



2019 CCHE Retreat Summary

Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado, July 24 – July 26, 2019

Retreat Objectives

- Build a team and explore our statutory role as a Commission.
- Envision the ecosystem of higher education that will allow Colorado to meet its Master Plan goals.
- Make further progress on developing a revised funding allocation formula.

New Commissioner and Advisor Orientation

In July, six new Commissioners were appointed to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, making over half of the Commission's membership new. Wednesday afternoon prior to the retreat the new Commissioners had an opportunity to meet with senior staff members from the Department and veteran Commission members and advisors for an orientation discussion. This discussion included an overview of the divisions of the Department. In addition to reviewing Commission logistics, staff shared key work and initiatives and provided an in-depth overview of the budget process.

Welcome Dinner

The retreat officially kicked off with a welcome dinner that included higher education Bingo. This game allowed commissioners, advisors and staff to get to know each other. Though each of our commissioners, advisors and staff members has a unique higher education experience, their experiences are fairly consistent with the "traditional" student experience (e.g., going directly from high school into a four-year institution and completing a bachelor's degree without interruption). In response, staff looks forward to doing outreach and bringing the stories and experiences of non-traditional students to the Commission in the upcoming year.

Introduction and Welcome from Fort Lewis College

Ernest House the Chairman of the Board of Fort Lewis College performed a land acknowledgement, a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. This is a regular and important practice at Fort Lewis College events. Mr. House also shared the history of the Ute Tribe, the work of the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs, and information about tribal consultation agreements. These agreements are made between government agencies and Colorado tribes. In response to this presentation, Commissioner McGimpsey is exploring the process for CCHE to enter such an agreement.

Following Mr. House's presentation, Dr. Tom Stritikus, President of Fort Lewis College introduced Fort Lewis's work, including their new strategic plan. The strategic plan focuses on students at the center, community and regional partnerships, knowledge in action and systems to facilitate success. He shared student stories to illustrate their focus on students in the center and then turned it over to KaNeeda Randall, who shared her personal experiencing at Fort Lewis College.

Briefing on the Governor's Goals and the CDHE Master Plan

Dr. Angie Paccione, CDHE Executive Director provided an overview of the Governor's higher education priorities including: 1) Advancing affordability for students through institutional cost containment and



innovative practices, 2) Increasing credential completion by leading and developing strategies to prepare Coloradans for jobs of the future, and 3) Erasing equity gaps in educational attainment.

Inta Morris, CDHE Chief Operating Officer provided an overview of CCHM Master Plan, *Colorado Rises advancing education and talent development*. This is the second iteration of a Master Plan with the key goal of ensuring that 66 percent of Coloradan's have a postsecondary credential. As part of this process the Department created a [toolkit](#), making it easy for the Commission and others to share this work.

Overview of Commission Authorities

Katie Zaback, Senior Policy Director and Staff Advisor to the Commission provided an overview of the Commission's current statutory authorities. She was joined by Dr. Brittany Lane, Director of Educator Preparation and Heather DeLange, Director of the Office of Private Postsecondary Education to talk about the statutory authority that they oversee. The Commission was asked to make many policy decisions on both educator preparation and private postsecondary degree authorization. All the Department's policies can be accessed online at: <https://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Publications/Policies/>. The Department is created and its duties are outlined in Colorado Revised Statute, [Title 23: Postsecondary Education](#).

Division Updates

Kim Poast, Chief Student Success and Academic Affairs Officer; Lauren Ramsay, Chief Strategy and Research Officer; Jason Schrock, Chief Financial Officer; Inta Morris, Chief Operating Officer participating in a panel that highlighted the work each of their divisions does to support the goals in the Master Plan. They also shared insight about their teams and their ideas for the future. Commissioners can expect to get to know them and their team members better through Committee work and general Commission work.

Colorado's Higher Education Eco-System

At the 2018 retreat the Commission had an in-depth discussion on affordability that influenced much of the work the Department and Commission pursued in 2018-19. This year, Dr. Chris Rasmussen, CDHE Director of Academic Affairs, facilitated an interactive case study activity designed to encourage commissioners to better understand the higher education ecosystem in Colorado and their own statutory authorities. Commissioners worked in teams to determine how they might leverage 2-year and 4-year public institutions and private institutions to approach a hypothetical scenario aligned with the governor's higher education goals. Each scenario was introduced by a subject matter expert. Highlights of each case discussion are highlighted below

Governor's Higher Education Goal #1: Advance affordability for students through institutional cost containment and innovative practices

Imagine that the governor has announced that by 2030 at least 25% of the credits in a bachelor's degree must come from non-classroom-based experiences (e.g., work experience, apprenticeships, internships, industry credentials, corporate training, "bootcamps", and the like).

