



**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting
Hybrid
June 1, 2023**

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Sarah Hughes called the business meeting to order at 1:17 pm.

I. Opening Business

A. Attendance

Commissioners attending: Chair Hughes, Executive Director Paccione, Commissioners Gonzales, Harber, Kostenbauer, Walmer, Abramson, Meyer, Temu Otting, Tucker, and Wilson

Advisors attending: Senator Zenzinger, Mark Cavanaugh, Federico Chavez, Dr. Melinda Piket-May, Steve Schwartz

B. Approval of the Minutes for the May 5, 2023 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Harber moved to approve the May 5th minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Gonzales, the motion passed by consent.

C. Reports

• **Chair**

Chair Hughes applauded the powerful conversations during the work session where the commissioners discussed the foster care program. She also reported on her delegation trip to Switzerland to learn more about the apprenticeship dual track education program. The delegation included the Governor, his staff, CEOs and Career Wise and they met with various stakeholders to learn more about the system. She mentioned that industry leaders who participated were eager to collaborate and noted that some department staff will return to Switzerland for a deeper dive. To conclude, she suggested a brainstorming session with Commissioner Abramson, Dr. Poast and external partners to share learnings and findings and discuss how it might be implemented in Colorado.

• **Vice-Chair** – Vice Chair Scott excused.

• **Commission Standing Committees**

○ **Student Success & Workforce Alignment**

Commissioner Abramson shared that the committee has worked very efficiently and has several items on the consent agenda. He acknowledged that moving forward, the committee will likely bring some items forward for discussion rather than move directly to the consent agenda so that the full commission and public will have an opportunity for learning and discussion. The committee has continued conversations around the intersection of stackable credentials and the acceptance and transferability of credits. Commissioner Abramson reported that he is working



with Chair Hughes and Landon Pirius to look at an ad hoc committee to explore the acceptance and transferability of credits.

He shared that he was encouraged to hear about some of the important programs like FosterEd, Colorado Health and Finish What You Started and acknowledged that the commission can help support public awareness. The committee will meet again after the retreat.

- **Finance, Performance & Accountability**
Commissioner Tucker reported that the FPA committee met on May 19th and had a very similar discussion as the student success and work force alignment committee about the importance of broader discussions. The committee initially started off with two items on the consent agenda and after some discussion on the financial aid allocation approval, they decided to move it to an action item so it could be discussed with the full commission. The formula has changed slightly so they felt it was important to discuss with the full commission. The committee also discussed the capital budget overview and Kennedy shared all the great successes on the capital and IT fronts.
- **HB22-1349 Technical Workgroup Update**
Vice Chair Scott excused.
- **Commissioners**
 - **Commissioner Temu-Otting** reported that COSI added a new board member, Nahum Kisner, Executive Director for Student Support and Retention at MSU Denver. She also extended an invite to the group to attend the COSI symposium that will be held at UNC on June 8th and 9th.
 - **Commissioner Wilson** asked if there is a formal process for getting information about bill signing around the state. Executive Director Paccione responded that the department is currently without a Legislative Liaison and assured Commissioners that once this position is filled, they will be responsible for making sure everyone is informed of bill signings.
- **Advisors**
 - **Advisor Mark Cavanaugh** reported that on May 17th, a significant package of regulatory guidance was issued by the U.S. Department of Education. The federal government is going to require tests of every program across higher education, public and private, that include things like a debt to earnings ratio for graduates and an earnings estimate. He mentioned that this is in alignment with what Colorado is doing with respect to ensuring that degrees are worth the money being spent both in terms of opportunity costs and the literal costs of the degree. He shared that he believes that we are probably one of the few states that's really out in front on this. The Feds primary goal is to aim at for profit institutions that are not providing good value.



D. Executive Director Report

- **Executive Director Paccione** reported on the Open Education Resources conference which was recently held at History Colorado. There was strong participation and lots of interest in the Open Education Resources (OER) grants that the department provides to institutions for them to transition from textbooks to online resources. To date, the program has saved Colorado students over \$20 million in textbook costs.

She also reported that Beverly Jones, the Department's Director of Industry Partnerships, met with the President of the Cooperative Education and Internship Program. She expressed her support for co-op programs where students are working and going to school, and they are often assured a job afterwards. Many industry partners are interested in this model where students can learn in the classroom and on the job.

Dr. Paccione announced the upcoming Celebration of Education Excellence on June 8th. The evening will celebrate foster youth who have earned any credential or degree. She shared that last year at the event, she was able to introduce the new bill that was passed to cover full tuition, room and board, transportation and fees for students who have been in the foster system. She thanked Senator Zenzinger for her support of the bill. She reported that Twyla Esquibel, Outreach Director at the Department, has been named to the Colorado Foster Youth Successful Transition to Adulthood grant program advisory board which will help further support foster youth and their successful transitions.

Dr. Paccione shared the preliminary news that the Department will be a part of large grant looking at students at our institutions perform and succeed as a result of receiving SNAP benefits for supplemental nutrition.

She concluded by announcing that the Department has hired a CFO from Tennessee and a Chief Policy and Research Officer (CPRO) who is coming to the Department from SHEEO. She added that the department is in the process of hiring a Deputy Executive Director, as well as a Controller, a Legislative Liaison, an Accessibility Officer and a part-time Web Master.

