



University of Idaho

Office of the President

TO: University of Idaho Faculty, Staff and Students
FROM: Chuck Staben, President
DATE: May 25, 2018
SUBJECT: Presidential Update

I am writing today to tell you that the Idaho State Board of Education and I have mutually decided that the 2018-19 academic year will be my last as president of the University of Idaho.

While this is difficult, I want you to know I am proud of what we have accomplished together and look forward to the challenges and successes we will have in the coming year. Since I became president four years ago, we have steadily increased enrollment and our retention rate is the highest in the state. Research expenditures have grown and the impact of those dollars has flourished. The Vandal family has come together to develop a clear path forward.

There have also been challenges. My decision to pursue a presidency at another university caused a distraction. Strategic evaluation of our programs and units during Program Prioritization was difficult. The decision to affiliate our football program with the Big Sky Conference was, understandably, fraught with emotion and conflict.

While the timing of this announcement coincides with the review of past handling of sexual assault allegations in athletics, this decision is unrelated. Also, please know that the review is continuing and we will have a final report soon.

In the year to come, we will focus on key projects – projects that will long outlive my time here and will stand testament to the work you all do to make this university the best it can be for the generations that follow. These key projects are:

1. Access to education – We have taken a strong stance at U of I, embracing the Direct Admissions program, creating unique partnerships with community colleges and leading the state in retention of freshmen to sophomores – 82 percent last fall. We will continue to work together to ensure every Idahoan who wants to grow and learn has the opportunity to achieve that goal.
2. Research – We will continue to build on our success – growing our annual research expenditures from \$95.6 million in FY14 to \$109.5 million in FY17 – the fuel behind innovation and discovery that makes an impact in Idaho and around the world.
3. ICCU Arena – This innovative building will be the university's next win. Partnering with the wood products industry, this unique building showcases what the U of I does best – bring value to the students we serve and to the state of Idaho. We have raised about \$35 million of this \$45 million project. The goal is achievable.
4. CAFE – This important initiative supports the leading agricultural industry in the state and is exactly the role we should play to support our land-grant mission. Building the largest, most

advanced research dairy in the country is an ambitious goal shared and embraced by the state and industry leaders.

We will continue to build on success, like the interdisciplinary work of the Integrated Research and Innovation Center and the investment in our own excellence through the Vandal Ideas Project. These efforts are successful because of the talent and determination each of you bring to searching for and identifying answers to critical problems and complex issues.

Each of you has a part to play in realizing the goals outlined in the university's strategic plan – a plan we developed together. The University of Idaho has been through many changes in its nearly 130-year history. It is up to us to write this next chapter – a chapter about Vandal success and excellence.

Chuck Staben
President

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