



**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting
Virtual
March 1, 2024**

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Hughes called the business meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

I. Opening Business

A. Attendance

Commissioners attending: Chair Hughes, Vice Chair Scott, Commissioners Abramson, Harber, Temu-Otting, Tucker, and Wilson, Executive Director Paccione

Advisors attending: Mark Cavanaugh, Dr. Michael Lightner, Mark Superka, Danielle Ongart, Jamie Viefhaus-Zak, Leilani Domingo, Dr. Melinda Piket-May

B. Approval of the Minutes for the February 2, 2024 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Harber moved to approve the February 2nd minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Abramson. The motion was approved.

C. Reports

1. Chair - Chair Hughes welcomed the new Advisor representing CDE, Danielle Ongart. She then reported that our Vice Chair, Josh Scott, has resigned from the Commission effective immediately and this will be his final CCHE meeting. A Proclamation was prepared and presented to Vice Chair Scott. Chair Huges read the proclamation aloud to the group and then allowed some time for the other Commissioners and Advisors to share some parting words with Vice Chair Scott. Chair Hughes also advised the Commission on the process the replace the Vice Chair position in the interim until regular elections are held in June. Chair Hughes also informed the Commission that several of the commissioners will be at the Capitol next week for re-appointment to CCHE and encouraged others to attend for support.

2. Vice Chair - Vice Chair Scott was very thankful for the proclamation that was presented and all the kind words and well wishes from everyone. He was very thankful for being able to work with this Commission in the capacity of Vice Chair and the opportunity to do good and positive work for the students of Colorado. Vice Chair Scott shared that he is moving out of state for educational opportunities for his children. He also shared that he plans to continue work with the Technical Working Group over the next several months.

3. Commission Standing Committees



- a. Student Success & Workforce Alignment – Commissioner Abramson echoed the welcome for Advisor Ongart and gave her Kudos for the work she is doing at CDE and for being such and ally to the Commission on 1330 and 1215 Bills. The SSWA Committee welcomed Advisor Ongart at their meeting this past week. The Committee had a short meeting. Several items were moved to the agenda for consent items.
- b. Finance, Performance & Accountability - Commissioner Tucker reported that this committee did not meet in February but plans to have a robust agenda for their March meeting.
- c. HB22-1349 Technical Workgroup Update – Michael Vente reported for the Technical Workgroup. He mentioned that they continue to dive deeper into conversations about value, ROI and longitudinal data. He appreciates the work Emily House has done in really facilitating these conversations. This group has worked on the components of the minimum value threshold equation and arrived at a structure of that equation. Staff at CDHE are working on the data necessary to plug into each element of the equation. With all of this work the group has been able to provide a summary of the work around incremental earnings for individuals who completed a post-secondary education. In the next phase of this work this group plans to take a deeper dive into the cost of higher education. Over the next few months, they hope to refine the earnings data and dive into the cost data and then update the technical working group over the summer. Michael shared some helpful links in the chat and offered to answer any questions. Chair Hughes mentioned that the commission is anxiously awaiting a timeline on how we may see this data come to fruition and thanked Michael for the “broad stroke” update today.
- d. Transfer Ad Hoc Subcommittee- Commissioner Abramson reported that this sub-committee is on hold until after the legislative session. There is some legislation that has been introduced relating to the student bill of rights as it relates to credit transfer as well as several amendments that will address some of the issues this committee has been discussing.

4. Commissioners.

- a. **Commissioner Harber** reported that he taped 2 fantastic episodes of his show with special guests, Executive Director Paccione and President Brownlee of Community College of Aurora. They were able to address several issues and share data and information about programs such as COSI. Commissioner Harber shared when and where they could watch the episodes and he also offered to share links to the shows after they have aired.

