

Strategic Affiliation Monthly Newsletter

November 2023

The Affiliation Governance Committee Update

The presidents of FHSU, NCK Tech, and Northwest Tech continue to work through the formal Affiliation documentation and Higher Learning Commission (HLC) approval processes. The HLC process is anticipated to conclude in June 2024, allowing the institutions to proceed with full, formal implementation of the Affiliation beginning in Fall 2024.

We expect to be able to provide more details on this once the governing boards of the three institutions grant formal approval of the Affiliation Agreement. Once these governing board approvals are secured, we will submit the "Change of Control" document HLC requires by early December.

The Affiliation Implementation Steering Committee (AISC) Update

The AISC met on Monday, October 9, and discussed the following agenda items

- Corey Isbell, vice president of student and Instructional services at NCK Tech, led a discussion on the online depository he created to house all implementation reports and documents. A discussion on security and access was tabled pending the hiring of the project manager.
- Dr. Joey Linn, vice president of student affairs at FHSU, provided an update from the Affiliation Governance Group (AGC), including the future creation of a student- and parent-centered website. This will be a project assigned to AIT9-Recruiting and Marketing.

"Fort Hays State, NCK Tech, and Northwest Tech are working diligently to serve families and businesses in their communities and increase prosperity for rural Kansas and our entire state. The Board appreciates the leadership of Presidents Mason, Burks, and Schears in proposing this Affiliation Plan to help meet Kansas' workforce needs."

- Kansas Board of Regents Chair Jon Rolph

Industry Partners Join the Affiliation Initiative

Several local and statewide organizations have committed to serve as Strategic Affiliation "Industry Partners." In this new role, our partners will assist our Affiliation Implementation Teams (AITs) in their work to create a strong new resource for Western Kansas students, businesses, and communities. The following is a list of organizations that have signed on as Industry Partners to date:

- **Commercial Builders, Hess Services, and the Kansas Contractors Association** (supporting AIT3-Construction-focused academic programs)
- **Hays Medical Center, the Kansas Hospital Association, and the Mitchell County Hospital Health System** (supporting AIT1-Nursing-focused academic programs)
- **Leo Burnett Worldwide** (supporting AIT9-Student Recruitment and Marketing)
- **The Kansas Legislative Joint Committee on Information Technology** (supporting AIT12-Information Technologies)



Governor Laura Kelly ceremonially signs HB 2290, the historic Affiliation legislation, at Fort Hays State University on June 14, 2023.

Updates from the Implementation Teams

The lion's share of the work to deliver on our shared vision of a strategic affiliation initiative is being done by the professionals who work every day at our three institutions in areas ranging from student services to academic program development to information technology. To date, close to 20 Affiliation Implementation Teams have been created, and each month, we will provide updates from a selection of the teams. Here are several updates for the month of October:

AIT3 - Construction

- The team is reviewing the curriculum and compiling information to start aligning programs. The group also completed a series of visits to each other's facilities to create better understanding and personal connections that will make the eventual transition to an affiliation model more seamless.

AIT9 - Recruitment/Marketing

- The team visited the Northwest Tech campus in Goodland and the Quinter welding program on October 4. They will be touring the Beloit campus in November.

AIT12 - IT

- The group has been meeting with the AIT9 to discuss key elements in a new Affiliation online landing page.
- The Registrar sub-group met to start talking about course numbering and mapping. The goal is to have all three institutions utilizing the same numbering system eventually.

AIT19 - HLC/Accreditation

- The three institutions are continuing to work through the formal affiliation documentation and Higher Learning Commission (HLC) approval processes.
- The HLC process is anticipated to conclude in June 2024, which would allow the institutions to proceed with full, formal implementation starting in Fall 2024.
- We expect to be in a position to provide more details on this if/when we get formal governing board approvals on the Affiliation Agreement and submit the HLC Change of Control document by late November or early December.

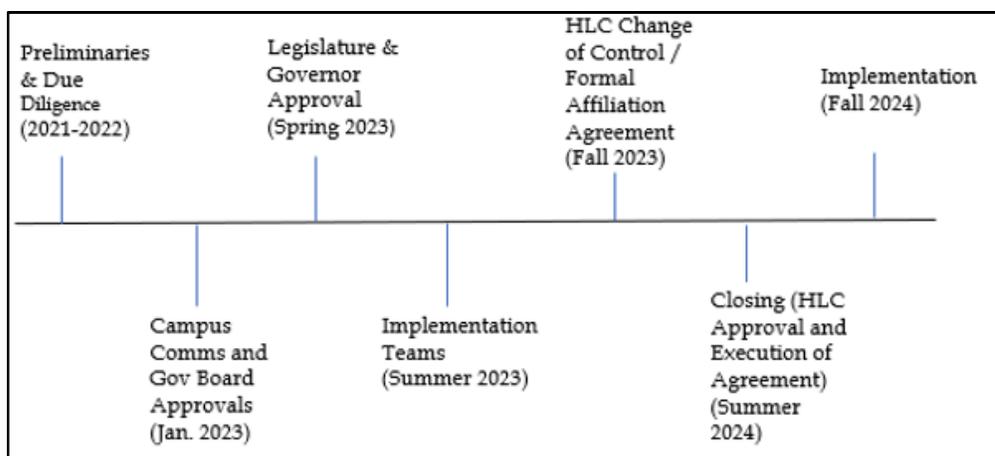
AFFILIATION STORY OF THE MONTH

Burgers, dogs, and nursing talk

On Monday, October 9, the FHSU and NCK Tech nursing departments jointly hosted their first barbeque social on the grounds in front of Stroup Hall. Dr. Jenny Manry, the FHSU Department of Nursing chair, created this event to help staff, faculty, and students from the two institutions get to know each other in anticipation of working more closely during the Affiliation Initiative.



Strategic Affiliation Initiative Timeline



"This is a historic endeavor that will change the higher education landscape in Kansas. It is the first Affiliation Initiative involving three rural-serving higher education institutions from the outset."

- Ben Schears, President, Northwest Tech