

NOTES ON BOARD OF TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORTS 1954-57

REPORT OF 1954

The **1954** report is essentially that of the “temporary Board of Trustees, which has served since the establishment of the University since **1948.**” On **December 16, 1954**, Dewey announces the appointment of the “permanent Board of Trustees of State University.” (Of the original 11, 8 are continued, and 7 new additional persons are added to increase the size of the Board.) The most important thing is that all through this period, Frank Moore is Chairman of the Board.

Interesting Observations in the **1954** Report

- **1944** Dorm Authority is created.
- **1950** Dorm Authority and State University enter into joint arrangements for management of dorms.
- **1954** Dorm Authority transfers management responsibilities to SUNY which is held to this day.

Other Interesting Facts

- Master Plan adopted by the Trustees in **1950** stated “that no additional Four-Year College facilities would be required before **1960** if the existing public and private facilities were continued.
- In the fall of **1953** the campus of Champlain College at Plattsburgh was reclaimed by the United States Department of Defense. This left Harpur College as the only state operated college of liberal arts and sciences.
- November **1952** the Trustees approved “a general plan for development of the Harpur campus site; the ground was broken for the new site by Dewey on **October 6, 1954.**”
- In this year’s document the following: “the organizational framework for a decentralized university is complex but the Trustees believe that these policies will assist in the smooth functioning of all parts of the State University of New York .”

- In medical development it should be noted that the cornerstone for a new basic science building (\$14 million) was laid by Governor Dewey on **October 21, 1954** at Downstate Medical.
- At the Upstate Medical the ground was broken in the late summer of **1954** for a \$5 million addition to existing facilities for basic sciences.
- Discussion of possibility of creating a “graduate program in public administration.”
- In **1943** the Regents submitted to the Governor proposal that the State establish a School of Public Administration. Now the Trustees argue for the establishment of a State College of Public Administration. They don’t precisely say where it is going to be at this point.
- During **1954** the Trustees authorize the University to cooperate with “Foreign Operations Administration in development of a Technical Assistance Program to the State of Israel.” This was executed on **June 30, 1954**.
- In its Conclusion of the **1954** study, the Trustees state: “Although New York was the last of the 48 states to establish a State University, it was the first to create one as a wholly decentralized institution consisting of colleges in every part of the State.”

NOTE: Need to consult documents on the following:

- Statement and recommendations by the Regents for meeting the needs in higher education in New York State, adopted **December 21, 1956**.
- The document citing the Regents approval on **December 27, 1957**, of “the entire higher education program for Long Island as proposed by the Trustees in early **1956**.”

Other Questions Needing Response:

- When was Reuben Frodin appointed to SUNY Central?
- What and where is the official authorization for the development of SUNY as recommended by the Heald Commission in 1960? This includes SUNY, Board of Regents and Legislature.

1955 Report

The is the first report of the permanent Board of Trustees. The report cites the year **1955** “as the year the nation began to be fully aware of the extent of the educational crisis which it faces.”

One of the first acts of the permanent Board was designation of a Committee on Capital Needs and recommending and the Board approved “a bond issue to finance a program aimed at improving facilities at State University units and establishing additional community colleges authorized by the Master Plan. **(We also need to find the Master Plan controlling all of this.)** The recommendations for a bond issue to be voted upon in the amount of \$250 million is seen as an “absolute minimum within the next five years.” “This sum does not provide for development of the new colleges on Long Island.”

The Trustees with respect to its review of Harpur College “reaffirms its policy that no additional liberal arts colleges will be established unless facilities for the State’s young people for this type of higher education clearly cannot be found in existing institutions.” **During the 1955 Legislative session both Assembly and Senate adopted a resolution memorializing the Board of Regents to direct the State University to formulate plans for the creation of a new teachers college on Long Island.** the Board of Regents subsequently acted as requested by the Legislature. In response to this action, the Trustees note that they have an obligation “to plan and provide facilities which would be of the greatest service to a given area and at the same time serve the State as a whole. This obligation surpasses simple acceptance of a directive by the Legislature and Regents to provide a teachers college on Long Island. To meet this obligation the Trustees during **1953** directed the staff to begin a series of studies to supplement the Master Plan which would provide data on the type of additional educational facilities needed for Long Island.

