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## UA3/10/2 Important Updates

WKU President's Office - Caboni

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Fellow Faculty and Staff:

I trust each of you had a restful and enjoyable break for the Thanksgiving holiday, and I hope you were able to spend time with family and friends. As we begin the final two weeks of the fall semester, I want to update you on a few important topics on which we have been working together as a community.

First, our strategic planning effort is well underway, with dozens of representatives from across the campus and community collaborating to help chart the course for WKU's future. The first campus open forum was held on November 16, and another is scheduled for December 7 at 2:45 p.m. at the Faculty House. Thanks to the outstanding leadership of Co-Chairs Paula Potter and Bruce Schulte, the working groups have begun exploring the big ideas and opportunities to position our university in the next decade as a national leader in student-success, academic innovation and inquiry, and applied research and learning. Next spring, the strategic planning group will continue to engage the entire WKU community in the planning process as we shape our future goals and aspirations. For more information on our progress and previous gatherings, please visit the [WKU Strategic Plan website](#).

Second, we continue to track discussions closely in Frankfort surrounding pension reform. We have met individually with each member of our legislative delegation as well as with members of both House and Senate leadership to discuss our priorities of protecting current employees and managing our costs. While the Governor has stated his intent to call a special session before the end of the year, as of today no date has been announced. A draft of the proposed bill can be viewed [here](#).

Finally, the budget council, under the leadership of Professor Indudeep Chhachhi continues its work to make recommendations about how we wean ourselves off carry-forward funds to balance the budget and how we rebalance expenditures and investments to address strategic priorities. We will move toward a new budget model for WKU in the era of performance funding. In the coming months, there will be difficult conversations about our way forward. It will be challenging to put aside parochial interests in support of the institution as a whole, but for us to be successful and emerge with a sustainable model and a balanced budget, we must make hard choices.

I am grateful for the manner in which we are working together as a campus community to discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. I especially appreciate the spirit with which we are working collectively to find solutions. Thank you for your commitment to this university and for your dedication to your colleagues, our students and our mission.

With the extended winter break comes an opportunity for all of us to renew our minds and spirits. In keeping with campus tradition, I am pleased to announce that we will close campus offices earlier than originally scheduled and will begin our winter break on Thursday, December 14.

Thank you for all that you do to contribute to the success of Western Kentucky University. Kacy and I wish each of you the best throughout this holiday season.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Timothy C. Caboni', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Timothy C. Caboni