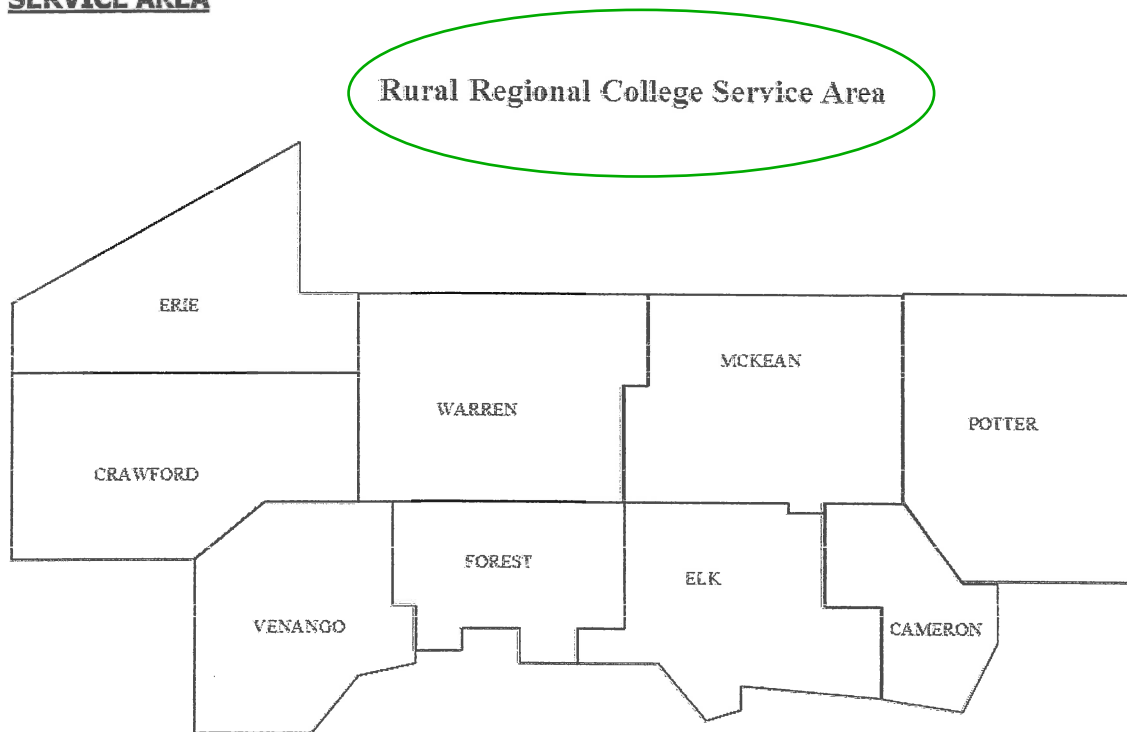


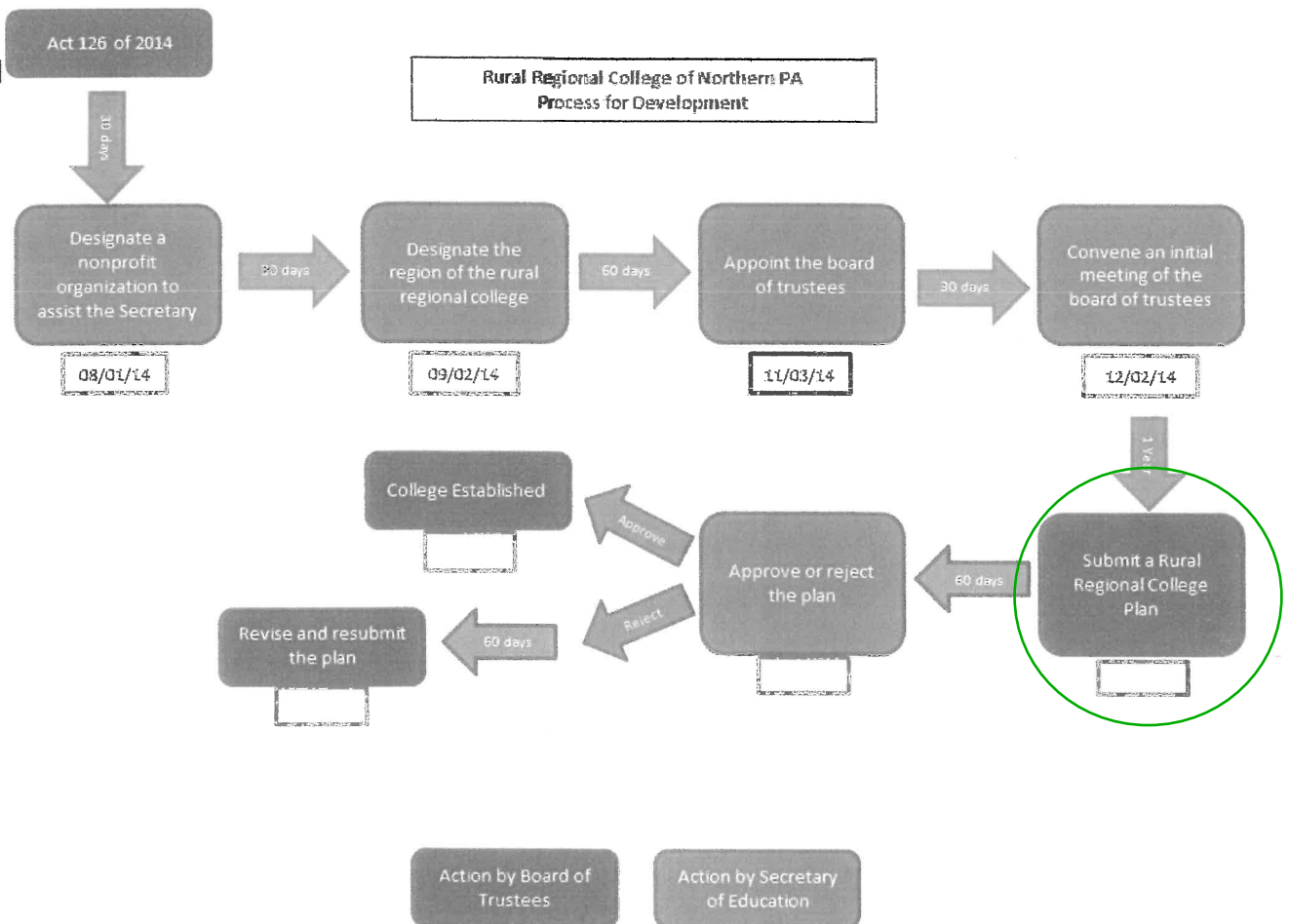
RURAL REGIONAL COLLEGE OF NORTHERN PENNSYLVANIA
STATUS UPDATE
February 4, 2016

Prepared for: The Erie Community Foundation
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SERVICE AREA



PROCESS FLOW CHART/TIMELINE



STATUS UPDATE

Funding

- Initial state appropriation for planning purposes (\$1.2 million) was not accessible to the Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania (RRC)'s board of trustees until quite recently due to a "glitch" in legislative language. These planning dollars are now accessible through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the RRC board and the PA Department of Education (PDE), subject to PDE's procurement regulations.
- The RRC was blue-lined (zeroed out) of the state's 2015/16 budget.
- The RRC board does not know whether 2015/16 funding will be restored, or what will happen beyond 2015/16. Certain RRC board member(s) are working to address these issues with state legislators.

Timeline

- Because planning dollars were not accessible, the board was unable to secure outside expertise necessary to prepare the plan in a timely manner, and therefore did not meet the one-year deadline for submitting the RRC Plan to the PA Secretary of Education. The RRC board will seek an extension of that deadline.

Substantive Work to Date

- The RRC board adopted articles of incorporation, bylaws and secured tax-exempt status.
- The RRC board discussed and drafted the following mission statement for the RRC:

The mission of the Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania is to provide affordable and accessible education opportunities to the underserved populace of this area by collaborating with local educational and administrative agencies, utilizing an innovative delivery model that is responsive to economic needs, and providing training which leads to family sustaining careers.

- The RRC board identified and/or secured the following assistance:
 - Project manager (Educational Consortium of the Upper Allegheny/Duane Vicini)
 - Plan research and writing (Lyceum Group)
 - Additional research and writing assistance (North Central Workforce Investment Board)
