
LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES TALKING POINTS 2020

In order to meet the challenges of a 21st-century workplace, the State of Wyoming will depend even more on the leadership of its colleges. Overall educational attainment in the state must increase, and **the colleges' role in reaching this goal is paramount to success.**

Economic Development & Diversification

THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES ARE THE WORKFORCE ENGINE OF WYOMING'S ECONOMY.

- Wyoming's biggest asset to attract new industries and diversify our economy is an educated workforce.
 - The community colleges train an estimated 80% of the law enforcement and first responders in our state.
 - The shortage of healthcare workers, coupled with Wyoming's aging demographic, yields increased pressure on filling those workforce needs.
 - As Wyoming's economy changes, new instructional programs are needed to meet the opportunities ahead.
- Employers are turning to their local colleges more and more, looking to hire graduates with the skills their business requires to remain competitive.
- Wyoming's industries are demanding an educated workforce, and the community colleges are [the answer.

Each college has the ability and demand to develop new programs, build partnerships with other entities in their service areas, and expand current programs. The colleges request support from the legislature to fulfill this need.

Talent Recruitment & Retention

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION IS THE MOST PRESSING ISSUE FACING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES.

This is a SOUND INVESTMENT on behalf of ALL CITIZENS.

- Our community college system serves all citizens of Wyoming.
- The mission and infrastructure of our colleges are part of the fabric of all 23 Wyoming counties.
- Education is a people business. On average, 75-80% of the colleges' operating budgets are spent on people. Although small incremental increases have been given in the last few years, these are not enough for compensation to remain competitive, let alone to offset inflationary pressures.
- Investing in our colleges means investing in the people working at the colleges. The risk in not doing so is great, including low employee morale and exacerbated employee turnover. This directly affects [student success.

The colleges request support in the form of an employee cost-of-living adjustment.

Student Success & Access

THE #1 PREDICTOR OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IS EDUCATION.

- By 2025, 65% of all jobs in Wyoming will require education beyond high school.
 - The community colleges and the University of Wyoming must work together to meet the Higher Education Attainment Goals.
 - There are over 160,000 Wyoming residents, ages 25-64, who have not obtained a post-secondary credential, and another 87,500 started college but didn't graduate.
- In order to award more degrees and certificates, the colleges must increase the number of students enrolled. In order to do this, the colleges must reach into new markets and strengthen outreach efforts in current markets to recruit students.
- A coordinated effort to inform the public of the value of education, and support a "college-going culture," will benefit everyone.
- An adult-focused grant/financial aid program similar in scope to the Hathaway Scholarship Fund is needed to serve this population.

Wyoming's community colleges have open doors, providing access to everyone, including veterans, first-generation students, minority students, and adult learners. **Helping the colleges reach potential students with their message and investing directly in the success of these students is critical to Wyoming's economic future.**

Campus Safety & Security

Our community college campuses are not just for students, they are for all Wyoming citizens. Keeping our campuses safe requires dedication, focus, and training. In order to meet fundamental safety and security needs, the colleges seek support from the State of Wyoming in four areas:

- **Locking systems** to externally secure all buildings on campus, including access control and monitoring, as well as immediate lockdown security against external threats.
- **Emergency operations training** and safety for campus emergency response personnel to effectively interface with local emergency management and law enforcement personnel.
- **Security and safety equipment** to provide an effective level of campus safety and security per threat assessment team analysis and recommendation. Equipment includes security cameras, mass notification alert systems, and panic button capabilities for vulnerable areas.
- **Cyber-attack prevention security** is necessary to minimize the risk of cyber-attacks and digital security threatening financial, academic, and health records of students and employees.

IN ORDER TO MEET FUNDAMENTAL SAFETY AND SECURITY NEEDS, THEY SEEK TO PROVIDE THE ABILITY TO:

- Externally secure all buildings on campus, providing external access control and monitoring of buildings, as well as immediate lockdown security against external threats.
- Six of seven campuses are requesting locking systems in order to maintain building access control, which they are unable to provide at this time.
- Provide emergency operations training and safety for campus emergency response personnel to effectively interface with local emergency management and law enforcement personnel.

- Five of seven campuses request funding for additional security personnel (peace officer) training as they are unable to provide 24/7 security coverage for residential campuses.
- Purchase security and safety equipment to provide an effective level of campus safety and security per threat assessment team analysis and recommendation.
- All colleges request funding for security cameras, mass notification alert systems, and panic button capabilities for vulnerable areas.
- Purchase security equipment to minimize the risk of cyber-attacks and digital security threatening financial, academic, and health records of students and employees.