Very important could one find this 1953 Study. The Trustees subsequently formulated a “comprehensive plan for the Island.”

Most important to look at in detail the annual Report of Board of Trustees 1955, Section III, pages 15-18. In short, the Trustees challenge whether a teachers college would render “maximum service to Long Island and the State.” But they point out “however, the need for additional facilities to train secondary school teachers of science and mathematics is undisputed.” They refer to a report on “Encouraging Scientific Talent” as formulized in **November 1955** by *Higher Education*, a publication of the United States Office of Education. The Trustees go on to talk of the great critical shortage of scientists and engineers in the United States, citing the discrepancies as noted by the NSF between the number of engineers graduating in the United States as compared with those from the

Soviet Union. Also cited is the fact that despite the number of engineering schools in New York State, “many New York young people who want to be engineers or scientists leave the State for the opportunity.” (Citing that more than 1,000 New York students attend MIT and more than 600 at Purdue, a State University.) They go on about the need for low costs. They also note that this “present and continuing demand for engineers was not anticipated as recently as five years ago when there seemed to be a surplus of men with engineering training.” Therefore, it was not evident in the Master Plan of **1950**. The Study of Long Island needs by the Trustees Committee on New Institutions also recommended two additional community colleges on Long Island and converting Agricultural and Technical Institute at Farmingdale to community college status, thereby creating three community colleges for Nassau and Suffolk Counties, thereby permitting students to transfer into the junior year of a four-year college.

In the Conclusion of its **1955** Report reiterates that its policy “has always been and will continue to be that of supplementing the efforts of the private and other public colleges.” In a populist vein they also note “an educated people is one of a country’s greatest assets and at the same time one of the most intangible. The fact that one child may not be educated to his capacity is in itself a matter of profound regret. Multiplied many thousand times over, it is a catastrophe. Jefferson saw democracy as a race between education and catastrophe.”

1956 Report

Frodin still there.

Olsen becomes Assistant to Executive Dean for Four-Year and Professional Colleges.

The Annual Report of **1956** notes the Trustees proposal of **March 1955** for a bond issue to be supported for State University. This was approved by the Legislature the first time during the **1956** session and also note the Governor's endorsement of the bond issue in **1956** and recommended the action of the Regents in **December 1956**. It will be placed on the ballot in the general election of **1957**.

The Report notes that the Trustees "proposed early in **1956** that in addition to three community colleges in Nassau and Suffolk County, a four-year college with graduate program by created in that area. The proposed college would specialize in preparing teachers in science and mathematics, teachers for the community colleges and also train scientists and engineers. At that time the Regents approved all of these recommendations, except the program to train scientists and engineers, which was reserved for future study." As a result "of our study, the Regents recommended in their statement adopted **December 21, 1956**, a wholly state-supported senior, or upper divisional, college which would provide for majors in the liberal arts, sciences, business subjects, engineering, and nursing, conditional upon the creation of three community colleges in Nassau and Suffolk Counties."

But important to note that in this Report, this proposal of the Regents is disputed and opposed by the Trustees. It sees an extended delay in the creation of such an institution waiting for the creating of the three community colleges in Long Island. In addition, it believes that an upper divisional college will create a demand for like institutions in other parts of the State, as well as "adversely affect the private four-year liberal arts colleges." It also notes that "State University is proceeding to implement that portion of its Long Island program which the Regents have approved. Through a generous gift from Mr. Ward Melville, a site of unsurpassed excellence for the four-year college has been obtained in the Stony Brook-Setauket area and plans for construction are underway. To help met the immediate shortages of college facilities on Long Island, the Trustees have scheduled the opening of this college in temporary quarters on the William R. Coe Estate for the **Fall of 1957**, a year ahead of the original plan."

Trustees decide somewhere in **1956** not to enter the field of dental training.

