



'Jacket Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2022

Meeting began at 2:00 pm:

Discussion of November Board of Regents Items:

Chancellor Hicswa announced that during its November meeting, the Board of Regents approved policy changes regarding the Montana University System (MUS) Tuition Waiver for Dependents and Remote Work Arrangements.

Employees can now use the tuition waiver after only four months of continuous service, instead of five years as was required by the previous policy. A revised tuition waiver form is available in the Human Resources Department (HR), and the employee's home campus HR department should be used regardless of which campus the dependent will attend.

Due to an additional policy change approved by the Board of Regents, remote work can be approved for employees by supervisors based on the suitability of the position and employee. Universities in the system must maintain in-person service for students and the public.

Both policy changes are intended to help retain employees, and expand areas from which candidates can be hired.

Fall Mini Break:

Chancellor Hicswa announced that the Board of Regents approved a "fall mini break" for October 19th and 20th of 2023. MSUB will not hold classes on these days, but offices will remain open. These dates coincide with the Montana Federation of Public Employees Conference.

Chancellor Hicswa reminded everyone to work with their supervisors and employees' schedules to accommodate days off in the absence of future "meeting-free days". Employees are encouraged to self-advocate for time away for self-care and family time.

Billings Chamber of Commerce "You Belong in Billings":

Director of Human Resources Paula Highlander informed everyone of a class being offered by the Billings Chamber of Commerce called "You Belong in Billings" for anyone new to town. More information is available on the Chamber of Commerce website, www.billingschamber.com.

Relationships with Students Policy (second reading) and Procedure:

Director of Human Resources Paula Highlander presented the Relationships with Students Procedure which will serve as a guideline and accompany the corresponding Policy. Some sections have been added since the first reading at the urging of the MSU Legal team for definition and clarity, and to make the policy follow MSU's policy more closely. Discussion followed. Chancellor Hicswa asked for a motion to approve the policy. The motion was made and seconded, and the team voted. Three people abstained; the policy passed. The final version of the policy will be posted on the Human Resources page of the website.

Employee Assistance Plan (EAP):



Paula Highlander reminded everyone of the many benefits offered by the Employee Assistance Plan, and that these are available to anyone in the household of an MSUB employee, even those not enrolled in benefits packages. She provided the phone number and urged everyone to add it to their contacts. The EAP is available through the Uprise Health program and the toll-free phone number is 800-395-1616.

Spring Registration Campaign:

Retention Director Katharine Moffatt presented on the various methods being utilized as part of the spring registration campaign. These include Navigate, direct outreach through peer navigators and text campaigns, promotional materials and social media, and tabling events. Ms. Moffatt explained the timeline of the registration cycle and gave an overview of current registration numbers. She demonstrated the many departments throughout campus who must take part in these activities to get students registered.

Campus Work Study and Virtual Career and Internship Fair:

Director of Career and Employment Services Dr. Becky Lyons announced that even at this time in the academic year, students are looking for work study jobs. Please let the Career and Employment Services office know of any openings. There are also students who stay on campus over winter break, and they are likely to be looking for work.

The Virtual Career and Internship Fair will be held February 22-23 and will feature ten employers each day. Students are able to access this information in Career Link and can reserve timeslots with potential employers, then receive automatic reminders.

Chancellor Hicswa added that students who have work study jobs are able to work more hours during breaks which can ease and speed up degree completion.

Governor's Budget:

Chancellor Hicswa gave an overview of items in the Governor's budget that may affect MSUB employees. The budget contains a present law adjustment for inflation, which reflects Governor Gianforte's support for higher education. She thanked Dr. Joy Honea for her work on the committee that advocated for this to be included in the Governor's budget. Additionally, she thanked Commissioner of Higher Education Clay Christian for his work with the governor to compensate employees to improve retention. The budget, which has not been approved by the legislature, includes a proposed 4% raise or \$1.50 per hour raise each year of the biennium, plus a one-time bonus of \$1000.00. MSUB would need to cover the cost of a raise for those not paid from the general fund, such as auxiliaries and grant-funded departments.

Legislative Session:

Chancellor Hicswa explained that the Governor's budget must be approved by the State Legislature. If the House of Representatives and Senate budgets don't match, the proposal will be debated by a select few representatives in a conference committee. MSUB employees may exercise their personal right to lobby during these proceedings, but must be careful to separate personal lobbying from anything related to their job as a state employee. Janelle Booth, Director of Government Affairs for MSU will provide an info session via Web-ex on navigating the legislative session as a public employee on Tuesday, December 20th at 8:30 am.

Finish Strong:



Chancellor Hicswa reminded the team to take any opportunity to encourage students during this stressful time of the semester so they can finish strong.

Leading With Empathy:

Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success Kim Hayworth gave an interactive article presentation based on “Empathy is the Most Important Leadership Skill According to Research” by Tracy Brower. Dr. Hayworth had JLT members stand to illustrate some statistics from the article about mental health. She offered actionable advice for how to practice empathy when in a leadership role. She led discussion on these action items, including asking and truly considering how a person is feeling, remembering and following up on concerns a person has shared, inquiring about those same challenges at a later date (a “check-in”), listening, and being aware of the supports offered at MSUB. Discussion followed.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Minutes taken by Natalie Preston