



**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting
Via ZOOM Teleconference
February 4, 2022**

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Vanecia Kerr called the business meeting to order at 1:00pm

I. Opening Business

A. Attendance

Commissioners attending: Chair Kerr, Vice Chair Hughes, Commissioners Abramson, Harber, Kostenbauer, Meyer, Scott, Tucker, Wilson.

Advisors attending: Rep. Kipp, Sen. Story, Sen. Zenzinger, Brad Baca, Daniel Casillas, Mark Cavanaugh, Colleen O'Neil, Dr. Melinda Piket-May, Dr. Landon Pirius

B. Minutes

Commissioner Harber moved to approve the December 2, 2021, meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the motion passed by consent.

C. Chair, Vice-Chair, Commissioners and Advisors Reports

Chair Report – Chair Kerr thanked Vice Chair Hughes and Commissioner Abramson for their work on the 1330 Task Force. She also thanked the Department and Dr. Paccione for their work on this effort. The 1330 Report was discussed at the Work Session just prior to this meeting. She also thanked Commissioners who participated in the survey distributed by Vice Chair Hughes about improving the efficiency of these business meetings.

Vice Chair Report – Vice Chair Hughes posed questions regarding the agenda for the meeting and some procedural issues.

Commissioner Reports – No individual commissioner reports offered.

Fiscal Affairs & Audit Committee – Commissioner Tucker reported that the committee discussed financial aid allocation at its January meeting. Various parameters of financial aid allocation will be discussed later in today's agenda. The committee also discussed best practices and requested that the department allow access to its resources to evaluate



how the financial aid model looks and operates and how that compares to other states. The committee is awaiting feedback from staff on this issue.

Student Success & Workforce Alignment Committee – Commissioner Abramson reported that the committee met for the first time this year a couple weeks ago. The conversation focused on the 1330 Report and what aspects of it apply to the committee. The committee also discussed how to take a proactive role in the reshaping of Colorado Rises as well as legislation. Dr. Lane presented to the committee and a discussion followed about the genuine condition of Colorado’s teacher prep pipeline. The committee will assemble a special learning session around this issue. Advisor O’Neil from CDE will be invited to participate in that session.

Advisor Reports – Student Advisor Daniel Casillas reported that there will be a Student Leader Day at the Capitol on February 17th. Commissioners and Advisors are welcome to participate.

Executive Director Report – Dr. Paccione encouraged commissioners to reach out to Advisor Casillas if they want information about what is happening on campuses or if they want to engage with students. Dr. Paccione introduced the new Department CFO, Mitch Karstens. The Department presented to the Joint Budget Committee and on the SMART Act to Joint Education Committee at the start of the legislative session in January. Both presentations were well received, and we certainly appreciate the positive feedback. Dr. Paccione thanked Chair Kerr for her participation at both of those presentations. The Department has also been looking at different ways it and the IHEs can assist the state in emerging from the pandemic. COSI, our Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative, has many new initiatives within it related to these efforts. Some of them are from the 1330 Report and some from the state, all of which will offer a stimulus to help get people back to work and help them return to complete postsecondary credentials and degrees started previously. Also coming out of the 1330 Report is the Fund Your Future program which is a way to increase overall statewide FAFSA completions. The Ed Prep staff has been completing contract revisions to help CDHS, the Department of Human Services, award nearly \$10 million in scholarships and loan forgiveness for early childhood educators. The Department convened advisors statewide. This quarterly meeting had almost 200 people on a 90-minute conference call. We presented at the quarterly meeting of the Colorado Community College System’s conversations on concurrent enrollment, advising the concurrent enrollment students. We have a new course for academic advisors at the collegiate level, but also now high school academic advisors will be eligible to participate as well. It’s called LEAD. We are also supporting efforts with the Community College of Aurora in developing a space for a cultural center. MSU Denver is hiring an associate director for its Brother-to-Brother program. Western Colorado University started a search for its Vice President for Inclusivity. And the Community College of Denver is hiring an Executive Director of Diversity and Inclusion. On February 24th we will host the annual Trustee Convening. We are pleased that the governor will speak to the group as well as James Kvaal, the Undersecretary for Postsecondary Education for the U.S. Department of Education. On February 25th, we will be making a campus visit to CU Boulder. Commissioners are invited to participate. With a nod to this being an election year, Dr. Paccione emphasized that it’s imperative



that commissioners have and use their DHE email addresses, but that email address cannot be used for any materials related to political campaigning.