1957 Report

In the Report of **1957** a major theme that is reiterated as basic policy is that of decentralization. It appears that decentralization is synonymous with stimulating “grassroots interests in the growth of college opportunities” whereby they may appear throughout the State, particularly in development of community colleges. It also appears to be identified with the effort “to bring education to the student rather than the student to a crowded educational center.” On this matter the Trustees on **December 12, 1957**, “reaffirmed emphatically their policy that State University would be a decentralized institution through which, to the extent possible, higher education is brought into all of the regions of the State to supplement the efforts of private colleges and universities.” Furthermore, “the Trustees pointed out that in the early days of the State University its Trustees rejected the concept of a single campus because of the inherited pattern of state colleges, because of the supplemental role of the State University with respect to the private colleges; and because the unmet higher education needs of our State require that distribution of educational facilities as close as possible to the people of the various regions.”

This policy orientation, I believe, becomes the cornerstone for understanding both the development and the major problems in that development of State University, particularly with respect to the difficulties to be experienced by University Centers in general and by Stony Brook in particular. It represents a kind of political and populist notion of education responsibility stressing the local significance of institutions rather than the regional, state-wide or even national value of such institutions. Indeed, it is at variance with the traditional development of state universities in the United States.

Section 4, titled “Science Center on Long Island,” pages 18-20, which gives the first fairly detailed description as to what will occur at the Long Island Center. An important point to note in this document is that on **December 27, 1957**, the Regents announce “their endorsement for Long Island and pave the way for the Trustees to proceed as rapidly as possible with the detailed planning necessary to create an outstanding science and engineering institution.” Apparently the resistance a year earlier by the Regents for the training of scientists and engineers is removed and the restriction to upper divisional work is no longer set forth as a condition in the new institution. It is also noted that “the Governor and the **1957** Legislature made available appropriations to plan, organize and staff a college for training of teachers of mathematics and science in these temporary quarters and a freshman class of 50 students was admitted in September **1957**. Plans will be made to accept a group of highly qualified science and engineering students, along with the teaching-course students admitted in **1958**.” They also note that undergraduate instruction could accommodate at this temporary site about 600 students; further expansion of the college must await the opening of Stony Brook. The Trustees “are not

satisfied with the preliminary estimates of the time required to provide college facilities at Stony Brook (estimate provided for at least “several years”) and the Trustees’ hope that ... the target date for use of Stony Brook facilities could advance substantially.” It is assumed the planning be designed for about 3,000 students “at the completion of the first stages of construction, with about 1,500 students pursuing undergraduate and graduate specialization’s (it is the first time graduate is mentioned) in science and mathematics, 1,00 in various fields of engineering and 500 preparing to teach mathematics and science on the secondary school level. “It is expected that many of the future professors in community colleges will be graduates of this institution.”

It is also noted in order to help expedite these objectives that “the Trustees have encouraged the local college Council to expedite its search for a highly qualified professional person to become head of the new college and have directed the State University staff to proceed as rapidly as possible with plans to develop an outstanding curriculum for the science and engineering courses. Tuition of \$325 a year has been established for science and engineering students. Those who are non-residents of New York will pay \$405 per year. In line with present State policy residents of New York State will not pay a tuition if they are enrolled in the teacher education program. Non-residents in the teacher education program will pay \$300 per year.

Also it is interesting to note that in order to foster and encourage research programs, the Trustees in **1951** “encouraged the establishment of the Research Foundation, a non-profit, public benefit, educational corporation, administered by its own Board of Directors, to serve as trustee and fiscal administrator of research and project grants from foundations, industries, individuals, and the Federal government.”

Also noted is that John Slocum formerly Secretary of the Board of Trustees and Assistant to its Chairman was appointed Executive Dean of Four-Year and Professional Colleges on **March 14, 1957**. He succeeded Reuben Frodin, who resigned.

Also J. Lawrence Murray was appointed Secretary of State University **on October 10, 1957**. This position combines responsibilities as Secretary of the Board of Trustees, Assistant to the Chairman of the Board and Supervisor of Public Relations for the University.

Also noted that Leonard K. Olsen was appointed Dean of the new State University College on Long Island on **February 14, 1957**. Prior to his appointment, he was Assistant to Executive Dean for Four-Year and Professional Colleges.

It is also noted that the position of Assistant to Executive Dean for Four-Year and Professional Colleges was abolished, as well as the position of Executive Dean for

Medical Education, and responsibilities for this position transferred to the Presidents of the Medical Centers..