E. Legislative Update

- **Executive Director Paccione** provided an update on the search for the right candidate for our open Legislative Liaison position. She also reported that she attended the Bill Signing in Salida and it was a great event.

F. Public Comment

- **Katie Zaback, Vice President of Policy at Colorado Succeeds**, requested to address the Commission. She shared that Colorado Succeeds is a business coalition committed to improving our education system to make sure it is meeting the needs of learners, as well as businesses throughout our state and with a particular focus on growing our homegrown talent. She noted that all commissioners should have received a memo about the financial aid allocation model. She acknowledged the high-quality work from staff and the leadership of the commission in continuing to look at the data and make improvements to the system. She went on to explain that the decentralized nature of the system in Colorado



makes it difficult to understand how affordability for students is impacted after dollars are allocated to institutions.

She expressed that there is an opportunity to get more information out about the significant investments that the state is making in student financial aid and other programs like the Care Forward program and the expansion of that program that we saw with 1246. She shared that they would like to see the state's annual financial aid report include more of those programs and be more learner centered so that there's a better understanding of which students are receiving aid and how that aid is impacting their overall cost of attendance.

She also commented on the collection of information about programs that are not four-year programs that are being offered by four-year institutions as these data points have not traditionally been collected because they have not been part of the standard credit bearing classes. She expressed hope that we can expand the collection of these kinds of programs to integrate them into the education system because nontraditional programs are becoming more important to learners in our state as these data points have not been collected because they have not been part of the standard credit bearing classes in our colleges. Ms. Zaback concluded by thanking the commission for their time.

II. Consent Items

- A. Reauthorization of Educator Preparation Programs at Colorado State University Pueblo— *Sam Fogleman, Interim Director of Educator Preparation Pathways*
- B. Approval of Middle School Mathematics Endorsement at Adams State University; Director of Special Education Endorsement at University of Colorado Denver; and Middle School Mathematics Endorsement at University of Denver—*Sam Fogleman, Interim Director of Educator Preparation Pathways*
- C. Approval of Mentor Teacher Endorsement at University of Colorado Colorado Springs—*Sam Fogleman, Interim Director of Educator Preparation Pathways*
- D. Approval of Computer Science Endorsement at Colorado State University—*Sam Fogleman, Interim Director of Educator Preparation Pathways*
- E. Reauthorization of the Temporary Teacher Educator Loan Forgiveness Program—*April Gonzales, Educator Program Coordinator, and Corey Evans, Senior Finance Analyst*

Commissioner Walmer moved to approve the consent items. Seconded by **Commissioner Harber**, the motion passed by consent.

III. Action Items

- A. Approve Revisions to CCHE Policy Section I, Part V: Creation, Modification, or Discontinuation of Academic and Vocational Programs at Public Institutions of Higher Education – *Dr. Chris Rasmussen*

Dr. Chris Rasmussen presented proposed changes to the policy, which were developed after extensive consultation with the Colorado Office of the Attorney General and with members of the Academic Council (provosts and deans at institutions of higher education). The policy revisions clarify that all public institutions may offer sub-baccalaureate credentials that appear on an academic transcript under certain conditions, and that institutions are obligated to report all credentials that appear on an academic transcript to the Student Unit Record Data System (SURDS).



Commissioner Harber moved to approve revisions to CCHE Policy Section I, Part V. Seconded by **Commissioner Walmer**. The motion passed by consent.

B. Fiscal Year 2023-24 Financial Aid Allocation Approval—*Gayle Godfrey, Lead Finance Analyst, and Lauren Gilliland, Deputy Chief Financial Officer*

Gayle Godfrey, Lead Finance Analyst at CDHE, presented the Fiscal Year 2023-24 financial aid allocations for the Colorado Student Grant (CSG), Colorado Graduate Grant, Colorado Work Study, and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) grants. She noted that need-based aid, CSG and graduate grant, increased by 11.7%, while work study and CTE remained flat. She briefly reviewed the formulas that allocate these funds to individual institutions, which were most recently approved by CCHE in 2022. She also noted the increases to COSI and the Dependent Tuition Assistance Program, as well as the decrease to the Fort Lewis Native American Tuition Waiver due to enrollment declines.

Commissioner Tucker asked if there is a way to better understand how institutions package financial aid after it is allocated. Lauren Gilliland, Deputy Chief Financial Officer at CDHE, agreed to compose a memo with summary statistics from the financial aid file. Executive Director Paccione advocated for asking the institutions to do analysis on the outcomes of students they provide financial aid to. Senator Zenzinger brought up the affordability messaging request for information and corresponding staffing provided by the Joint Budget Committee as a mechanism to further conversation. Chair Hughes mentioned the 1349 working group as another venue for this conversation.

Chair Hughes, Commissioner Tucker and Commissioner Kostenbauer recommended preparing a set of questions they would like answered on financial aid, and for the Department to respond with what is already available and what it would take to obtain the remaining information. Commissioner Tucker recommended taking this topic back to the Finance, Performance and Accountability Committee.

Commissioner Walmer moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Financial Aid Allocation. Seconded by **Commissioner Harber**, the motion passed by consent.

The meeting adjourned at 2:53 pm.