Context: Dr. Kim Poast, Chief Student Success & Academic Affairs Officer, CDHE

There was a lot of discussion about the value of the Commission's convening power in helping to address this hypothetical challenge. The Department's connections with institutions, the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Workforce Development Council, and the businesses community makes CDHE well positioned to lead a conversation on integrating workforce experience and other outside learning into the academic content. Additionally, there is already energy and momentum around how higher education can recognize industry credentials, which provides a good starting point.



Teams also discussed the Department’s existing tools for translating work-based learning into academic credit hours. Tools like Guarantee Transfer Pathways (GT Pathways) and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) can be used to translate work-based experiences into credit and ensure that those experiences are transferable across state institutions. One team wondered if Colorado could create a series of statewide exams that correlate with different general education competencies (which can then be translated into academic credit). It was suggested that a “checklist” of competencies could be developed that could be used when structuring out-of-class experiences, including volunteer work, so experiences can be designed at the front-end to align with college-level learning. Institutions may need assistance in developing capacity to engage in more assessment of prior learning.

Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana has developed a framework that crosswalks industry certifications into course competencies, which is something Colorado might explore. Also, Tennessee Reconnect has worked with a vendor to create a website that helps students understand how their existing credit and experiences can be applied to degree requirements at public institutions. What’s missing is a mechanism for connecting work-based learning and other outside experiences to other components of an associate or bachelor’s degree (e.g., the academic major or electives) in a systematic, transparent, and potentially transferrable manner. How might institutions be incented to incorporate work-based or other applied/practical experience (for credit) into more academic programs (such as a required internship)? This was identified as a potential opportunity for a statewide convening led by CDHE. Potential revenue concerns by institutions would need to be addressed, along with potentially marketability of students (both to employers and to graduate schools). It was noted that the learning from outside experience can benefit not just the student, but also the students’ peers through cross-industry connections and development of professional networks.

Finally, teams discussed the need not just to translate work-based learning and other experiences into an existing academic structure, but also the need to recognize the value of different types of credentials and elevate their currency in the labor market. They recognized that there is a lot of opportunity to help industries, professional associations, and higher education better understand the way each entity recognizes skills, and to come up with innovative ideas that cut costs for students and ensure the state has the workforce it needs. It was suggested that companies could be incented to provide additional education and training for employees through tax credits; this education and training could be developed in partnership with faculty so that it aligns with elements of an academic degree.

Governor’s Higher Education Goal #2: Increase credential completion by leading and developing strategies that prepare Coloradans for jobs of the future

Imagine that the governor has announced a goal of becoming the #1 state in the nation in the developing industry of commercial space exploration and recreational space travel, by 2030.

Context: Dr. Melanie Hulbert, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Western Colorado University

Commissioners discussed how important it would be for all institutions to focus on contributing to this developing industry through their existing missions and strengths, and to rely on partnerships to fully leverage the state’s higher education system. This was viewed as more efficient than having each institution respond directly to new industry needs. From a four-year perspective the focus was on building new industry needs on top of existing academic program areas and complementing that by investing in research and development in the emerging areas. An opportunity exists to learn from how institutions have already responded to emerging industries such as cannabis, aerospace, brewing, and hemp.



Two-year institutions and private institutions are often nimbler in creating short-term academic programs to meet industry needs. Two-year institutions can focus on the entry points into a new degree pathway, on the existing CTE infrastructure, and on their strong relationships with local industries to determine the best way to respond to a new industry. Private institutions provide perhaps an even more nimble opportunity to expand to meet specific industry needs. They can draw on national connections and standardized curriculum to expand the highest need programs that will meet industry needs.

There was discussion of different incentives that can be offered to institutions to develop new academic programs, and for students to enroll in specific programs. One example provided was Rhode Island's Wavemaker Fellowship, which incents graduates from Rhode Island's colleges and universities who stay in-state for jobs in selected fields for tax credits and student loan forgiveness. Institutions may need subsidies or incentives (and some form of insurance) to invest in high-cost, high-risk programs. The infrastructure required suggests that cooperative programs and industry partnerships would be ideal. This represents another opportunity for a CDHE-led convening.

Governor's Higher Education Goal #3: Erase equity gaps in educational attainment

Imagine that the governor has announced that by 2030, the racial/ethnic composition of Colorado's K-12 educator workforce will approximate the racial/ethnic composition of students in the K-12 pipeline.