Public Comment – Public Comment was presented by Scott Laband, President of Colorado Succeeds. Mr. Laband offered his gratitude to the commission, Dr. Paccione, and the CDHE staff for the work accomplished per the 1330 Task Force. He commented that the Task Force was one of the best commissions he'd ever participated in and that Colorado Succeeds wholeheartedly support the recommendations of the 1330 Report. Colorado Succeeds is ready to help and be supportive in any way.

Public Comment was offered by Sam Jaris. Mr. Jaris is a disability and student advocate in the Colorado. He submitted his objectives for the commission to review.

II. Consent Items

- A. Degree Authorization – Recommendation of Approval for the Renewal of Authorization as a Place of Business - ECPI University – *Heather DeLange*
- B. Degree Authorization – Recommendation of Approval for the Renewal of Provisional Authorization - Arizona College of Nursing – *Heather DeLange*
- C. Degree Authorization – Recommendation of Approval as a Religious Training Institution - Olivet University – *Heather DeLange*

Commissioner Abramson moved to approve Consent Items A through D (Action Item III A was moved to Consent before this vote. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harber and passed by consent.

III. Action Items

- A. Educator Preparation – Recommend Reauthorization of Educator Preparation Programs at Regis University – *Dr. Brittany Lane*

This agenda item was moved to Consent following a motion by Commissioner Harber and seconded by Commissioner Abramson.

IV. Discussion Items

- A. Talent Pipeline Report presentation – *Lee Wheeler-Berliner, Managing Director of the Colorado Workforce Development Council; and Caitlin McKennie, CDHE/CWDC Talent Pipeline Analyst*

Lee Wheeler-Berliner, Managing Director of the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC), provided an overview the 2021 Talent Pipeline Report. Lee noted that



CDHE and CWDC (along with other colleagues) have worked on several iterations of this report over the years. The report provided important data on the supply and demand for specific workforce categories. He said that the report has been used to inform dozens of pieces of legislation over the past several years.

Lee said that while more work needs to be done in terms of pandemic recovery, Colorado was one of the highest-ranked state for net new jobs created per capita by businesses with 81.12% of new startups still active after their first year of existence. Since April 2020, labor force demand has recovered at a rapid pace, with total job openings surpassing unemployment as of May 2021. He noted that more efforts to close equity gaps in labor force participation are necessary for Colorado to continue to have a vibrant workforce.

Lee also shared results from the Bridging the Talent Gap survey conducted by CWDC. Through this partnership with Bridging the Talent Gap, CWDC employed a nationally normed labor market survey that was targeted at employers with the intention of producing a statewide representation of Colorado's employers. Significant efforts were taken to include all regions and every organization size, while prioritizing four focus industries in particular, including: retail, healthcare, IT, and advanced manufacturing. Results from this survey were included in the Talent Pipeline Report.

Lee shared various policy recommendations outlined in the report centered around enhancing opportunities for employers to implement talent development strategies, strengthening critical industries so all businesses can thrive, and structuring supports necessary to enhance the participation of targeted populations in the labor force. Various commissioners asked questions on how these data and the findings of the report could be used in tandem with other resources to inform their work. Lee looked forward to continued collaboration between CDHE and CWDC on a range of topics related to workforce development throughout Colorado.

B. *Colorado Rises* Revision – Dr. Angie Paccione and Dr. Ben Boggs

Dr. Paccione opened the presentation by stating the revision of the strategic plan is an opportunity for the commission to articulate its vision for Colorado postsecondary education for the next five years. Those years will go beyond any one administration's or any individual commission members' terms. The plan is used by the institutions as guidance by which they establish their institutional strategic plans, along with measurable objectives and goals by which they are held accountable. Therefore, the endeavor revise and renew the state strategic plan is not to be taken lightly. Dr. Paccione noted that Ms. Inta Morris, former Department Deputy Director, had been contracted to aid the Commission in this work, drawing from her nearly 14 years of experience with the Department and previous efforts to renew and revise the strategic plan.