5. Advisors

- a. **Advisor Cavanaugh** shared a few take aways from a FASFA update meeting he attended. FAFSA has been a huge issue and there was an apology issued to all of Higher Education at this meeting. The Department is fully aware of the impact of these issues and it is all hands on deck to get it corrected and functioning. They are also really encouraging institutions to have their SAIG websites that allow for data exchange all setup and ready to go. Advisor Cavanaugh shared a link for the concierge service that is available. They are hoping for a 24 hour turnaround on information to the institutions. The department is welcoming and pleased with institutions being flexible with aid. Advisor Cavanaugh gave a shout to many Colorado institutions for really working with families and students as they apply,



pushing enrollment deadlines and getting through this crisis gracefully. He mentioned that they also discussed what to do after the crisis, when the FAFSA system is up and running, it will be much more efficient. They discussed how to get to students we may have lost in this crisis, how do we get them back and have them trust the system again.

Chair Hughes thanked Advisor Cavanaugh for bringing this up and staying on top of the progress and updates. She also gave kudos to our institutions across Colorado for trying to adapt.

- b. **Advisor Ongart** reported that the State Board of Education voted unanimously to support the 1215 pass course recommendations, particularly recommendation 1 about creating an umbrella program and 3 a state longitudinal data system. She shared a link to the memo for the Commission to review and added that it was historic and very exciting that folks on both sides of the aisle are seeing the value and the need. Advisor Ongart also shared that CDE is pursuing revisions to the individualized career and academic plan state board of education rules. He mentioned that there will be multiple opportunities for input. She will share the draft when ready and welcomes feedback then, also when it goes through the State board process this summer there will be opportunities for input. She encouraged the commission to review specifically for the inclusion of post-secondary preparation, readiness and planning.

D. Executive Director Report

Executive Director Paccione thanked Vice Chair Scott for his work and partnership in developing the focus of the current strategic plan for the commission. She wished him well in his new journey.

Dr. Paccione also mentioned that the commissioners may see information regarding site visits coming via email. She welcomed their participation in these visits but shared that there will not be any compensation for those that attend because it is not considered official commission business.

Executive Director Paccione shared that Student Day at the Capitol was held last month as was very successful. Student leaders had an opportunity to meet with legislators at the Capitol and our senior staff members at the department.

The Outreach Team at the Department hosted a FAFSA/CASFA Block Party at CU Denver. There was great attendance, scholarship giveaways and help for students and families with the FAFSA application portal and process. We are looking forward to the next one that will be held in Pueblo in the coming weeks.

Dr. Paccione also reported that we had a successful Black History month with different events on Campuses across the state and the Governor's wonderful celebration at his residence. She reminded everyone that March is Women's History Month and she is looking forward to attending celebrations for that as well.



Dr. Paccione let the commission know that at this time a large part of the focus for the department is on the legislative process. The department has a few bills being introduced and we are keeping an eye on other bills that are being introduced and how they may impact Higher Education in Colorado.

In closing, Dr. Paccione shared that she found it remarkable that billionaire, Ruth Godsman provided an endowment to Einstein's College of Medicine in the Bronx, so that no student in that medical school would have to pay tuition ever again.

E. Public Comment – No public comment

II. Discussion Items

- A. Legislative Update-** Legislative Liaison, Carla Blanc reported that she attended a stakeholders meeting with institutions regarding SB-164. There was some productive conversation and the group was able to clarify what is already in the statute and how they can improve it for the students. Carla also mentioned that the First generation serving Higher Education Institutions bill is back. This bill is in committee this week and has some updates from what was presented in the previous sessions. Finally, she talked briefly about another bill, SB24-156. This is the college preparation and enrichment program "Pathways to Promise". Carla informed the Commission of the details in this bill and added that there were some concerns around the funding for the institutions and what the scope of work would be. As it stands, the participating school systems will get 1 million in funding and the individual institutions will get 500K. We learned from the institutions that the scope of work would be to help students 8 grade through 12 grade, understand the potential of post-secondary education and walk them through the admission process as well as the FAFSA application process.

III. Consent Items

- A.** Approval of the Provisional Authorization Renewal for Arizona College of Nursing – *Heather DeLange, Director of Office of Private Postsecondary Education*
- B.** Approval of Institutional Grants for the 2023-24 OER Grant Program – *Chealsye Bowley, Director of Open Education and Learning Innovation*

Commissioner Harber moved to approve the consent items. Seconded by Commissioner Tucker. The motion was approved.

IV. Action Items – No Action Items

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.

