcomes, Guiding Principles, and Sub-Committees of June 3, 2020 meeting:*

The June 3 meeting agenda included thorough study and review of state-level post-secondary governance and funding structures for higher education and community college systems across the United States.

Within these detailed analyses, WICHE and SHEEO facilitators embedded the prior Wyoming studies to provide evolutionary context and to build on past positive accomplishments.

The outcome of the meeting was a positive confirmation of the current state-level governance structure and coordinating commission role. The Commission's Guiding Principles for this workgroup were outlined as follows:

*Community Colleges and Higher Education Must:*

- *Provide Return on Investment*
- *Increase post-secondary educational attainment per the state priority*
- *Consider and incorporate external costs adjustments and inflationary pressures*
- *Be responsive and efficient to the state's need for post-secondary education*

*Sub-committees Established:*

The Workgroup, during the summer months, will focus on four primary areas through four related sub-committees. Each sub-committee will report their findings at the next full meeting scheduled for October. Areas of focus and the sub-committees are as follows:

1. Common Language: Research of definitions, common use of language, and best practices.
2. State's Needs: Balancing education deliverables and meeting the needs of the state, regions within the state, counties, and communities with available education funding.
3. Funding Strategies: Identifying a select number (three or four) funding strategies that other states have implemented to augment higher education funding including tuition, mills, special taxes, etc.
4. Foundational Efforts: Consolidating the evolution of governance and state funding history beginning in 1984 to today resulting in a one or two page executive summary.

Commissioners

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**MEMO**

TO: Honorable Mark Gordon, Governor of Wyoming  
Renny Mackay, Policy Director for Governor Gordon  
Lachelle Brant, Sr. Policy Advisor for Governor Gordon

FROM: Dr. Sandy Caldwell, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Caldwell".

DATE: June 12, 2020

SUBJECT: Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup Status Update

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Per the request from Joint Appropriations Committee (JAC) during the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) public testimony on January 10, 2020, and during the JAC budget hearing for the WCCC budget conducted on December 17, 2019, the WCCC convened a Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup.

The WCCC consulted with Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) and State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) to have them to facilitate the process to ensure the workgroup proceeded with accurate information and through neutral parties to help ensure objectivity.

The WCCC conducted the first workshop in February 2020 in conjunction with their regular meeting where a charge statement was developed and consensus was reached on membership and process. The charge statement was provided to members of Joint Appropriations Committee and chairmen of Joint Education Committee during the final weeks of the 2020 Legislative Session.

In March 2020, the membership was confirmed and members received the charge statement as well as a tentative timeline for the process. An initial meeting of the workgroup was scheduled for April 2020, but was delayed until June 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19 on the State of Wyoming. As such, the workgroup met last Wednesday, June 3, for the in-depth work to commence.

In preparation for the workgroup and as part of the data gathering process, Dr. Caldwell engaged the LSO member, Michael Swank, on finding all the prior documents and studies. Between them, they were able to locate the 1984 study, 1990 Management Audit, 1991 Omnibus Act, 1999 study, and 2008/2009

legislation and study along with the subsequent legislation to implement the recommendations. LSO Michael Swank attended the June 3, 2020, workgroup meeting to watch the discussion.

During the June 2020 meeting, the workgroup studied the impact of state-level post-secondary governance across the United States and also higher education and community college funding across the United States. Within these detailed analyses, the facilitators from WICHE and SHEEO embedded the prior Wyoming studies to help avoid repeating prior good work.

The outcome of the meeting was a confirmation of the current state-level governance structure of a coordinating commission role.

Guiding principles were outlined and will be solidified (these are unedited at this time and will be revised):

*CC and higher education must:*

- *Provide Return on Investment*
- *Increase post-secondary educational attainment per the state priority*
- *Consider and incorporate External Costs Adjustments and Inflation, and*
- *Community Colleges and higher education must be responsive and efficient to the state's need for post-secondary education.*

Focus will be on four primary areas with four sub-committees that will work in the time until the next full workgroup meeting in October 2020.

Sub-committees:

1. Common Language: Research and definitions for common use of language and best practices.
2. State's Needs: Needs of the state and expectations to deliver including meeting the states needs for state, regions, counties, and communities while balancing what they actually do and what they can be funded for.
3. Funding Strategies: Identifying a select number of 3 or 4 funding strategies that other states have used to augment higher education funding including tuition, mills, special taxes, etc.
4. Foundational Efforts: Condensing information since 1984 that has led to today in a one or two page executive summary.

