



State of  
**North Dakota**  
*Office of the Governor*

Doug Burgum  
*Governor*

**Executive Order 2017-19**

**WHEREAS**, it is critical to North Dakota's economic success that its institutions of higher education prepare individuals to be competitive in the workplace; and,

**WHEREAS**, building a workforce and an economy for the 21st century requires that North Dakota examine its existing approaches to higher education; and,

**WHEREAS**, North Dakota currently operates eleven institutions of higher education: two research universities, four regional universities and five community colleges; and,

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to a 1939 amendment to the North Dakota Constitution, governance of the eleven institutions rests with the State Board of Higher Education; and,

**WHEREAS**, over the last eight decades, North Dakota has experienced economic, social and demographic changes that have profoundly impacted the educational needs and demands on all institutions of higher education; and,

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 2003, enacted by the sixty-fifth legislative assembly, directs the State Board of Higher Education to conduct a limited study to reorganize the five community colleges, focused on the workforce and educational needs of the state; and,

**WHEREAS**, given the significance of higher education in North Dakota, it is important to understand whether the governance system is operating to its fullest potential, and whether strategic improvements would better serve the educational and workforce needs of our state; and,

**WHEREAS**, an evaluation of the governance structure of higher education in North Dakota, by an independent task force, will determine whether the collective system of higher education is operating at the highest level, furthering the educational and workforce needs of the state; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Governor is vested with executive authority pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution to convene groups dedicated to addressing issues of importance to the state.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, Doug Burgum, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, hereby establishes the Task Force for Higher Education Governance. The Task Force shall consist of 15 members, appointed by the Governor, representing the interests of the students, faculty, business community, and all branches of state government. The Governor shall designate the Chair of the Task Force.

- I. The Task Force for Higher Education Governance shall:
  - a. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current higher education governance structure and determine whether the current structure promotes optimal efficiency, effective operations, and desired results;

- b. Determine whether the current governance structure complies with Article VIII, Section 6 of the North Dakota Constitution;
  - c. Identify best practices for governance of a higher education system;
  - d. Provide written recommendations outlining proposed changes to the governance structure that promote effective operations and desired results, focused on educational and workforce needs of North Dakota in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- I. The Task Force shall meet monthly or at the call of the Chair. A simple majority of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum for purposes of taking any official action.
- II. The Task Force may create working groups to consult with, and elicit, the expertise of educational leaders and North Dakota citizens.

The Governor is vested with executive authority to issue this Order pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution.

This Order is effective immediately, and it shall remain in effect until further notice.

Executed at Bismarck, North Dakota, this 7<sup>th</sup> day of November 2017.

  
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Doug Burgum  
Governor

ATTEST:

  
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Secretary of State

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Deputy