

**TRF Community Advisory Committee and Guests  
Brainstorming Session- Workgroup Compilation  
October 12, 2011**

**The following is a summary of the reports from the workgroups. Some topics were commonly noted among several workgroups during the discussions regarding “Concerns/Issues/Community Perceptions” and “Ideas/Solutions.”**

**“Concerns/Issues/Community Perceptions”**

- 1) Housing availability, and particularly, affordable rental housing, remains a common barrier for all major stakeholders in Thief River Falls. This is an area that was mentioned by virtually all breakout groups.
- 2) Concerns persist that the East Grand Forks campus is “absorbing” the Thief River Falls campus.
- 3) Budget reductions have led to incorrect information regarding the state of Northland and its plans for the future.
- 4) Northland is becoming the “de facto” institution for vocational education, as local high schools are squeezed out of those programs due to their own budget constraints.
- 5) The local communities are unclear about the character of the continuum of education from high school to community/technical college to four year university. This obscures Northland’s potential.
  - 5a) Linked to this is an unclear understanding among community members of transfer possibilities after the completion of an associate’s degree, diploma, or certificate.
- 6) Great partnership exists with Lincoln High School; strong PSEO scholarship program
- 7) Concerned for high cost of maintaining campuses in three locations (TRF, Aviation, EGF)
- 8) Concerns about financial viability for TRF campus
- 9) Demographics
- 10) Are we doing enough for communities to the north, such as Roseau?
- 11) Are we serving non-traditional students; those who didn’t complete high school?
- 12) Some people think we focus on liberal arts; others think we focus more on trades

## **“Ideas/Solutions”**

- 1) Northland’s position in a rural setting can be a marketing strength—prospective students may find staying close to home and close to local support networks appealing.
- 2) Consistent publicity and reinforcement of the economic impact of Northland upon the city and county would help to substantiate Northland’s benefits for community members.
- 3) Exploring “advanced certificates” in high-tech and emerging professional fields could help create a longer continuity of student enrollment from basic diploma to higher skilled degrees that could be stacked together.
- 4) Asking local universities to help in Northland’s recruitment: as local university recruiters encounter prospective students more suited to a 2-year institution, ask them to recommend Northland as a “preferred” college.
- 5) Incorporating current students into Foundation activities could help form future avenues for current students’ professional development.
- 6) Working closely with local employers could help create more local urgency for the construction of rental housing, which would in turn be accessible to students.
- 7) There is potential for alumni outreach
- 8) Need to get more people in the doors; give more one-on-one attention to prospects; tours
- 9) Increase marketing through social media
- 10) Partnering with community education in some areas –creating more exposure in the community
- 11) Continue to work with high schools to promote technical programs – internships, job shadowing, career days
- 12) Expand PSEO scholarship programs into other communities
- 13) Address misperceptions/rumors
- 14) Expand College in the High School – Roseau and Kittson Counties?
- 15) Pursue partnerships with other businesses, as we have with Digi-Key
- 16) Look for opportunities in our demographics – ie – baby boomer population’s interests

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