

Dannel Malloy
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Week of October 7

Trustees -

We've been fortunate throughout Maine over the last week to see the change of seasons picking up pace, with bright fall colors everywhere we look now. While we slow down this holiday weekend to enjoy the traditional end of Maine's summer season, I nevertheless hope the upticked pace of seasonal change is an apt metaphor for the change I'm trying to lead in our public universities.

The work I have to discuss with you today is of our progress on topics that are well familiar to you by now.

Our Presidents gathered with me and my senior staff and NECHE President Barbara Brittingham this past Wednesday in Orono. To this regular monthly meeting (which I generally described for you in my "[Week of August 12" message](#)) we also invited our Chief Academic Officers, as well as Jeff St. John, Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs at UMaine; Greg Fahy, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at UM Augusta; and Kathy Yardley, Associate Provost and Dean of the College of Education, Health and Rehabilitation at UM Farmington. We came together with this larger group as part of our planned next steps following my Unified Accreditation recommendation to you so that the entirety of UMS's academic leadership could discuss a process we might follow, if you send us down that path, to successfully attain a unified accreditation that embodies our [Guiding Principles](#).

Our discussions with Barbara were incredibly positive. We have an early sense of the process and timeline for a unified accreditation effort that we will detail for you in the November report you requested. Also as you requested, our report will include significant campus-level input; indeed, I fully expect that the academic leaders on campus who already work with NECHE on their own institutional accreditations will have the leading voices and roles not only in our November report, but in the effort itself.

We continue our campus engagement on this issue too. On Tuesday, I traveled to Farmington with Robert Placido, Jim Thelen, Ryan Low, and Rosa Redonnett to lead discussions about unified accreditation with faculty, staff, students, and Board of Visitor members at UMF. I'm confident that the more we talk about unified accreditation -- what it is, and equally if not more important, what it isn't -- the more we reduce anxiety, find common ground, and assure our campus communities that unified accreditation would not result in loss, but rather gain and benefit. One common anxiety we're addressing, for example, is a fear of losing control over the academic programs a campus offers. But as we've said in our Guiding Principles, market-relevant programs that can be responsibly offered at (and by) a single university will have as important a place in a System-wide accredited academic portfolio as they do in their own universities now. Unified Accreditation will be about what more we can do together, not about taking away any one university's ability to continue doing something it already does well.

We're doing other work too.

I met in my office Thursday morning with Representative Tori Kornfield, who co-chairs the Legislature's Joint Education Committee along with Senator Rebecca Millett, with whom I'll be meeting later this

month too. These meetings, along with others I'll schedule through the fall with key legislative leaders, will give us an opportunity to press our case for an increase in the current flat funding for our FY2021 operations to support the need for more investment in our student-facing programs and cover the cost of collective bargaining increases we've already promised our employees (which are in line with increases that the State will already cover for its own represented employees over the same time period). We'll have other priorities too -- additional investment in the Law School, new approaches to funding research and infrastructure improvements, and even making sure our legislative and State leaders understand the path we may take with unified accreditation. Although my past experiences come from a different vantage point, I well know the value of maintaining the strong UMS relationship with our Legislature.

After the meeting with Representative Kornfield, she and I walked together across campus to the Advanced Structures and Composites Center, UMaine's signature research and commercialization center that's behind the Maine Aqua Ventus floating offshore wind demonstration project, the recently announced federally-funded research collaboration with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and a number of other cutting edge applied research initiatives important to the Maine economy. Representative Kornfield and I joined President Joan Ferrini-Mundy, our two U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King, Congressman Jared Golden, and Maine Commissioner of Economic and Community Development Heather Johnson, among others (including two of Jim Thelen's children, who were excused from their schools to join us), to mark the unveiling of the world's largest 3D printer and world's largest 3D-printed object, a 5,000-pound 25-foot composite boat appropriately christened the "3Dirigo." The printer, built by Ingersoll Machine Tools, came to UMaine through the support of more than \$2 million in grants and the collaborative work between the Center, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Soldier Center, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineer Research and Development Center, and others. It represents a milestone moment and opportunity for UMaine to take its rightful place as a national research leader in bio-based composites and additive manufacturing, which the Oak Ridge partnership will further catalyze in the coming few years.

Senator Angus King called the event "the most important day at UMaine since Stephen King's matriculation in 1965," earning some chuckles from a large audience, but more than a few nods of agreement as well. You can see select media coverage of the event [here](#).

By the way, I told you that one of my demonstrations of transparency would be to make these weekly messages to you available online on a trailing monthly basis. We've now done that on the Chancellor's webpage, which you can see [here](#) on a panel titled "Chancellor Updates to the Board of Trustees" on the right side of the page. I expect we'll post the previous month's updates at the end of each following month going forward.

Our important work on your priorities for UMS and the State of Maine continues.

Regards,

Dan