

University System of New Hampshire



October 29, 2020

Governor of the State of NH
State House
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu,

This is to confirm the USNH Board of Trustees' continuing interest in pursuing a merger of the state's two systems of public higher education. On June 26, 2020, the USNH Board adopted a formal resolution of that interest:

***VOTED**, on recommendation of the Education Excellence Committee, the USNH Board of Trustees hereby approves the establishment of a joint task force with the CCSNH governing board for the purpose of exploring the relationship of the two systems, and **FURTHERMORE**, authorizes Board Chair Joe Morone to discuss with the leadership of the CCSNH governing board the establishment of a joint task force, and **FINALLY**, authorizes the USNH Board Officers to appoint the USNH members to the joint task force.*

At its meeting last Friday, October 23, the Board discussed the CCSNH Board's initial response to the resolution and, by consensus, agreed that even if the approach envisioned needs to be modified, unifying the two systems remains the best course for advancing public higher education in New Hampshire by creating a seamless, affordable, quality system that meets the needs of all N.H. citizens seeking the benefits of higher education, whether in a trade, a profession, or a purely academic field.

The Board believes this to be the optimal time to merge USNH and CCSNH, maximizing our ability to achieve the current missions of both systems, including the provision of affordable access to high-quality education for our citizens. Vacancies in executive leadership positions, inter-system collaboration emerging in several administrative areas, and internal restructuring underway at USNH will help facilitate the merger. The current enrollment, financial, and competitive pressures make the consolidation of our systems necessary to fully leverage the state's operating and capital appropriations to our systems. Cognizant of the critical role public higher education will play in moving our state forward following the pandemic, the Board is convinced the

combination of USNH and CCSNH will be a far stronger economic and social lever than the two would be operating separately.

The USNH Board stands ready to fully support and participate in whatever process may best achieve the goal of merging our two public systems of higher education. While our institutions, executive leadership, and the Board itself are more than fully occupied meeting current challenges, we believe the successful merger of the two systems is critical to the future of the state and, for that reason, are prepared to dedicate the time, effort, energy, and resources necessary to make it happen.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Morone". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph G. Morone
USNH Board Chair

cc: Johnathan Melanson
Jayne Millerick