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Sent: Monday, November 10, 2014 6:57 PM
To: Robel, Lauren Kay; Applegate, John Strait
Cc: MAM
Subject: Comments on Draft Bicentennial Strategic Plan for IU

Lauren and John,

Once again, thank you for attending our recent core campus fall faculty meeting to discuss the draft of the Bicentennial Strategic Plan for Indiana University. I'm writing in response to your invitation for comment on the draft. These comments are my own and not the result of formal consultations with faculty. I've encouraged faculty to offer their own individual or collective comments through the Office of the President website.

I believe the School of Education can contribute significantly to most of the bicentennial priorities outlined in the plan, especially the commitment to student success, catalyzing research, creating a global university, and moving towards a culture of building and making. But I will limit my comments here to Bicentennial Priority Three: Re-Imagining Education.

I couldn't help but notice that the only bicentennial priority with a single action item in the plan is Re-imagining Education. That action item focuses on creating a Blue Ribbon Committee of external experts and practitioners to conduct a review of trends in teacher education and research and provide recommendations on how the IU Schools of Education should address their large enrollment declines. I'm afraid that no matter how expert and wise the membership of the Committee, it will be impossible for them to grasp the complexity of the Schools' structure and all the issues facing the organization in the type of short-term review envisioned. Moreover, presenting this as the sole action item, especially when the introduction to the articulated priority recognizes that state education policy and shifting economic opportunities are known to be significant causes of the downward trend in enrollments, just "kicks the can down the road" on things we know the university can do today. It also sends the wrong message to our faculty, many of whom are national and international experts on the very issues confronting the school. This has given rise to a considerable level of cynicism among the faculty and the perception among many that the Committee is just an excuse to take some form of action that has already been decided.

While most faculty members, including me, don't necessarily view the external review as a bad idea, I believe the strategic plan should boldly articulate actions we already know are necessary and the university can reasonably take to effect meaningful change on the policy and economic forces impacting the School. For example, under the Re-Imagining Education *Bicentennial Action Item 1* you could add the following:

2. Indiana University will work with its many P-12 partners, education advocacy groups, alumni groups and others concerned with improving public education to effect policy changes that increase the state's investment in P-12 education and promote teacher and school leader empowerment and success.
3. Indiana University will engage with state policymakers and opinion leaders to change or repeal policies that discourage teachers from pursuing higher levels of education and professional development as a means of career advancement and salary increases.
4. Indiana University will increase scholarships that reduce net tuition and fees specifically for students majoring in education.
5. Indiana University will honor at least one P-12 teacher at each university commencement to publicly underscore the value and contributions teachers make to college preparation, participation, and completion.
6. Indiana University will work with the School of Education and other units across the university to recruit, mentor and retain education researchers, educators and professors of practice in P-12 education using cluster hires.
7. Indiana University will invest in the physical and IT infrastructure necessary for twenty-first century educational research, with priority given to building the School of Education research wing and creativity lab space currently in the Bloomington campus' master plan.

I could go on, but I want to keep the number of action items within the general framework of other priorities listed in the plan. Some *potential metrics* could be as follows:

- Reversing the ten-year teacher salary reduction trend in Indiana
- Amending teacher evaluation policy to encourage rather than discourage higher levels of education for teachers
- Increasing the number and amount of funds for education student scholarships
- Increasing enrollment and degrees awarded in education
- Improving public opinion of teachers and public education in Indiana
- Improving research and education on school reform
- Completing the innovation research wing of the School of Education currently in the Bloomington campus master plan

I realize these are bold and potentially controversial ideas, but if the university is going to be true to its commitment of making the School of Education a bicentennial strategic priority, it will require bold as well as substantive policy and economic action. Putting forth a plan with a bicentennial strategic priority that only establishes a Blue-Ribbon Committee and metrics that only call for completion of the committee's report and assessment and implementation of its (yet to be formulated) recommendations strike me as much too limited in scope. It also ignores the expertise of a world-renowned faculty at one of IU's most highly ranked academic units, one with more than 100 years of history at IU.

Some of the *continuing priorities* might be as follows:

- Continue to strengthen the School of Education highly ranked graduate programs in areas beyond teacher education such as Higher Education Administration and Student Affairs, Counseling and Educational Psychology, Instructional Systems Technology, Education Leadership and Policy Studies, and Curriculum Studies.
- Expand the number of countries participating in the School of Education award-winning Global Gateway for Teachers Program and the number of institutional partnerships with top-ranked schools of education throughout the world.
- Expand the current partnership between the School of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences to offer an integrated Bachelors of Science/Masters of Education degree to include a Bachelor's of Arts/Masters of Science degree in high-need areas such as STEM Education and world languages.
- Continue to strengthen the collaborative degree programs, certificates and minors currently offered by the School of Education in partnership with the Kelley School of Business, the Maurer School of Law, the Jacobs School of Music, The School of Public Health and SPEA.
- Continue to grow the Urban Studies Ph.D. program offered by the School of Education at IUPUI.
- Increase the top-ranked School of Education Distance Education degree offerings.
- Continue to increase the quality and diversity of undergraduate teacher education students through the highly successful Direct-Admits program.

In sum, it just doesn't make sense to put all the eggs in the basket of a Blue-Ribbon Committee named without input from the faculty of the unit to be reviewed. There's a lot we already know about the policy and economic changes needed for IU and the School of Education to advance its responsibility for leadership in education in Indiana and throughout the world. Why not say it?

I hope these ideas are helpful. I'd be pleased to answer any questions you may have or elaborate on anything I've suggested. I look forward to the next iteration of the plan.

Thanks for inviting me to comment.

Best,

Gerardo