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Chancellor Behr Previews Upcoming School Year in Convocation

She gave faculty and staff an inside look at what's coming in the year ahead.

University of Minnesota Morris Chancellor Michelle Behr opened the 2019–20 school year at the Opening Faculty/Staff Convocation and Reception on August 21. There she welcomed faculty and staff and previewed what's to come in the year ahead.

"Welcome to the new academic year," she said. "I am excited for the work that we have ahead and the opportunities the work presents for us to collaborate to continue to support and enhance the excellence for which our campus is known."

Highlights from the Chancellor's address include:

- [Higher Learning Commission Reaffirmation](#): This year UMN Morris is slated for the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). A team of peer reviewers will be on campus October 28–29. The campus has been preparing for this visit in two major ways: the Quality Initiative, focused on first-year student success (the final report for which was submitted in the spring and was approved) and the Assurance Argument, in which campus officials will document how UMN Morris meets HLC criteria for accreditation: visible and actionable [mission](#), ethical integrity in practice, quality teaching and learning, assessment and improvement, and [strategic vision and planning](#) that supports institutional health and decision making.
- [Strategic Visioning and Planning](#): Last year Campus Assembly endorsed the campus vision and eight aspirational statements to achieve that vision. Four task forces further developed four of the aspirational statements; 10 priorities emerged. Those priorities were endorsed by Campus Assembly. This fall the campus community will take up the remaining four statements that focus on strengthening commitments to scholarship, sustainability, and accessibility and that elevate the campus's role within the UMN System and as an educational center in our region and beyond. Three central themes underpin this work:
 1. **Public liberal arts for the future**: building the model 21st-century public liberal arts college
 2. **Excellence for everyone**: fostering capacity with respect to community, culture, climate, and governance
 3. **Vital campus community**: ensuring a sustainable and stable University community
- [Enrollment Management](#): A plan to reimagine enrollment management, which came out of the priorities identified in strategic visioning and planning, is underway. An interim vice chancellor for enrollment management, Melissa Bert, will oversee a reorganization of enrollment management structures, staff, and processes at UMN Morris, which include:
 - **The "Building a Better Student Pathway" Project**: a group of staff and faculty are examining processes and communications around prospective and current first-year students. Their goal is to ensure that campus messaging and

programming generate greater knowledge of and interest in the campus and support student success.

- **Transfer Student Services (TSS):** a new office of Transfer Student Services (TSS) will build support and programming for students who come to UMN Morris with previous college experiences.
- **Strategic Enrollment Council (SEC):** a new group of administrative and governance representatives will ensure students find clear and helpful pathways through their college careers.

This week faculty and staff also took part in a Fall Professional Development Day, and new employees completed orientation. Move-in Day for students is Saturday, August 24. Classes begin Wednesday, August 28.