August marks the beginning of the new school year and is an exciting time for our universities as students travel from around the state, country and world ready for a fresh start in their studies. It’s also an exciting time for the Board of Governors, which is hard at work on several initiatives on behalf of the State University System of Florida. We look forward to continued collaboration with our universities and to keeping you posted throughout the school year.

Welcome back.

Marshall Criser III
Chancellor

Florida Polytechnic University launches
The State University System of Florida will officially welcome its newest member this month, with Florida Polytechnic University opening its doors on August 16 to more than 500 freshmen, transfer and graduate students. FPU is the first state university to specialize in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs. Dr. Ava Parker and FPU’s Board of Trustees have done remarkable work guiding the university through its initial stages of development. And the Board is thrilled that Dr. Randy Avent, confirmed as FPU’s first president during our June meeting, will lead the way.

Update from UF Online advisory board
Based on a review of the data and information provided by the University of Florida, the UF Online Advisory Board has found that the implementation is on track, on time, and on budget. After launching five fully online baccalaureate programs with nearly 600 students in 2014, the program is scheduled to add another five new fully online baccalaureate programs, including STEM programs -- biology, computer science, telecommunications and geology-- in the fall.

Legislative Budget Requests due
Universities will submit their legislative budget requests by August 4, outlining their critical needs and aligning their budget issues with the goals of their strategic priorities and university work plans. These
LBR issues will be analyzed in preparation for the Board’s September meeting. The Board’s official LBR will then be submitted to the Governor and Legislature on October 15.

**Academic vice presidents meet**
The Board of Governors held a workshop Monday to discuss how the State University System and State College System can access the best possible workforce data and use it when making determinations about new bachelor’s degree programs. The workshop brought together high-level academic affairs leaders from across the state who have responsibility for developing new programs. Ms. Rebecca Rust, Chief Economist for the Department of Economic Opportunity, provided detailed information and resources in her keynote presentation regarding current and long-term state and regional-level occupational demand projections and fielded questions from the audience.

**Board welcomes three new members**
Our staff held orientation for three new Board members this week, welcoming governors Dan Doyle, Jr., Katherine Robinson, PhD, and Stefano Cavallaro. Doyle, appointed by Gov. Rick Scott in March, is the CEO of Dex Imaging in Tampa. Cavallaro, who joined as the Board’s student representative in June, studies accounting and political science at FSU and is president of the Florida Student Association. Robinson, who will join as the Board’s faculty representative in August, is an associate professor of nursing at the University of North Florida.

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**Upcoming Board Meetings**

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<th>September 17-18</th>
<th>Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton (Trustee Summit)</th>
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<td>University of West Florida, Pensacola</td>
<td>November 5-6</td>
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**Trustee Topics**
The Board of Governors is seeking applicants for 22 Board of Trustee positions throughout the State University System. There is one vacant position each at Florida A&M University and the University of Florida, and there are two vacant positions at the following public state universities: Florida Atlantic University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida International University, Florida Polytechnic University, Florida State University, New College of Florida, University of Central Florida, University of North Florida, University of South Florida and University of West Florida. More information is available [here](#).