



Jonathan Holloway, President
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September 16, 2024

Vicki L. Hewitt, EdD
University Senate
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
335 George Street, Suite 1250
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear Dr. Hewitt,

I am writing in response to the University Senate's recommendations on Senate Charge S-2302: Budgetary Considerations Underlying Potential Merger of the RBHS Subunits Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and New Jersey Medical School into One Medical School.

Thanks to the Ad Hoc Committee and the Budget Finance Committee for their ongoing contribution to University governance and oversight of the process to create the Rutgers School of Medicine.

My response to the Senate's recommendations are listed below:

1. Detailed information about fiscal concerns, including costs relating to the administrative structure and branding be provided to the Senate.

The process to create a Rutgers School of Medicine is being led by Dean Robert Johnson of New Jersey Medical School and Dean Amy Murtha of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. The deans have established a structure to consider all aspects of the merger, initially concentrating on the elements for accreditation required by the Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME) and in anticipation of a required self-study and site visit. Collectively, they have adopted guiding principles, drafted a mission, vision, and values statement for further feedback and refinement, addressed core curricular competencies, and addressed admissions issues. To date approximately 275 members of the schools' faculty, staff, and students have participated in a series of advisory committee and task forces to review such topics as governance and administration, the academic environment, curriculum, research mission areas, clinical mission areas, community engagement mission areas, graduate programs and the graduate school, communications and information technology, the staff experience, the faculty experience, and the student experience. I understand that the deans will be launching additional task forces this semester to continue addressing key issues raised during this process. As these details are further elucidated through the iterative process described above, I am certain that the deans and Chancellor Strom will further articulate these details as recommended by the Senate. Information relating to costs incurred to date are addressed in the response to recommendation number 2 below.

2. Annual reports be made available to the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) regarding contracts relating to the merger, including consultants, branding, transportation, new administrative staff, and extensive time commitment from faculty. These should be provided without the need to file OPRA requests.

Rutgers Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Michael Gower provided updated budgetary information related to this recommendation to the Senate Executive Committee on September 6, 2024.

3. Sources of funding for new projects aimed at providing equivalent services to the two schools be identified and disclosed.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences Chancellor Brian Strom and Senior Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs Vicente Gracias have been diligently pursuing new revenue streams to provide funding for financial priorities and capital projects at Rutgers Health. Once these novel sources of funding are secured, they will be dedicated in part to supporting the ongoing capital projects, including the Medical Science Building renovation (now accelerated due to LCME requirements for comparability) and replacement of ADMC buildings on the Rutgers Health Newark Campus. I anticipate that Chancellor Strom will provide an update on these projects when he addresses the University Senate later this semester.

4. Reports be made to BFC on new fund-raising directed towards the merged medical schools and student tuition/fellowships.

Rutgers Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Michael Gower provided updated information related to this recommendation to the Senate Executive Committee on September 6, 2024.

5. Transparency should be provided about clinical faculty, revenue, and compensation between the two campuses/schools.

Supplemental to the response to recommendation number 1, members of the medical schools' faculty have made us aware of a desire to harmonize the compensation system for clinical faculty across the two medical schools as part of the merger process. As you know, compensation must be negotiated as part of a bargaining process with the AAUP-BHSNJ.

6. A copy of this document be sent to the Chair, Vice Chair and ranking member of the NJ Higher Education committee of the State Senate and Assembly for their consideration in preparation of budgetary outlays in the coming fiscal years. The Senate concludes that costs of the proposed integration are not defined and may be significant. Providing transparency and openness about these costs is prudent and responsible to safeguard the best interests of the University.

Thank you for this recommendation. We will provide an update on the merger of the medical schools, including budgetary information, to the university's finance and government relations offices as they prepare for the Fiscal Year 2026 State Budget and Appropriations process.

Thank you again for your advice and input as we move forward on our journey to create a model institution for medical education in the 21st Century.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Holloway

c: Brian Strom, Chancellor, RBHS
Amy Murtha, Dean, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
Robert Johnson, Dean, New Jersey Medical School
Lucille Foster, Chair, University Senate