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Good afternoon. I'm writing to provide a brief update on several matters of interest to the campus. First, fall enrollments continue to look strong. New student applications and confirmations are at record numbers. We are also seeing a substantial increase in the number of students who have been regularly admitted as well as a strong increase in the number of transfer students, African American students, and Hispanic students. In short, we expect a record entering class this fall, and quality appears to be very strong. We are less certain about returning students. We simply don't have sufficient information at this time to know what impact the current recession will have on returning students. However, we find ourselves in a very strong position regarding enrollment.

Many of you no doubt read that the Governor will recommend that postsecondary education be held constant with no additional permanent budget reductions to our base next year. This will be done by temporarily reducing our base budget by 2.6%, replacing those funds with stimulus money, and holding us at our current funding base for planning purposes. In contrast, state agencies will be asked to cut 2.6% without the benefit of stimulus funding to "backfill". In other words, they will have a 2.6% permanent reduction. Because we anticipated this reduction and included it in this year's budget reduction process, our campus will not have to go through another budget cutting exercise unless the General Assembly fails to support the Governor's budget recommendations. Confronted with what appears to be close to a \$1B budget deficit, Governor Beshear's recommendation reflects his strong commitment to postsecondary education and I have communicated our thanks to him. If you have the opportunity, I hope you will do the same. In summary, while we continue to confront uncertainties related to our budget, I believe we are in a very strong position as we prepare for the upcoming year. We may decide to internally reallocate resources in order to fund high priority items but this will be done by choice, not necessity.

Finally, I recently convened our vice presidents, deans, directors, and chairs, as well as representatives of our governance groups to review ways that we can more narrowly focus our efforts in the face of our budget challenges. While the revised document is not yet finalized, we will come out of this with a revised set of strategic priorities that are fewer in number and more focused. What I heard frequently during the past year was that we might be trying to do too much, given the budget constraints. This message has been heard and our agenda for the next couple of years will be much more focused. More later.

The Governor will convene the General Assembly on June 15th and we'll know more once they complete their work. By early fall, we'll also know how our enrollments are doing and be prepared to consider other opportunities for campus investment. However, today we find ourselves in a relatively strong position, thanks to the hard work and dedication of everyone on our campus.

I know that the current recession impacts our employees in a variety of ways. I hope that you and your family are coping with these challenging times. Thank you for your continued commitment to NKU. I will communicate again when I have more information to report. Until then, best wishes.

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