 - Clerical support, plan coordination and other management (Elk/Cameron Community Education Council)
 - Presidential search firm (Perry & Associates, who have not yet begun their work)
- The RRC board worked on portions of the plan that could be done in the absence of outside assistance and drafted two chapters for PDE's feedback (Chapters 5 and 6 as required under the law, which are "Philosophy and Objectives" and "Board of Trustees" respectively.)

- A subcommittee of the RRC board began conversations with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education to ensure that the RRC will be prepared to commence and follow-through with accreditation requirements at the appropriate time.
- The RRC board has begun to envision a proposed delivery model for educational offerings. The current thinking is that it should be a "distributive" model with multiple sites across the region, including a main administrative site, community college centers and satellite delivery sites.
- Much of the delivery model thinking had been done prior to Erie County being added to the geographic service area. As a result, the RRC board asked Mary Buia to convene an Erie County subcommittee to evaluate the distributive model and make Erie County-specific recommendations to the RRC board. The subcommittee included:
 - Aldo Jackson, Erie County Technical School
 - Steven Bishop, Corry Higher Education Council
 - Janet Anderson, Partners for Performance (Northwest PA Workforce Development Board)
 - Richard Scaletta, General McLane School District
 - Mathew Pundt, Erie's Public Schools
 - David Tullio, Custom Engineering
 - Andy Foyle, H & H Machined Products and liaison to the Manufacturer and Business Association
 - Jacob Rouch, Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership

The subcommittee reviewed the distributive model concept and supported that approach. They then issued a report to the RRC board including Erie County-specific recommendations regarding locations for community college centers and satellites, salient points for the selection of the RRC's main administrative site, and the most important keys to the RRC's success. The RRC board will act on the subcommittee's recommendation at a future meeting.

