



Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) Initiatives

57th SHEEO Annual Meeting
Minneapolis, Minnesota
July 15, 2010

Presentation by Larry A. Isaak, MHEC President

Midwest CREST



- ▶ Across the Midwest over 10 million adults have earned some college credits but have not earned a degree.
- ▶ Citizens increasingly “swirl” among colleges and universities during the course of their educational pursuits, often enrolling in multiple institutions of varying types in different states and at different times in their lives.
- ▶ The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has awarded MHEC a grant to explore the creation of the Midwest Credential Repository for Education, Skills, and Training (CREST).

Midwest CREST



- ▶ CREST is envisioned as a means of growing the human capital of the region by matching degree seekers with degree completing institutions.
- ▶ The exploratory process has identified additional opportunities for MHEC to assist states in developing improved processes and systems for facilitating interstate mobility of students and accelerating degree completion.

Policy Research: Difficult Dialogues



- ▶ Part of Lumina Foundation’s “Making Opportunity Affordable” initiative
 - Phase I: Policy Summit Dialogues, Nov. 2008
 - Phase II: Dialogues in all 12 MHEC states
April to Dec., 2009

- ▶ Thought Experiment:
 - Suppose you had to increase the proportion of adults in the U.S. with a college degree by 20 percentage points by 2025 with no increase in funding and no decrease in quality. How would you do it?

Difficult Dialogues: Contradictions & Conundrums

- ▶ Focused, directive curriculum vs. opportunity to choose from a variety of courses
- ▶ Broad based studies vs. career specific education
- ▶ Aligning students with “better fit” institutions vs. fear of tracking & the desire to give everyone a chance
- ▶ Mixed perspectives on remedial education
- ▶ High cost of multiple campuses & duplicative programs vs. access and opportunity
- ▶ System–level policymaking & standardization vs. institutional autonomy & entrepreneurship
- ▶ Facilitate mobility & aggregation of credits vs. “our degree” at “our institution”
- ▶ Need for improved student services vs. the cost of said investments

Difficult Dialogues: Policy Challenges



- ▶ Producing real change while remaining sensitive to fundamental values about the purpose and role of higher education
- ▶ Investing in long-term gains, not short-term fixes
- ▶ Measuring the impact of investments and developing genuine systems of accountability
- ▶ Managing higher education efficiently, knowing it's more than a business

MHEC Cost Saving and Cost Containment Initiatives



- ▶ Saved \$28 million for MHEC states in FY09 and \$286 million cumulatively

- ▶ Property insurance program insuring \$73 billion:
 - MHEC, WICHE, and NEBHE states

- ▶ Technology Programs:
 - MHEC and WICHE States
 - \$225 million of purchases

- ▶ Exploring energy and health insurance programs

Observations About Collaboration to Reduce Costs



- ▶ Focused initiatives (Don't try to do everything)
- ▶ Interstate compact statute critical
- ▶ Let users identify needs and build programs
- ▶ Barriers = turf, turf, turf
 - State government
 - Campuses, systems
- ▶ Need committed system and campus leaders who want different solutions



*Restore, Revitalize, Renew:
Higher Education's Role in the Economic
Transformation of Communities*



**Midwestern Higher Education Compact
Annual Policy Summit & Commission Meeting
November 15-17, 2010 • Detroit, MI
www.mhec.org/2010annualmtg**



The Westin Book Cadillac Detroit
1114 Washington Boulevard

*Celebrating 20 Years of
Advancing Education Through Cooperation*