

Dannel Malloy  
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Week of October 14

Trustees –

With our travel and retreat together yesterday and earlier today, I'm sending an abbreviated update of last week's activities so you have a sense of the momentum we continue to drive. But before I get in to that, a few words about the panoramic views to which we were treated at the New England Outdoor Center – just stunning.

The overnight Nor'easter last Wednesday and a campus power outage in its wake caused us to postpone a planned "town hall" forum and lunch last Thursday with select faculty at the University of Maine to discuss my unified accreditation recommendation. Fortunately, we were able to keep a scheduled discussion with members of the UMaine Faculty Senate and President Ferrini-Mundy that afternoon. And I led a similar discussion with the University of Maine at Augusta's Faculty Senate, which met in Bangor Friday afternoon, and President Wyke.

Although I've reported previously on any given week's unified accreditation work, the sum of it in just the past three weeks is already significant. So far, leading the campus outreach you charged me to undertake to inform our next report to you, in November, on how we might successfully pursue unified accreditation, I and my team have held campus-wide "town hall" discussions and separately met with select faculty leaders in Fort Kent, Presque Isle, and Farmington, met with Boards of Visitors in each of the same places, as well as UMaine's in Orono, and as noted above, met just this past week with Faculty Senates at both UMaine and the University of Maine at Augusta. With additional input we'll gather from an online survey available to all UMS faculty and staff – to which more than 50 of our colleagues have already responded with valuable input – and our meeting last week with NECHE President Barbara Brittingham and all UMS Presidents and Chief Academic Officers, I feel confident that we'll have the best initial sense of how to engage our campuses in a successful effort to pursue unified accreditation if that is the course you choose for us.

I'll close this summary update with an important point that our recent discussions make clear: Unified accreditation will not solve all of our problems. It will not reset Maine's challenging demographics. It will not, by itself, convince more of Maine's high school graduates to embrace the value and quality that our universities clearly offer. But if we who are charged with leading Maine's public universities think innovatively about how we can better recruit, enroll, retain, and graduate our students to ensure more Maine residents become life-long learners, unified accreditation can be an important new tool we don't presently have to make positive change and improve the experience our learners have with us.

Regards,

Dan