- The project manager has begun to assign responsibility for various pieces of the RRC's Plan development and put deadlines for their development. The plan must include the following sections:
 - Executive Summary
 - Regional Characteristics (Chapter 1)
 - Regional Survey (Chapter 2)
 - Survey Research (Chapter 3)
 - Regional Needs Analysis (Chapter 4)
 - Philosophy and Objectives (Chapter 5)
 - Board of Trustees (Chapter 6)
 - Advisory Council of Presidents (Chapter 7)
 - Organization of College Administration (Chapter 8)
 - Academic Programs (Chapter 9)
 - Accreditation Plans (Chapter 10)

- Facility and Plan Operations (Chapter 11)
 - Initial Partnership (Chapter 12)
 - Transition to Independent Operation (Chapter 13)
 - Financial Operations (Chapter 14)
- To assist the RRC board, Mary Bula provided the following information and connections:
 - The Erie County community college plan previously prepared by Rethink Erie, including the five year operating plan and 10 year capital plan.
 - The names and contact information of the outside experts Rethink Erie retained to identify local needs and assist with financial projections, etc. (Rich Gross, Jeff Anzovino).
 - The Erie County subcommittee's report and recommendations for the proposed RRC delivery model (referenced above).
 - Emerge 2040's final report (<http://emerge2040.org/strategicplan/>).
 - Two regional reports related to workforce and economic development needs, gaps and assets (<http://www.northwestpa.org/partners-resources/>).
 - Janet Anderson – director of Partners for Performance (Northwest PA Workforce Development Board).
 - Jessica Borza – Thomas P. Miller & Associates (the Erie Regional Manufacturing Partnership's consultant).

RRC DELIVERY MODEL CONCEPT

February 2016

Main Administrative Site

- Requirements to be determined by PA Department of Education
- Single location
- Will house some RRC administrative functions
- May provide access to classrooms, computer labs, and video conferencing equipment

The location of the main Administrative site is yet to be determined and may be driven largely by PDE requirements.

Community College Centers

- These are envisioned to be the “local/regional face” of the Rural Regional College, responsible for serving students in conjunction with main site.
- Co-housed with existing partners that can provide:
 - Classrooms
 - Course delivery equipment
 - Student and faculty support
 - Administrative support for program
- Centers envisioned to oversee course delivery, and provide necessary support services for programming.
- May have “flagship programs” unique to their center, based on needs.
- CTC and/or IU could also serve as Community College Centers, based on need.

Proposed Community College Centers include and are not limited to: Community Education Councils in (1) Cameron/Elk, (2) Potter/McKean, (3) Warren/Forest, (4) Corry, and (5) the Erie County Technical School.

Satellite Delivery Sites

- Located at facilities that can provide:
 - Classrooms
 - Equipment needed for course delivery
 - Limited support services (not the same level of support as Community College Centers)

Proposed Satellite Delivery Sites will be primarily driven by student demand, and ideally be geographically disbursed. Sites could include school districts, IUs, CTCs, libraries, PA CareerLinks®, and other community organizations. Other than technology capacity and student demands, there are no limits to the number of satellite sites.

Miscellaneous points to note:

- There will be relationships with accredited university partner(s) at least until RRC becomes accredited; and potentially with institutions beyond receiving accreditation to share facilities and resources.
- General education and academic programming will be delivered through the region through live courses and video conferencing.
- Technical programs are envisioned to be delivered in partnership with the various Career and Technical Centers, existing public and private postsecondary institutions, and potentially businesses throughout the region. Innovative curriculum delivery, such as condensed semesters, weekend offerings, and full-day courses may be utilized to accommodate for geographic limitations.
- For equipment not currently available, RRC may purchase mobile labs and equipment that can be moved from location to location.
- A model for minimum technology requirements will be developed and include considerations for internet bandwidth, network configuration, software licensing, and hardware configuration.
- A distributive and mobile model for administrative/support staffing and faculty will be integrated across the Main Administrative site, the Community College Centers, and Satellite Sites.
- A model for minimum staffing and student support requirements will be developed for the Community College Centers and Satellite Sites.
- Contracts/agreements/MOUs will be developed for all Centers and Sites which outline expectations and responsibilities.