Context: Dr. Cheryl Nixon, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr. Anne McCarthy, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Fort Lewis College

This conversation began with some incredibly innovative work that Fort Lewis College is doing to train more math teachers, including on Native American reservations in Colorado and New Mexico. Commissioners identified that much of our underrepresented minority population has lower levels of educational attainment and reduced access to traditional college pathways. There should be a pathway that allows individuals without a high school credential to finish one and continue directly into a teacher education program. It should also be easier for ECE workers and paraprofessionals to enter the teacher training pipeline and get credit for the work they are doing in those jobs. More accessible pathways into teaching for retirees and individuals transitioning from corporate careers are needed.

There was also a discussion about making teaching more appealing and affordable. Some ideas generated from that discussion included offering in-state tuition to students from out of state who want to teach in Colorado, creating a fellowship program, reducing tuition rates for teacher education programs (potentially to near zero), providing housing subsidies, doing more outreach to elevate the importance of teaching, and removing other barriers and costs such as testing and licensing fees. An example shared was Maryland's "SmartBuy" program, which helps residents buy homes by paying off a portion of their student loan based on the home purchase price.

To increase the diversity of the teaching workforce we might recruit more students into our universities from areas of the country with larger populations of students of color, graduates of HBCUs and HSIs, and perhaps transfer students from associate degree institutions.

Fort Lewis Campus Tour & Dinner

Fort Lewis students gave the Commissioners and advisors a tour of a new science building and laboratory facilities that were paid for through capital development dollars. The Commissioners then got a tour of other buildings on the campus, including student housing, the Skyhawk Center (combined student services operation), and the Dale Rea Clocktower. Following the tour, the group gathered in the student union for



dinner and a panel discussion with President Tom Stritikus and partners from Pueblo Community College, Durango Public Schools, and local non-profits) talked about the innovative ways they are working together to provide more opportunities for students. The executive director of PCC's new campus discussed expanding Concurrent Enrollment opportunities in Durango Public Schools. The Durango superintendent is ensuring that the graduation requirements are aligned with college admission expectations (the district is aligned with HEAR, which exceeds the floor set by CDE). A local non-profit talked about collaboration in working with immigrant students and providing a welcoming environment and resources for students. Example of other innovative successes include aligning spring break across educational institutions and having the school bus driver earn a credential while waiting for students.

Day 1 Debrief

Dr. Angie Paccione facilitated a debrief of the first day of the retreat which included an opportunity for retreat participants to learn the different ways that people say hello.

Funding Allocation Formula Discussion

Jason Schrock, Chief Financial Officer provided an overview of the work the Department has been doing with a CCHE Working Group to update the funding allocation formula. Mr. Schrock gave background on the current formula and discussed the process for developing the new formula, which has included meetings with the working group as well as feedback from institutions.

The new formula allocates just new funding, as any model that allocates all state funding becomes necessarily complex and difficult to understand. He indicated that the new formula meets the goals laid out for the revision process, including ensuring a new model is simpler and clearly aligned with the CCHE/CDHE Master Plan, particularly the goal of addressing the equity gaps in higher education. Commissioners discussed the viability of potential changes to the draft formula, such as whether nonresident Pell and URM students should be counted in the formula, not just resident students.

Mr. Schrock closed the presentation by discussing the next steps for the formula revision process. Staff is looking at further revisions to the formula, including metrics rewarding improvement and Concurrent Enrollment credit hours, and is seeking further feedback from stakeholders. The formula is expected to be a discussion item at the September CCHE meeting, with the goal of having the formula be an action item at the October meeting. If approved, the formula could then be incorporated into the November budget request.

2019-2020 Preliminary Planning

Commissioners spent the last hour of the retreat reflecting on the items that they are passionate about and the things they would like to know more about going forward. There was a lot of discussion around protecting students and ensuring they receive a high-quality postsecondary credential. They talked about ways to support students access and success and the importance of affordability. Teacher shortage issues were also highlighted in this discussion. Among other things Commissioners expressed interest in learning more about COSI, COF and Gear-up. They are also interested in student success strategies for minority populations and ways that we can make easily consumable data more available.

Participants:

Commissioners: Kerr, Colón, Gannett, Hughes, McGimpsey, Olena, Stitch, and Tucker

Advisors: Artis (faculty), Baca (CFOs), Cavanaugh (IHEC), Johnson (student), McCluskie (Legislative), Powell (Parent);

DHE Staff: Executive Director Dr. Angie Paccione, Inta Morris, Dr. Kim Poast, Dr. Lauren Ramsay, Jason Schrock, Katie Zaback, Katrina Smith, Dr. Chris Rasmussen, Dr. Brittany Lane, Heather DeLange, Chloe Mugg

