

The Southern Illinoisan, April 15, 2011

IBHE head talks future of higher education

By Codell Rodriguez, The Southern | Posted: Friday, April 15, 2011 12:30 am

CARBONDALE - George Reid believes that if the state and higher education institutions work together, everyone can get through the economic crisis in Illinois.

Reid was recently appointed executive director of Illinois Board of Higher Education and spoke with The Southern Illinoisan Editorial Board on Thursday. He previously served as the assistant secretary of planning and academic affairs at Maryland Higher Education Commission and his experience includes various administrative positions in institutions such as Kentucky State University and University of Cincinnati.

Reid said he believes strongly in the challenge President Barack Obama put forward to make higher education in the United States the best in the world. He said one way Illinois can improve higher education is to close the achievement gaps between economic backgrounds.

While he admits Illinois faces a great challenge with the economic crisis, he said as executive director of the IBHE, he would try to help represent the institutions and the state so everyone has a better understanding of the situation.

One of those situations is the move to performance-based funding where the state funds institutions based on achieving goals such as increasing graduation rates and enrollment. Reid said he is in favor of the funding. He said it can improve the operation of institutions. Goals would be set by the institutions and the state with two years to come up with the criteria.

While the performance-based funding may not be popular with everyone in higher education, Reid said the best thing to do now is focus on how institutions can work with the change and excel.

"We can all debate whether or not we want to do it, but now it's the law," Reid said.