Good morning, colleagues:

Yesterday, it was my distinct honor to attend the University of Michigan, Board of Regents meeting as your chancellor. It was a pleasure to provide my first report to the Regents.

I spoke about the warm welcome I have received on the campus and in the community since my arrival. I shared with the Regents the energy and excitement created on campus as the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs welcomed new students at move-in day and organized a set of orientation activities. The newest group of Wolverines and I share a special kinship as we start our first year in our new academic home.

In our 10th day enrollment report that was released this week, there were signs indicating that we’re on the right track in some areas, but need to reverse the trend lines in others. I reported to the Regents about our growth in graduate professional programs and merit scholars. The quality of incoming students also continues to rise with improved average high school GPA and SAT scores. Also in our first year as a full partner with the Flint Promise Program, we welcomed 61 Flint Promise students, compared to only 4 students last year as a partial partner.

The First-Time Freshman retention this year is at 74.4% (up 2% from last year) and the Transfer First-Year Retention is at 80.5% (up 6% from last year). Our 6-year graduation rate also improved. For the 2012 cohort, the rate was 46.32% (up from 44.05% for the 2011 cohort). We must sustain the momentum and continue our efforts to increase retention and graduation rates.

We have much work to do to stem the decline and rebuild enrollment. This fall our undergraduate head count and credit hours decreased, again, by 235 and 2.14% respectively. While our graduate student headcount saw no change, the graduate hours are up by 5.10%. Overall, we came in over what we budgeted for FY 2020, but are down slightly from last year. I shared with the Regents that reversing the enrollment trend line will be an institutional priority in the years to come.

We welcomed 28 new faculty and staff to our University. I reported to the Regents that we have launched a search for the next Vice Chancellor for University Advancement. The new Vice Chancellor will help us move aggressively and creatively to generate philanthropic resources for the institution as well as increase alumni engagement and support.

Of course, no conversation about the campus is complete without a nod to our high quality faculty and staff who give this institution its fuel, its lifeblood. At the University of Michigan-
Flint, our scholarship, informed by latest advances, connects us to the needs of the region. In my remarks, I highlighted three stories of faculty success:

- Dr. Connie Creech, professor of nursing and director of graduate nursing programs in the School of Nursing, secured a four-year grant of nearly $1.7 million-dollars to create a residency for psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioners to work with underserved populations.
- Dr. Mihai Burzo, associate professor of engineering in the College of Arts and Sciences, will continue his leading-edge work on enhancing driver alertness with the Toyota Research Institute through a $444,944 grant over two years.
- Dr. Eric Common, assistant professor in our Education Department, has been recognized for his substantive research into socio-emotional and behavior support by the U.S. Department of Education with a grant of $175,000 to help build positive educational outcomes of children.

I would also like to recognize and congratulate two of our faculty on appointments approved by the Regents yesterday. Professor Janet Haley was appointed as chair of the Department of Theater and Dance, and Professor Jeannette Stein was reappointed as chair of the Department of Psychology. Both appointments are effective through 2022. Congratulations and thank you to both for their dedication to the College of Arts and Sciences, and the University of Michigan-Flint.

These are a few campus highlights from yesterday’s meeting. I invite you to view the full board agenda here.

With my very best wishes to all of you.

Go Blue!

Deba Dutta
Chancellor

Chancellor Dutta speaks on the vital signs of UM-Flint video

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