



**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting
Via ZOOM Teleconference and in-person
May 6, 2022**

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Vanecia Kerr called the business meeting to order at 1:01pm

I. Opening Business

A. Attendance

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

Advisors attending: Mark Cavanaugh, Colleen O’Neil, Dr. Melinda Picket-May, Dr. Landon Pirius

B. Minutes

Commissioner Harber moved to approve the April 1, 2022, meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the motion passed by consent.

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

Chair Report – Chair Kerr thanked Dr. Paccione for joining the Denver Academy Gala two weeks ago. Her remarks were very well received. Chair Kerr recognized that the election of a new chair and vice chair will be conducted at today's meeting. She commented that her tenure on the commission and as chair has been a rewarding and learning experience. She is thankful for the opportunity.

Vice Chair Report – Vice Chair Hughes thanked Commissioners Abramson and Scott for testifying at various legislative committee meetings this past month. She recognized that HB21-1330 gave the commission an opportunity to deliver a good body of work. She thanked staff for their good work on the Stackable Credentials Bill. She also thanked Chloe Figg for her work and reporting in the last Legislative Update. She thanked Michael Vente and Carl Einhaus for their videos presenting information on agenda items for this meeting. She recognized Misti Ruthven for her consistent representation of the Governor’s office at commission meetings.



Commissioner Reports – Commissioner Harber thanked Dr. Paccione for leading Decision Day at the Capitol. He encouraged commissioners to join him at the event next year. He suggested that future May commission meetings be scheduled away from the last day of the legislative session so that legislative advisors can attend. He announced that he will attend Adams State University Commencement with Dr. Paccione.

Commissioner Trujillo shared that he’s been brainstorming about outreach efforts in his district and believes it is important for all commissioners to have a good understanding of the priorities and concerns of the universities in their districts. He encouraged commissioners to visit campuses when possible to get feedback on commission initiatives and discussions. It is important to bring that information to commission discussions. He suggested that leveraging the power of technology would help make this efficient.

Fiscal Affairs & Audit Committee – Commissioner Tucker reported that two items are on the agenda today. One is a discussion item, item III. B. and the other one is an action item, IV. A. The committee continues to work on making financial aid allocation methodology more equitable.

Student Success & Workforce Alignment Committee – Commissioner Abramson reported that the committee is currently looking at several policy revisions in degree authorizations. He has been participating on the SARA Appeals Board regarding Aspen University. There is an agenda item for today’s meeting regarding Aspen University’s provisional status. Commissioner Abramson gave special thanks to CDE’s Colleen O’Neill, (CCHE Advisor) and CDHE’s Dr. Brittany Lane, who have put together a comprehensive agenda for us all to learn about the state of educator preparation and where the teacher shortages are geographically and by grade.

Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Revision – Commissioner Scott reported that the working group has meet often over the past few months to become more knowledgeable of the issues and how to think about measures. They’ve been identifying objectives, and the drivers that will push toward those objectives. They are now beginning to think about the measures that support evaluating progress towards those objectives and in doing this have had conversations with several national experts on objectives for postsecondary education. Updates to key stakeholder groups have been ongoing.

Advisor Reports – Dr. Piket May reported that the Colorado Faculty Advisory Committee would like to get more involved with the commissioners now that we are back in person a little bit more. As Commissioner Trujillo reported, as you go visit a campus, please consider reaching out so the Colorado Faculty Advisory Committee, an on-the-ground teaching faculty so people really involved in the teaching, can find a contact for you at that school.

Advisor Cavanaugh thanked Vice Chair Hughes for speaking at the Independent Higher Education a week ago. This was a progress report and open discussion on the strategic plan revision process. It was a good dialogue about where the non-profit, independent



institutions of higher education fit into this framework and the key role they have for Colorado postsecondary education. The federal government has loosened the rules on public service loan forgiveness and that window may not go longer than October, so if anyone is aware of Coloradans seeking to work in non-profit, government, sectors, it's worth reapplying. The bad news is that something is happening with FAFSA. Organizations nationally that follow FAFSA have reported about a 12 percent drop year over year in FAFSA applications. Renewals are even worse, and it gets worse as measure closer to Pell students. In Colorado our numbers are about 12.5% FAFSA decrease, 18% for Pell eligible students. Title IX regulations are expected to drop later this month. There will be another rule comment administrative law process that unfolds from that.

D. Executive Director Report –

Last Friday, April 29 was Decision Day 2022! To help mark the day, a great event was held at the Capitol recognizing 24 Colorado GEAR UP students at Gateway High school. The Lt. Gov., legislators, mascots, and other dignitaries were on hand to celebrate the students. Dr. Paccione recognized that Commissioner Harber was able to attend. This week, Department released [Pathways to Prosperity: Postsecondary Access and Success for Colorado's High School Graduates](#). This is the annual data report on Colorado high school graduates entering postsecondary education. This is on today's agenda, and Carl Einhaus and Michael Vente have provided videos for you to learn more about this important annual report. A few notable points include:

- For 2020 graduates, the college-going rate was 50.5% (a more than 5% decrease from 2019 graduates).
- The state's rate is more than 10% lower than the national average, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 2020 national college-going rate was 62.7%.
- However, the percentage of students who earn a college credential while in high school continues to increase.

