

DRAFT: January 13, 2010  
Northeast Higher Education District  
Strategic Action Plan  
2010 – 2015

**NHED Vision**

The NHED will enhance student access and learning options throughout the region and will focus on each member college's connection to the community.

**NHED Mission**

The NHED will provide quality higher education to the communities throughout northeastern Minnesota by developing a regional structure that will preserve college autonomy, but will also align programs and services to better prepare residents for learning, employment, citizenship, and life.

The above vision and mission were articulated at the founding of NHED in 1999, and continue to provide NHED's overarching impetus. Strategic goals were formulated at that time, and updated during the period of Presidential transition in 2007. These goals highlighted four common themes:

1. Improving student access
2. Aligning with key regional partners
3. Developing and maintaining strong ties between colleges and their home communities
4. Identifying efficiencies across the District while maintaining educational excellence

These themes are still applicable to NHED's strategic course. However, shifting circumstances are creating fundamentally new challenges and opportunities. It is critical that the District responds decisively and with urgency. Within this context, the District's 2009 strategic planning process sought to identify the primary barriers to NHED's progress and frame a new set of strategies that address the barriers at their core. The resulting strategic action plan will guide the President's action through 2015.

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**Strategy 1: Affirm and Strengthen District Alliance**

- Demonstrate that the NHED model of interdependent, autonomous institutions produces quality educational outcomes for the region
- Champion and promote cross-college communication to increase a shared understanding of the organization and deepen the ability of students, staff and communities to leverage District relationships
- Align resources and priorities that drive cross-college improvements and increased efficiencies
- Advocate for NHED learners, communities and institutions in regional economic development and other policy-setting deliberations

**Strategy 2: Strengthen the Quality of District Programs**

- Accelerate cultures of academic and service excellence through continuous quality improvement of NHED's academic and support programs
- Advance efforts to market and recruit learners to NHED colleges and sustain their commitment to the region after graduation
- Actively listen and respond to current and emerging needs of regional employers
- Develop and advance strategies for ongoing external financial support, including college foundation fundraising.

**Strategy 3: Expand Public/Private Partnerships**

- Develop and execute a coordinated, cross-college plan to support appropriate regional, state, national and international public/private partnerships
- Engage P-16 partners in developing a more integrated education system for Northeast Minnesota
- Position the District colleges to be the “providers of choice” for regional business/industry seeking ongoing training opportunities
- Promote mutual accountability among NHED colleges, communities and employers in the region

**Strategy 4: Innovate for a Changing World**

- Expand advanced education offerings that meet the needs of NHED learners and support regional economic development opportunities
- Share resources to capitalize on economies of scale using the principle of “interdependent service organizations”
- Target emerging technologies and optimize utilization and coordination across NHED
- Advance technology-based communication