



Board of Regents
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DATE: April 3, 2024
TO: NMSU Community
FROM: Ammu Devasthali, Chair, NMSU Board of Regents, Presidential Search Committee
SUBJECT: Presidential Search Update

As the Board of Regents announced last week, we have launched a new search for NMSU's next president. After receiving feedback from our NMSU community, I wanted to more widely share additional details about the search and respond to some questions that were raised.

We previously provided information about the composition of the search committee and that I will serve as its chair. Historically, the Regents have had a high level of involvement in the search process from start to finish, and it's not unprecedented at NMSU for a Board member to serve on the search committee. Zach Smith, our contact at WittKieffer, tells me it's quite common for Regents or Trustees to serve in this capacity. This is for good reason, because the Regents are charged with the hiring of the president.

"Based on my experience leading over 50 presidential searches, the vast majority of the search committees included at least one institutional board member," Zach said. "It's important for Boards to have a voice throughout the process so that the entire committee knows what's important to the Board and the future of the institution."

While the search committee plays a key role in the hiring process, and our previous committee did an outstanding job, the Board of Regents is ultimately charged with hiring the president. Board representation on the search committee will help streamline the process, allowing us to make our decision by the end of this year. Managing the search process and hiring NMSU's next president are our duties and obligations as Regents. Once hired, the president will go about the business of running our university system.

Our search committee this time around is smaller and nimbler – and every person on this committee will have a strong voice in representing their respective stakeholder groups. I have every confidence that the individuals in this group will have no reservations at all about speaking their minds and engaging in earnest dialogue about what is best for the university. My voice will be one of many voices on the committee, and I will facilitate open discussion and encourage full participation and debate until the committee reaches its final *collective* recommendations.

We will begin in-person interviews with candidates much earlier in the search process this time. We will also request candidate information and profiles earlier to permit more time for review. I want to encourage all of our stakeholder groups to communicate with their representatives on the committee and work through them to ensure their voices are heard. For our faculty, in particular,



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Faculty Senate Chair-elect Vimal Chaitanya will be a key resource. Visit our [search committee page](#) on the [presidential search website](#) for a list of committee members you can contact with your input.

As we move forward with the new search, we'll use the job description and leadership profile we have already developed to help streamline the process further. We're also exploring additional ways to engage the community in the search process by expanding our outreach efforts and creating more opportunities for stakeholders to hear from candidates during the final stages of our search.

Our decision to launch a new search was in no way a reflection of the previous committee's work. On the contrary, they did exactly what we asked them to do and played an important role in this multi-faceted process. We've made changes to the makeup of the search committee this time around because we can rely on the groundwork previously laid to help streamline the time from start to finish. We'll look to this new committee to provide a fresh perspective, build on the work done previously, and deliver recommendations within what we expect to be an efficient and effective process.

On behalf of the board, I want to again thank everyone who participated in our previous search, as well as those who have committed their time and energy to this new search. Please send your input or questions for the search committee or the Board of Regents to regents@nmsu.edu.

Go, Aggies!

AmDevasthali