On April 14, members of the department met with a delegation of higher education administrators from across Central and South America (9 delegates representing 9 countries). The delegates are part of a 3-week International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) administered by the U.S. Department of State. DHE staff provided an overview of higher education in Colorado and discussed issues related to supporting underserved students and workforce development. Representatives from Colorado institutions joined to discuss opportunities for collaboration and exchange.

On April 27, the Department hosted the Spring convening of the Statewide Advisors for Student Success (SASS!). Over 160 2-year and 4-year academic advisors from across the state join us on the call. We are committed to strengthening academic advising statewide – which serves to aid our students in clarifying their pathways, saving them time and money, and supporting them in pursuing their dreams and goals.

On April 26, the Division of Private Occupational Schools officially launched our new DPOS Connect IT solution! This online support modernizes workflow, better connects



occupational schools to the ETPL, and allows for more calculation of ROI for DPOS programs.

This week the state made Juneteenth an official state holiday. Dr. Paccione attended the bill signing. She stated that she is honored to serve as the first Black member of the Governor Polis's Cabinet. This new holiday means nearly 200,000 college and university students and nearly 400,000 P-12 students will have the day off and able to contemplate the meaning of this date.

In partnership with the Office of Early Childhood, the Department's Educator Preparation program:

- Distributed funds to pay the tuition and fees for ECE 101 and ECE 103 for over 1,913 students (for a total of over 2,400 courses) in the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 semesters.
- Allocated \$1.8 million to IHEs for Spring 2022/Summer 2022 scholarships for students in early childhood related certificate and degree pathways.

E. Legislative Update –

Dr. Ben Boggs provided the legislative update for Ms. Chloe Figg as she was at the capitol during the meeting. In following her notes, Dr. Boggs thanked Chair Kerr, Vice Chair Hughes, and Commissioners Abramson and Scott for their participation in addressing legislative committees on various bills this session. It has been a positive and successful session for Colorado postsecondary education, and the time and contributions of our commissioners are sincerely appreciated,

The session is set to adjourn *sine die* on Wednesday, May 11. Since the legislative update email sent by Ms. Figg earlier this week, all of our priority bills have either passed or on their way to final passage. We are very pleased by the success of this session and look forward to implementation of the new legislation as we head into the summer.

F. Public Comment- There was no public comment.

II. Consent Items

- A.** Educator Preparation – Recommend Approval of Principal Preparation Program Initial Authorization – *Dr. Brittany Lane*
- B.** Educator Preparation – Recommend Approval of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Bilingual Preparation Program Initial Authorization – *Dr. Brittany Lane*
- C.** Educator Preparation – Recommend Approval of Special Education Preparation Program Initial Authorization – *Dr. Brittany Lane*
- D.** Degree Authorization – Recommendation of Approval for the Renewal of Full Authorization: Colorado Christian University – *Heather DeLange*



E. Degree Authorization – Recommendation of Amendment to CCHE Policy Section I, Part J – *Heather DeLange*

Commissioner Harber moved to approve Consent Items A through E. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson and passed by consent.

III. Discussion Items

A. Update on Proposed Revisions to CCHE Policy Section I, Part N (Service Regions) – *Dr. Kim Poast*

Dr. Poast led a robust discussion on the proposed revisions to the service regions policy. She noted that the original initiative to re-examine the policy was included in HB21-1330 and directed to the Student Success and Workforce Revitalization Task Force. Discussions on this topic have included a range of stakeholders including the institution CEOs, the Academic Council and the Colorado Department of Education. A “sticking point” is the issue of concurrent enrollment for the K-12 districts are how they are assigned to postsecondary institutions, which can provide significant revenue for an IHE. The current draft of the new policy indicates that service boundaries would be drawn by the governing board of an institution in its ability to best meet the needs of its community.

Discussion focused on the process for making these changes, and when the Commission would be notified or involved. A priority concern is that the IHEs should work collaboratively to ensure the needs of the state’s students are met. In short, a “backstop” would be included to stipulate that all areas of the state are serviced. As part of an equity commitment, rural K-12 districts should have ample opportunity to provide concurrent enrollment options to their students. This raises the point of competition among the postsecondary IHEs in their ability to offer quality courses at reasonable expense, which is an important revenue stream. Therefore, for the Commission the point is not to protect rural institutions, but to help make them more competitive.

Dr. Poast reminded the Commission that the policy did not limit what a school district could obtain through virtual learning but was addressing the physical location of the courses – either at an IHE or at a school district. The approach to the new policy has been to explore how the state could “get out of the way” and increase competition while ensuring the needs of all students – urban and rural – are being met. And in doing so, IHEs can be incentivized to work collaboratively to offer better products.

