



PRESS RELEASES

Secretary Spellings Convenes Accreditation Forum in Washington, D.C., with Key Stakeholders
Goal to Provide More Information to Students and Parents

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Washington, D.C. — U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings today convened an accreditation forum to discuss strategies for making higher education more accessible, affordable and accountable and explore ways to implement the recommendations of her Commission on the Future of Higher Education.

Secretary Spellings delivered remarks to approximately 60 representatives from accrediting agencies, colleges, universities, state leadership, private sector and higher education organizations who came together to discuss the Commission's recommendation for making student learning outcomes and achievement the core priority and requirement for accrediting an institution. More than 50 observers also attended the forum.

"For more than a hundred years, accreditation has been the main tool we've used to assure higher education quality to the people," said Secretary Spellings. "Now is the time to take a hard look at the system and see how we can improve it to better meet the new demands of American families in the 21st century."

Since 1998, when Congress moved student learning to the number one requirement, the accrediting community has taken steps to improve focus on student learning, but those efforts have been limited and inconsistent. One of the goals of the accreditation forum was to take that work to scale and work together for a more robust, more outcome-focused, results-centered system that will benefit students and parents and empower them with information.

The accreditation forum also looked at ways to streamline and improve the accreditation process to support innovation, promote consistency in accreditation standards, increase accountability, and become more transparent to the public.

On Sept. 26, 2006, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., Secretary Spellings announced her plans to improve the U.S. higher education system, based on the recommendations in the final report of her Commission on the Future of Higher Education, to help keep America competitive and provide students and families with

more information and more affordable access to higher education. The accreditation forum fulfills a promise made by Secretary Spellings to move forward with recommendations made to her by the Commission.

The final report of the Secretary's Commission on the Future of Higher Education is available at www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/final-report.pdf.

For a fact sheet on the Secretary's Higher Education Action Plan, visit www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/actionplan-factsheet.html.

To view the full text of the Secretary's Sept. 26 remarks announcing her Higher Education Action Plan, visit www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2006/09/09262006.html.

Following is a full list of participants at the accreditation forum:

James Applegate
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education

David Armstrong
Chancellor
Florida Community Colleges and Workforce Education

Robert Atwell
President Emeritus
American Council on Education

Trudy Banta
Vice Chancellor for Academic Planning and Evaluation
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

Roger Benjamin
President
Council for Aid to Education

Barbara Beno
President
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Robert Berdahl
President
Association of American Universities

Dort Bigg
Executive Director
Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

Howard Block
Managing Director and Senior Research Analyst
Banc of America Securities

George Boggs
President and CEO
American Association of Community Colleges

J. Keith Brown
Associate Vice President
North Carolina Community College System

Jonathan Brown
President
Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities

Patrick Callan
President
National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education

Kevin Carey
Research and Policy Manager
Education Sector

Steven Crow
Executive Director
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Carol D'Amico
Executive Vice President
Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana

Thomas Dawson
Chief of Staff, Office of Postsecondary Education
U.S. Department of Education

Judith Eaton
President
Council for Higher Education Accreditation

Edward Elmendorf
Senior Vice President for Government Relations
American Association of State Colleges and Universities

Peter Ewell
Vice President
National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

Jackson Grayson
Founder and Chairman
American Productivity and Quality Center

Randal Haack
Senior Vice President and CFO
University of Northern Colorado

Mary Jane Harris
Director, Department of Accreditation
American Physical Therapy Association

Terry Hartle
Senior Vice President
American Council on Education

Marshall Hill
Executive Director
Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

Larry Isaak
President
Midwestern Higher Education Compact

Sally Johnstone
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Winona State University

C. Todd Jones
President
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio

Jillian Kinzie
Associate Director
National Survey of Student Engagement

Janet Laughlin
Coordinator, Student Success Center
Danville Community College

Anita Levy
Associate Secretary
American Association of University Professors

Paul Lingenfelter
President
State Higher Education Executive Officers

Geri Malandra
Vice Chancellor for Strategic Management
University of Texas System

James Manning
Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education
U.S. Department of Education

Robert Mendenhall
President
Western Governors University

Charles Miller
Chairman
The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education

Margaret Miller
Director
National Forum on College-Level Learning

Anne Neal
Executive Director
American Council of Trustees and Alumni

Kay Norton
President
University of Northern Colorado

Cheryl Oldham
Chief of Staff, Office of the Under Secretary
U.S. Department of Education

David Payne
Senior Executive Director
Educational Testing Service

Paula Peinovich
President
Walden University

Mark Pelesh
Member, Coalition for a Competitive American Workforce
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

George Peterson
Executive Director
Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology

Arthur Rothkopf
Senior Vice President and Counselor to the President
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Elise Scanlon
Executive Director
Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology

Vickie Schray
Senior Advisor, Office of the Under Secretary
U.S. Department of Education

Stephen Shank
Chairman and CEO
Capella University

Robert Sheets
Director, Research & Development
University of Illinois – Urbana

David Shulenburger
Vice President for Academic Affairs
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

Kent Talbert
General Counsel
U.S. Department of Education

Jane Wellman
Senior Associate
The Institute for Higher Education Policy

John Welty
President
California State University – Fresno

Belle Wheelan
President
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Thomas Wickenden
Director of Accreditation
Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools

John Wiley
Chancellor
University of Wisconsin – Madison

Roger Williams
Executive Director
Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training

Ralph Wolff
President and Executive Director
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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