

651.227.8442
www.ifo.org
490 Concordia Ave, Suite 125
Saint Paul, MN 55103



Chairman Jay Cowles
Minnesota State Board of Trustees
30 East 7th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
June 15, 2020

Chair Cowles, Trustees, Chancellor Malhotra;

As we reach the half-way point in the fall semester and the COVID pandemic has persisted, the teaching and learning in the MinnState System has once again proven to be very adaptable and remarkably resilient; faculty, staff, and students continue to respond in positive and constructive ways. We cannot over-state the commitment to the entire educational experience demonstrated by our campus communities.

The pandemic has impacted every aspect of our life; its economic impact on our campuses and for the state looms extremely concerning. Our faculty are deeply invested in their university and the programs they teach in. The Inter Faculty Organization realizes the instability caused by Covid-19 greatly impacts our campus budgets and we are dedicated to partnering with administrators, staff, and students to minimize the long-term impacts. As part of our commitment to being part of the solution, the IFO Negotiating Team and our Board of Directors have unanimously approved a resolution to forgo pursuing across-the-board pay increases for fiscal year 2022. It is our hope this provides a small degree of certainty as campuses develop budget projections and the potential savings will help protect the quality of our academic programs and necessary services for students.

The legislative appropriation has always been important but the circumstances facing our institutions and higher education in general make the next biennium highly critical. Many of our campuses are in financial crisis and the enrollment trends exacerbate problems that could likely devastate the educational opportunities in Minnesota. At our September Meet and Confer, Vice Chancellor Maki extended an invitation for IFO input on the MinnState legislative budget request. We accepted this invitation and appreciated the opportunity to provide input as the budget was being developed. The goal of Equity 2030 is the right strategic direction and therefore, we support the budget request reflecting the priority of this initiative. The IFO will continue to contribute to closing the educational equity gaps and addressing the challenges to educating our students. Our collective efforts must be on preserving the transformative education for the future generations of students. We look forward to on-going engagement and partnership as we seek the necessary funding for the MinnState System.

Thank you to the trustees for the work you do and your commitment to higher education.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Jeffers
President
Inter Faculty Organization