Attached are the Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup and the June 3 Workgroup agenda, which has active hyperlinks to the documents used for the workgroup meeting. These documents are publicly available on the WCCC website.

Enc (2)

1. Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup Charge and Membership
2. Agenda for June 3, 2020, Workgroup Meeting

Commissioners  
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## MEMO

TO: Joint Education Interim Committee

FROM: Dr. Sandy Caldwell, Executive Director

DATE: November 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup Status Update

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### *Upcoming Meetings Related to Sustainable Funding Workgroup and Potential WCCC Action*

December 2, 2020: Sustainable Funding Workgroup will meet to finalize recommendations.  
December 4, 2020: WCCC will hold Special Meeting to consider action to adopt the recommendations.

### *Outcomes from October 7, 2020, workgroup meeting: Recommendations for Sustainable Funding Strategies*

The workgroup met and completed the State's Needs task with an almost finalized the State's Needs document. The final document reflecting the last revisions will be sent out in the next couple of weeks.

The majority of the focus was on Funding Strategies sub-committee and its draft recommendations. The workgroup agreed to revise the draft recommendations to include funding recovery of the existing budget deficit of \$53.8 million, which was highlighted during the last budget request and was the impetus for the Sustainable Funding Workgroup by the JAC. Additionally, the workgroup added in funding recovery from the recent 10% budget cuts and will include an additional budget cuts pending the outcome of the next 10% cut and upcoming legislative session. The draft recommendations include the following:

- Reduction in general fund unrestricted State Aid (approximately 60% college budgets) to include all State Aid (restricted and unrestricted), major maintenance, and CapCon (approximately 78%) down to about 45% combined
- Increase in college district mill levy
- Implementation of non-taxing district mill levy of 1 or 2 mills

- Some percentage of a potential sales tax should the legislature implement a sales tax
- Movement of awarding of CapCon and major maintenance funds to WCCC for oversight of distribution ensuring maintaining 45% combined state funding (bullet #1)
- Increase and maintain tuition within Tuition Policy range (\*WCCC did take action October 8, 2020, to increase tuition to within the Tuition Policy)

*Background in advance of October 7, 2020 Workgroup meeting:*

Per the request of the Joint Appropriations Committee (JAC) during the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) public testimony on January 10, 2020, and during the JAC budget hearing for the WCCC budget conducted December 17, 2019, the WCCC has convened a Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup.

WCCC continues to consult with the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) national organization to seek their combined expertise and assistance with facilitating a thorough review of state funding and governance models. Representatives from both organizations are actively involved to ensure the workgroup proceeds with accurate and timely information, and upholds a high degree of neutrality and objectivity.

WCCC conducted an initial workgroup meeting in February 2020, in conjunction with the regular meeting. Accomplishments from the initial meeting included development of a charge statement and reaching consensus on group membership and process. The charge statement was provided to the Chairman and Joint Appropriations Committee members during the final weeks of the 2020 Legislative Session.

In March, workgroup membership was confirmed, members received the charge statement as well as a tentative process timeline. Due to impacts related to COVID-19, the first full meeting was delayed until June. The workgroup met last Wednesday, June 3, for in-depth review of state funding and governance models.

In preparation for the workgroup, and as part of the data gathering process, Dr. Caldwell engaged Michael Swank, Program Evaluation Manager, from the Legislative Services Office. Mr. Swank provided the workgroup significant assistance in locating prior documents and studies.

Documents and studies located included: A 1984 study, 1990 Management Audit, 1991 Omnibus Act, 1999 study, and 2008/2009 study along with subsequent legislation to implement study recommendations. Mr. Swank participated in and observed discussion during the June 3, 2020, workgroup meeting.

*Outcomes, Guiding Principles, and Sub-Committees of June 3, 2020 meeting:*

The June 3 meeting agenda included thorough study and review of state-level post-secondary governance and funding structures for higher education and community college systems across the United States. Within these detailed analyses, WICHE and SHEEO facilitators embedded the

prior Wyoming studies to provide evolutionary context and to build on past positive accomplishments.



