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## Media Release

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Arizona Board of Regents Call for System-Wide Transformation**

Tempe, AZ (March 12, 2009) – Today at their March 12 meeting, the Arizona Board of Regents discussed design parameters for transforming the university system and charged university leaders with the responsibility for crafting and recommending a system-wide architecture.

The Board's *2020 Vision* strategic plan establishes measurable targets intended to bring the system to national competitiveness in educational attainment over the next 12 years. Goals have been identified at three levels – bronze, silver, and gold.

"The current budget situation and the accompanying reductions in state support severely limit our ability to achieve these strategic goals," Board President Fred Boice commented. "The Board desires to achieve the gold level of the *2020 Vision* by producing more degrees at a lower unit cost, which will justify an enhanced investment from taxpayers in the post-recession future. To accomplish this, we must re-engineer our organizations and change the way in which we deliver our programs."

During the study session held this morning, the university presidents described their efforts to manage budget reductions and the initiatives they have underway to develop alternative models of delivery of academic programs.

The series of design parameters offered for the Board's consideration, included: lower cost options for students seeking a baccalaureate degree; enhanced statewide program delivery; major research activities concentrated on the universities' main campuses; expanded partnerships with community colleges; a review of duplicative program offerings; and a new state funding model that corresponds to the revised architecture of the university system. **(See attached document for full description of design parameters.)**

"As a system, we are experiencing forces that both compel and provide the Arizona Board of Regents with the opportunity to chart a bold new path for the future." Regent Fred DuVal commented. "All barriers to access should be erased, creating a student-centered and integrated – rather than an institution-centered and balkanized – system, which would maximize simultaneous admission, ease of transferability, and credit portability across all platforms of higher education providers."

During the session, Regent DuVal provided an update on Arizona's \$150,000 planning grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education "Making Opportunity Affordable" initiative, the focus of which is to increase access to undergraduate education with cost-effective instructional delivery models, and to develop the support systems to assure student success.

The University Presidents and the Board's Executive Director were asked to report to the Board in June regarding their progress in designing a new system-wide architecture.

*The Arizona Board of Regents is committed to ensuring access for qualified residents of Arizona to undergraduate and graduate instruction; promoting the discovery, application, and dissemination of new knowledge; extending the benefits of university activities to Arizona's citizens outside the university; and maximizing the benefits derived from the state's investment in education. The Board consists of twelve members: eleven voting and one non-voting student regent. This includes the Governor and Superintendent of Public Instruction as ex-officio members, each serving while they hold office, and two Student Regents. For more information, visit [www.azregents.edu](http://www.azregents.edu).*

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