Dr. Paccione recognized Dr. Boggs who noted that the Commission had addressed the need for the 5-year revision at its annual retreat in July 2021. He also noted that today's



presentations/discussions of the *1330 Report* and the *Talent Pipeline Report* were meant to enhance the Commission’s perspective of what recent statewide initiatives could aid and expand what the strategic plan could encompass. He noted that *Colorado Rises* was not the first strategic plan – the first was officially mandated in 2012 and renewed in 2017, and strategic plans predated even these. The 5-year timeframe offered an excellent opportunity to gauge the progress of the past five years, and to review if the strategic components still address Colorado’s greatest needs and opportunities.

Ms. Ina Morris joined the conversation to clarify the difference between credential completion and attainment. She added that the previous strategic plans gradually broadened to include credentials (beyond just degrees) and to include overall data from the private institutions for a more accurate statewide picture. Dr. Boggs reviewed broad data from the current strategic plan, showing that some counts had decreased during the pandemic – so there is ground to make up. Vice Chair Hughes joined Ms. Morris in clarifying that a workgroup within the Commission will undertake a more careful review and also seek interaction with stakeholders and the institutions so that the revision/renewal process is inclusive and transparent, while remaining under the purview of the commission. The intent is to have a near-final draft for the commission’s intensive review and discussion at its annual retreat in July.

After further discussion, the initial workgroup was identified as Vice Chair Hughes, Commissioners Tucker, Scott, Advisor Cavanaugh, with Ms. Morris and Dr. Boggs. Others are welcomed to join, and this group is expected to expand somewhat. The workgroup will have information refining the arc of work and timelines emailed by February 18.

V. **Commission Initiatives**

Legislative Update – *Chloe Figg, Emma Fedorchuk, and Lauren Gilliland*

Ms. Figg was unable to join the Commission meeting, and Dr. Ben Boggs offered her report. The 2022 Legislative Session officially convened on January 12th and will meet for a required 120 days. Due to the Omicron virus, many hearings are limited and involve remote participation – which means the capitol seems much emptier than usual sessions. The Department and the institutions began the session with hearings before the Joint Budget Committee. The institutions have formed a joint funding request independent of the Department and Governor’s proposed budget.

Dr. Boggs recognized Representative Kipp so that she might provide comments to the commission. Representative Kipp noted that she was sponsoring a bill for which she sought the commission’s support. The bill seeks to remove barriers for those wishing to become teachers, and to help increase diversity among the teaching workforce. This would be accomplished through a number of components within the bill, including: a stipend to aid students financially during their student teaching; another is support with covering the required fees for PRAXIS exams. Representative Kipp noted that the bill may be expensive, but providing this support is crucial to attracting and attaining more teachers, especially teachers from underserved backgrounds. In the questions that



followed, it was noted that the fiscal note for the bill is incomplete at this time. The commission agreed that when the bill is officially introduced, the Student Success and Academic Affairs committee will review it per the Representative's request.

Senator Zenzinger asked to speak to Senate Bill 8, which seeks to provide tuition-free postsecondary education to foster youth. The bill has passed the Senate Education committee with two amendments. The first ensures that eligible foster youth would complete the FAFSA and receive federal and other financial supports prior to the funds associated with this bill so that this effort is a "last dollar" program. The second divides the cost associated per each student evenly between the state and the public postsecondary institutions. The senator noted that only 30.5 percent of foster youth graduate from high school, and of those only 15 percent continue to postsecondary education. So this is an area of great need and challenge. She thanked the institutions for the assistance and support in the preparation of the bill.

In closing, Dr. Boggs was asked about the joint letter from the institutions to the Joint Budget Committee. Dr. Boggs responded that per media report, the letter had been well received by the committee who were seeking to increase funding appropriations to the institutions. The commission added comment that opportunities were welcomed to help support enhanced financial support to the institutions.

Chair Kerr thanked everyone for a fine meeting with much participation and also fine pre-meeting work by Commission members and staff. She noted that the next meeting will be held on Friday, March 4, 2022.

Meeting adjourned at 4:03pm.