The Commission agreed to have a second conversation at its June meeting, with the goal of voting on a new policy at its July retreat. Commission members and advisors are to communicate specific concerns to Dr. Poast so she can incorporate responses into the June discussion.



B. Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Revision

The Commission discussed the current status of the Strategic Plan Revision. A question was raised as to whether the revised plan would have a monetary component to it so that the plan could be implemented statewide. The response underscored that the Commission is a coordinating body, not a governing one, and that the Commission is reviewing opportunities to emphasize data and measures towards goals and objectives as levers to clarify priorities and pathways for the IHEs. Related to this will be the funding allocation formula, which by statute will begin the process of being reviewed and revised at a stage following the establishment and implementation of the new strategic plan. That will be the opportunity to directly tie the strategic plan to appropriations and funding.

The conversation continued that lack of funding has been a challenge in education for generations. While waiting to address the funding formula and appropriations, efforts need to be emphasized to reallocate what is already provided to meet pressing strategic needs. Too many Coloradans are not entering postsecondary pathways, and too many that do are not completing with their credential.

Questions were raised as to the two previous strategic plans and if they were effective in creating change. Many state challenges persist. Yet, modest improvements did occur and the plans – aspirational as they may have been – created a common vision across state government, numerous stakeholders, and the IHEs on areas requiring attention. An opportunity with the new plan is to revisit historical assumptions and consider the current postsecondary ecosystem and students. CEOs seek to move away from “traditional students” and “two-year” and “four-year” institutions in light of their new realities, and who and what their students are and what education they seek. In this manner, the opportunity is to clearly define the problem we are trying to solve, and then developing a strategic plan that encourages a solution more flexibility than we have today.

C. Presentation: Postsecondary Access and Success For Colorado’s High School Graduates 2022 Report – *Carl Einhaus*

Mr. Einhaus provided an overview of the updated Postsecondary Access and Success report which follows the high school graduating class of 2020 into their first year of higher education. A pre-recorded video provided highlights of key findings. As anticipated, the pandemic had a negative impact on college-going rates, particularly for low-income students and students graduating from high schools in rural areas. Commissioners asked what they could do to assist in reversing the trends brought on by the pandemic. Mr. Einhaus and CDHE leaders will discuss internally ideas to introduce to the Commission.

D. Potential New Graduation Rate Metric in the Higher Education Funding Formula – *Lauren Gilliland*



Ms. Lauren Gilliland reviewed the mandate in House Bill 20-1366 to reexamine how the funding formula could better incorporate performance metrics beyond first-time full-time students. She reviewed the timeline for this discussion, which will culminate in a full CCHE vote at the June 6th meeting on a recommendation to submit to the Joint Budget Committee. Ms. Gilliland reviewed the current graduation rate metrics and noted that the Department could generate a metric for all students, not just first-time full-time, but that it would be graduation in 200% of time. This was not looked upon favorably by FPA and is not in line with administration priorities. Ms. Gilliland informed commissioners that the Department could generate a 100% and 150% metric, but it would take more time. She informed commissioners that they could recommend development of a timely completion metric for all students, but that it's development could be done during the five-year review process. Commissioner Scott recommended also looking into progression metrics. Vice Chair Hughes recommended this issue be taken back to the Finance, Performance and Accountability committee for further discussion.

IV. Action Items (10 minutes)

A. Financial Aid Allocation Methodology Approval – *Lauren Gilliland*

Ms. Lauren Gilliland stated that the purpose of this item is for the Commission to approve the new financial aid allocation methodologies for the Colorado Student Grant, Colorado Graduate Grant, and Colorado Work Study program. Actual allocations are to be voted on at the June CCHE meeting. Ms. Gilliland described the process by which recommendations were developed. These included extensive stakeholder input, work with the Finance, Performance and Accountability Committee, and consultation with Hanover Research over the course of a year. She noted that Hanover Research confirmed the new methodologies complied with best practices. Commissioner Tucker motioned to accept the financial aid allocation methodology for the various programs that were mentioned. Commissioner Harber seconded. No objections were made, and the motion passed.

B. Degree Authorization – Recommendation of Probationary Authorization for Aspen University – *Heather DeLange*

Heather DeLange, Director of the Office of Private Postsecondary Education, provided a summary of the agenda item and the rationale for the recommendation of the Probationary Status for Aspen University. The probation recommendation was based on the lack of notification of the request for change with Aspen University's accreditor as required by state policy. Dr. Joanne Weiss and Jay Vaughan of Aspen University provided a recap of the issue from the institution's perspective. Assistant Attorney General Natalie Powell joined the meeting and noted she would like the opportunity to provide the Commission with legal advice in executive session. Based on the advice of Ms. Powell, Commissioner Meyer



made the motion to notice an executive session, Commissioner Harber seconded the motion. The executive session will be scheduled.

Meeting adjourned at 3:53pm.