The outcome of the meeting was a positive confirmation of the current state-level governance structure and coordinating commission role. The Commission's Guiding Principles for this workgroup were outlined as follows:

*Community Colleges and Higher Education Must:*

- *Provide Return on Investment*
- *Increase post-secondary educational attainment per the state priority*
- *Consider and incorporate external costs adjustments and inflationary pressures*
- *Be responsive and efficient to the state's need for post-secondary education*

The Workgroup, during the summer months, will focus on four primary areas through four related subcommittees. Each sub-committee will report their findings at the next full meeting scheduled for October. Areas of focus and the sub-committees are as follows:

1. Common Language: Research of definitions, common use of language, and best practices.
2. State's Needs: Balancing education deliverables and meeting the needs of the state, regions within the state, counties, and communities with available education funding.
3. Funding Strategies: Identifying a select number (three or four) funding strategies that other states have implemented to augment higher education funding including tuition, mills, special taxes, etc.
4. Foundational Efforts: Consolidating the evolution of governance and state funding history beginning in 1984 to today resulting in a one or two page executive summary.

*Outcomes and August 27, 2020 meeting*

Discussed the outcomes and interim sub-committee activity since the June 3, 2020 meeting. LSO Michael Swank also provided an update from the August 14, 2020, Select Committee on Community College Governance and Funding. Mr. Swank discussed the formation and structure of the Select Committee Whitepaper on the evolution of the current governance and funding structure of the WCCC and community colleges.

Two sub-committees completed their tasks with some minor follow up revisions.

1. Common Language—completed its task regarding common use of terminology and creating a unifying message. Summarized the need to communicate consistently and in a recurring manner.

2. Foundational Efforts—completed its task in creating an executive summary of the prior 35 years of evolution. Combined the effort with the LSO Whitepaper. Encouraged the need to understand the evolution to prevent repeating prior efforts while also recognizing conditions change over time, which warrant reconsideration or adaptation.

Two sub-committees moved forward on their tasks and will require additional follow-up. The focus of the next meet will be to complete the State's Needs Summary and to focus on narrowing down potential sustainable funding recommendations for the October 2020 meeting.

3. State's Needs—provided an overview and summary of the State's Needs as outlined in Statutes and Session Laws such as the mission of community colleges and the educational attainment goals in the State of Wyoming. Required aspects including educated citizenry with academic, technical, remedial, adult education, non-credit continuing education, and non-credit community education as well as cultural centers and technology hubs for the regions. Focus of the Statewide College System Strategic Plan as the foundation for budget requests to ensure the State's Needs are met. Next step will be for the subcommittee to refine the information and finalize a summary for the October 7, 2020, meeting that includes Statutory Requirements, Attainment Plan, and Statewide College System Strategic Plan and includes recommendations, consideration of efficiencies, and implications.
4. Funding Strategies—provided a summary and discussion of the various funding strategies used in other states. Discussion of mills, tuition, specific taxes, general sales taxes, and general funds based on the specific states' needs and authority. Consideration of the prior efforts as outlined in the Foundational Efforts and LSO Whitepaper need to be part of the framework. The next step will be for the subcommittee to meet and narrow down specific recommendations for the October 7, 2020, meeting. The sub-committee will also outline strategies that are not well suited for Wyoming and why.

Attached is Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup materials and the June 3, August 27, and October 7, 2020, Workgroup meeting agendas. These include active hyperlinks documents referenced in the workgroup meeting. These documents are also publicly available on the WCCC website.

Enc (5)

1. Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup Charge and Membership
2. Agenda for June 3, 2020, Workgroup Meeting
3. Workgroup sub-committee assignments
4. Agenda for August 27, 2020, Workgroup Meeting
5. Agenda for October 7, 2020, Workgroup Meeting



## MEETING AGENDA

February 12 and 13, 2020

Laramie County Community College  
Clay Pathfinder Building, Room PF 108

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**Zoom Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/246049064>

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**ACTION AND REPORT AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION (ACTION ITEMS IN BOLD)**

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February 13

Laramie County Community College, Clay Pathfinder Building, Room 108

8:30 a.m.      Workshop - Community College Funding Sustainability ([Executive Summary](#))  
[Informal Discussion, no action will be taken]      [TAB 0](#)

