

From: Pitts, Ted <TedPitts@gov.sc.gov>  
To: Soura, Christian <ChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov>  
Date: 4/9/2014 9:20:04 AM  
Subject: FW: Senator Leatherman's offer

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From: Dennis Nielsen [mailto:drdjnielsen@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2014 5:07 PM  
To: Pitts, Ted  
Subject: Senator Leatherman's offer

Ted: FYI Email I sent to Dr. Small and all BOT members REASON: Response to following email from Dr. Small:

Regards: Thanks for the prompt responses to my report on the meeting. I do not want us to read more into the agreement than perhaps what was expected or agreed to. The questions that I raised for the Senator were in major part based on my concern about the future of SCSU. We will get through this crisis. The larger question is what will we look like for the future. It was not implied in the meeting that we would have to have a "major roll out" of this initiative to have the legislature or some other entity save South Carolina State University. In spite of our current difficulty, the integrity of our institution is paramount to maintaining our attractiveness and building our future. As flawed as we are at the moment (and we had a lot of help from a lot of places in arriving at our present status) we still stand on a record of service and a platform of future contributions to this State and nation which demands that we be treated with dignity.

Speaking as the Chairperson of this Board, I am prepared to accept the help that is being offered-on the conditions that were recited- and in a manner that does not exalt another while diminishing SCSU and its Governing Board. We do not need a big public roll out of the Agreement. That is not the 'lead paragraph". The University has a Strategic Planning process. It has a Strategic Planning Committee with Board membership. If three guys from some where are going to dismiss all of that, and come in and write us a plan, then I very respectfully say "count me out". Why would folks reinvest confidence in us if we cannot save ourselves and emerge with a sense of institutional integrity. We are still a University with students who are depending on our capacity to insure that their credential has some currency.

I am still for the agreement as I understand it and as recited above. Beyond that, perhaps we need another meeting.

Doc Small

Dr. Small:

Once again, the state of South Carolina Legislative leadership is offering South Carolina State University funds to place us in a deficit free position. As I understand the offer, it is a one time appropriation with support to help us progress in a positive way toward the future. In my view, it would behoove us to accept this offer because if we reject it or attempt to change the conditions of the offer, the state may/will refuse to provide needed funding and that would result in serious consequences including failing SACS and perhaps closing the University. As I understand, the offer includes input from leaders of other institutions to help set us on a path that meets the standards of SACS (by placing the Strategic Plan for the University under the President) and place us in an improved position to increase student enrollment – with final approval of the plan by the SCSU Board of Trustees. Prior to final approval of the Strategic Plan, the Board will certainly have the opportunity to question and discuss the plan.

In my opinion, it would go a long way if the Board unanimously approves the offer. We need the funds, we need them very soon, and this would give legislators leading the effort further evidence of our commitment to repositioning our University for the future and if approved with a short time line,

gives legislators time to find and appropriate funds to the University.

As I understand the offer, negotiations are over and an attempt to renegotiate is not on the table. For us, it is an up or down vote on the offer and the conditions included in the offer. And I believe it would be a benefit to us to have approved this offer prior to SACS visitation next week.

For me, I will vote in favor.

Dennis