

Iowa Highlights 2020-2021

Iowa's Engagement

- 17-Year Partnership.** Iowa enacted authorizing legislation in 2005 to join the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), which was created in 1991.
- About MHEC.** MHEC brings together higher education leaders and policymakers from Iowa and 11 other Midwestern states to develop and support best practices, collaborative efforts, and cost-saving opportunities. Through these efforts, it works to ensure strong, equitable postsecondary educational opportunities and outcomes for all.
- Iowa Leadership.** Commissioners, commissioner alternates, and members of advisory program committees provide direction for MHEC programs and services.

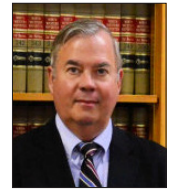
How the Compact Benefits Iowa

- \$3.12M in Savings.** In 2021, Iowa colleges, universities, school districts, and state and local governments realized more than \$3.12M in cost savings through MHEC's contracts and programs.
- Return on Iowa's Investment.** The State of Iowa received a 27-fold return on its annual compact membership commitment of \$115,000.
 - » **Technology Contracts.** Iowa institutions saved more than \$778,000 by purchasing \$7.86M in technology hardware, software, and services through MHEC-negotiated contracts.
 - » **Distance Education.** By participating in the Midwestern-State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA), Iowa saved approximately \$2.35M. Without M-SARA, institutions must undertake a costly state-by-state, institution-by-institution approach.
- Property Insurance.** MHEC's Master Property Program insures dozens of campuses nationwide, including the University of Northern Iowa, with competitive property insurance options. An added benefit of the program is that it pays dividends to participating institutions when the losses do not deplete the self-insured fund.
- Credential Transparency.** Iowa joined MHEC's initiative to map its state's credential data with a national registry that makes information on credentials leading to careers, more transparent, accessible, and consistent. MHEC has signed MOU with the Iowa Community College system and the Board of Regents, which will begin publishing credentials soon.
- Open Educational Resources.** Iowa is holding its first ever statewide Iowa OER Virtual Summit in March 2022, sponsored by MHEC. The theme of the Summit is "OER Superheroes" and forging connection, collaboration, and partnerships to promote openness across Iowa.
- Iowa Best Practices.** MHEC's June 2021 Executive Committee meeting in Des Moines included a presentation on Future Ready Iowa's work to close the Iowa skills gap. The Iowa Department of Education Community College and Workforce Preparation Division's credentialing work was featured at the full Commission meeting in November.

Commissioners



Nancy Boettger
Regent
Board of Regents
State of Iowa



Derrick R. Franck
Board Member
Iowa Association of
Community College
Trustees



Olivia Madison
Professor Emerita and
Dean Emerita of
Library Services
Iowa State University



Sharon Steckman
Representative
Iowa Legislature



Vacancy
Senate
Iowa Legislature



Andrew Baumert
VP Marketing & Outreach
Iowa Association of
Independent Colleges
and Univs. (Alternate)



Jacob Bossman
Representative
Iowa Legislature
(Alternate)



Timothy Fitzgibbon
Senior Vice President
First National Bank
(Alternate)



Herman Quirmbach
Senator
Iowa Legislature
(Alternate)



Mark Wiederspan
Executive Director
Iowa College Aid
(Alternate)

Midwestern Higher Education Compact Priorities

INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY, & EFFECTIVENESS

The Compact serves as an incubator, providing a platform to discuss opportunities and pilot potential solutions.

- 1. Innovative Best Practices.** MHEC shares effective solutions to challenges identified by policymakers and higher education leaders. In 2021, discussion topics included rebounding from the pandemic, federal relief, and campus mental health.
- 2. Open Educational Resources.** MHEC coordinates efforts to expand access to openly licensed textbooks and learning materials accessible via the Internet at little or no cost to students.
- 3. Credential Transparency.** MHEC is bringing states together to create an online, standardized clearinghouse of credentials linked to career pathways to better serve students, educators, and employers.
- 4. Timely Research & Policy.** Member states direct and receive high-priority access to research on pressing topics such as college readiness, affordability and finance, and student success.
- 5. Interactive Dashboard.** MHEC's online tool provides state-by-state data on key performance indicators including preparation, participation, affordability, completion, finance, and workforce.

DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS TO REGIONAL PROBLEMS

MHEC takes on projects and issues that are too cumbersome or expensive for one state to do alone, working jointly to make the Midwest region stronger and more competitive.

- 1. Convenings.** MHEC convenes diverse leaders to discuss and identify critical issues in higher education. MHEC also brings together campus experts including CIOs, risk managers, and campus health leaders to address shared challenges and opportunities.
- 2. State Visits.** MHEC leaders visit each state annually during its legislative session to learn more about and address key issues affecting the state's economy and higher education.
- 3. Military Credit.** MHEC serves veterans in the region by leading efforts to translate competencies acquired through military service into meaningful credit toward a college degree, certificate, or license.
- 4. Tuition Reciprocity.** MHEC provides a Midwest tuition reciprocity program whereby public institutions agree to charge students in participating states no more than 150 percent of their in-state resident tuition and private institutions offer a 10 percent reduction in their tuition rates. This program saves families money and keeps students in the Midwest.
- 5. Distance Education.** MHEC manages a regional approach to authorizing Midwestern states and institutions to regulate, approve, and oversee the delivery of interstate online education. This approach, part of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), provides a streamlined process that results in cost savings for postsecondary institutions and improved access to online education for students.

DRIVING COST SAVINGS & BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

MHEC programs and contracts result in tremendous cost savings for institutions, states, and students. The Compact solves key business problems and protects investment in higher education by collaborating and reducing risk.

- 1. Competitive Sourcing.** MHEC leads extensive competitive bidding and RFP processes that save members time and money while making it easier to purchase insurance, technology, and other goods and services. Institutions can tailor these negotiated contracts to their needs.
- 2. Technology Contracts.** MHEC leverages the combined hardware, software, and services volume of campuses and local governments in member states to reach favorable agreements with technology vendors. In FY21 member states saved an estimated \$34.19M through technology purchasing contracts.
- 3. Cyber Insurance.** MHEC offers institutions cyber security insurance and assesses vulnerabilities in security controls, threats, and financial exposure.
- 4. Property Insurance.** MHEC offers comprehensive property coverage that can be tailored to the needs of specific college campuses. Its Master Property Program reduces campus insurance costs while improving asset protection. In FY21, the program saved member states \$4.32M.
- 5. Student Health Solutions.** MHEC offers institutions options for fully insured, school-sponsored health plans. MHEC's responsive approach resulted in the recent addition of virtual mental health services for students.