*Commissioners*

*Mr. Gregg Blikre, Gillette  
Mr. Dennis Boal, Evanston  
Ms. Katherine Dooley, Powell  
Dr. Craig Frederick, Guernsey  
Dr. Jackie Freeze, Rock Springs  
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**COMMUNITY COLLEGE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING WORKGROUP**

AGENDA

JUNE 3, 2020

9:30 AM -11:45 AM

ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89993608023>

Facilitators:

Dr. Demi Michelau, WICHE President

[WICHE Presentation](#)

Dr. David Tanberg, SHEEO VP Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives

[SHEEO Presentation](#)

9:30 AM

- I. [Charge Statement](#) (February 2020)
- II. Management Council Select Committee on Community College Governance and Funding and Joint Education Interim Committee [Priority #3](#)
- III. Prior Studies and Efforts
  - a. [1984 Community College Study](#)
  - b. 1990 Management Audit
  - c. 1991 Post-secondary Omnibus Act
  - d. [1999 Legislative Study](#)
  - e. [2008 Community College Task force](#)
- IV. [Current Structure Wyoming Community Colleges](#)
- V. [Community College Governance Structures Nationally](#), and [Analysis of Governance Structures](#)
- VI. Community College Funding Mechanisms Nationally
- VII. Areas of Focus for October Meeting

Commissioners  
Mr. Gregg Blikre, Gillette Mr.  
Dennis Boal, Evanston Ms.  
Katherine Dooley, Powell  
Dr. Craig Frederick, Guernsey  
Dr. Jackie Freeze, Rock Springs  
Ms. Julia Newman, Torrington  
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*COMMUNITY COLLEGE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING WORKGROUP*

AGENDA

August 27, 2020 9:00 AM - Noon

ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85746854271>

Facilitators: Dr. Demi Michelau, WICHE President  
Dr. David Tandberg, SHEEO VP Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives

9:00 AM

- I. Summary and Recap June 3 2020 [TAB 1](#)
- II. Status Brief of August 14, 2020, Select Committee on  
Community College Governance and Funding

10:30 AM

BREAK

- III. Sub-committee report out
  - a. Foundational Efforts [TAB 2](#)
  - b. Common Language and Message [TAB 3](#)
- IV. Sub-committee report out and discussion
  - a. State Needs and next steps [TAB 4](#)
  - b. Funding Strategies and next steps including developing recommendations
- V. Plan for October Meeting and Finalizing State Needs  
and Funding Strategy Recommendations

Noon Adjourn on or before posted time

2300 Capitol Ave., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite B, Cheyenne WY 82002

Commissioners

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**COMMUNITY COLLEGE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING WORKGROUP**

AGENDA

October 7, 2020

10:00 AM - Noon

ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86266807651>

Facilitators: Dr. Demi Michelau, WICHE President  
Dr. David Tandberg, SHEEO VP Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives

10:00 AM

- I. Summary and Recap August 27, 2020 workgroup meeting
- II. Final Sub-committee reports:
  - a. Foundational Efforts [TAB A](#)
  - b. Common Language and Message [TAB B](#)
- III. Finalize Sub-committee report out and discussion: State Needs [TAB C](#)
- IV. Sub-committee report out and consideration of options for recommendations: Funding Strategies [TAB D](#)
- V. Draft Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup Recommendations

Noon Adjourn on or before posted time

**Sustainable Funding Workgroup  
December 2, 2020 1:30 pm  
Online Via Zoom**

**Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86153290873>**

**Dial-In Phone Number: 1(669)900-6833; Meeting ID: 861 5329 0873**

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**ACTION AND REPORT AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION (ACTION ITEMS IN BOLD)**

Facilitators: Dr. Demi Michelau, WICHE President  
Dr. David Tandberg, SHEEO VP Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives

1:30 pm

- I. Summary and Recap of Workgroup Effort and October 7, 2020 workgroup meeting
  - a. Charge Statement Tab A
  - b. Sub-committees Tab B
  
- II. Final Sub-committee reports:
  - a. Foundational Efforts Tab C
  - b. Common Language and Message Tab D
  - c. State Needs Tab E
  - d. Recommendations: Funding Strategies Tab F
  
- III. Sustainable Funding Workgroup Final Recommendations Tab E

Adjourn on or before posted time, 3:30 pm