MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

333 Market Street, Honors Suite, Harrisburg, PA
November 15, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Dr. Francis Michelini

Attending:

Francis Michelini	David Collins	Kirk Hallett
Jonathan Peri	Paul Ferrera	Erin Agnew
Ivory Nelson	David Collins	Francine McNairy
Wendy Beetlestone	Larry Wittig	Sandra Dungee Glenn

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the September 21, 2011 meeting of the Council of Higher Education were approved on a **Nelson/ Peri** motion.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY HIGHER EDUCATION

Ms. L. Jill Hans, Deputy Secretary of Postsecondary and Higher Education, provided an update on the following:

Teacher Information Management System (TIMS)

- TIMS is a new web-based software system which facilitates the collection and exchange of data related to the teacher certification process.
- This system will avoid duplication of efforts presently seen in the current process.
- Streamlining includes:
  - Elimination of 45,000 to 60,000 applications each year
  - Expense of printing and mailing approximately 30,000 certificates
- TIMS System will increase access to individuals in the field
- TIMS will collect information including continuing education Act 48 data, educator credentials, work experience data, and test scores.
- Teacher candidates will submit their applications, pay and monitor the progress of the applications online.

Postsecondary Application System Transition

- When implemented, the Consolidated Application will replace the full, initial, annual and educational leadership review processes related to the review of teacher preparation programs.
- The application may be closed for approximately six months in order to complete a high quality electronic data collection system.
- In the interim, PDE will continue to review and approve initial program applications using a self-study and on-site review process.

Act 101

- PDE is in the process of closing out the 2010-11 fiscal year payments to the Act 101 institutions; only one institution is outstanding at this time.
- Staff from the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) held an initial meeting with Act 101 directors in September and have begun the application process for the 2011-12 fiscal year.
- The 2011-12 fiscal code enacted by the General Assembly transferred responsibility for administering the Act 101 Program from PDE to PHEAA.

College Textbook Policies Advisory Committee

- The committee met on November 3 to review a draft report of recommendations it is developing to improve the accessibility and affordability of college textbooks.
- Members have formed small workgroups to review and refine specific sections of the draft report and its recommendations. Feedback from the workgroups will be incorporated into a second draft of the report, which will be shared with the full Advisory Committee for additional comment.
- In compliance with the legislative deadline established in Act 104 of 2010, the committee will present its final report to the State Board of Education by May 2012.

PRESENTATION

Christine Zuzack, Vice President of State Grants and Special Programs for the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), and Nathan Hench, PHEAA's Vice President for Public Affairs, reported on PHEAA's plans for administration of the Act 101 Program. Act 101 is designed to support economically and educationally disadvantaged students attending Pennsylvania's institutions of higher education. The following is a summary of their presentation:

- The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) administered the Act 101 program through 2010-11. In June 2011, the program administration was transferred to the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) by an act of the General Assembly.

- Due to a tight timeframe for transition during the current program year, PHEAA decided to proceed with program administration for the 2011-12 fiscal year under the same parameters previously used by PDE, except for the collection of data in the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS). A copy of the Act 101 2011-12 Program Guidelines was provided for Board members' review.

- Current State Board regulations overseeing Act 101 Programs – Chapter 44 – will remain in effect until PHEAA develops new regulations.

- PHEAA recently convened a meeting of school leaders to discuss the goals and objectives to set for schools participating in the Act 101 Program in 2012-13 and plans to reconvene program leaders in the spring to continue this conversation.

- Ms. Zuzack reviewed program eligibility requirements for both institutions and students to participate in Act 101. Among the requirements for institutions, schools must be located in Pennsylvania, authorized to grant degrees, and approved to participate in the Pennsylvania

- State Grant Program. Students must be economically and educationally-disadvantaged Pennsylvania residents who are enrolled as full-time students.

  Ms. Zuzack further reviewed program requirements for participating institutions, including requirements for Act 101-specific student orientations; program directors and Advisory Boards; minimum and maximum program enrollment; record keeping and reporting parameters that provide for longitudinal data tracking; and requirements for annual reports to PHEAA.

- Ms. Zuzack said that PHEAA remained committed to supporting Act 101 despite a reduction in state funding for such programs from $9 million to approximately $2 million. She noted that two schools elected not to participate this year, which allowed PHEAA to spread reduced funds further to other institutions.

During Q&A with Board members, Dr. Nelson asked if PHEAA had evaluated the cost per student to meet legislative mandates for operating Act 101 programs compared to program goals? He noted that program requirements continued to increase as dollars dedicated to Act 101 went down. Due to the reduction in state funding for Act 101, Dr. Nelson said that, moving forward, he would prefer to see a smaller number of schools served with better supports. If that approach is not used, he suggested the program should be eliminated and that current Act 101 funds should be redirected into the state's student grant program, rather than continuing to provide all current Act 101 participating institutions with financial support inadequate to meet program goals.

Dr. McNairy echoed Dr. Nelson's sentiment that the current level of state support for Act 101 is inadequate to meet program expectations and data collection demands, and said Act 101 is asking colleges to make up for twelve years of undereducation with limited funds. She noted that her own institutions, Millersville University, elected to discontinue Act 101 this year for those reasons and has created its own alternative program to serve economically and educationally disadvantaged students.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comment was made to the Board by Dr. Fred Savitz, President of the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teachers Educators (PAC-TE). Dr. Savitz addressed new statutory requirements being implemented by the Department of Education that will allow post-baccalaureate, Intern and residency teaching certificates to be offered by non-IHE (institution of higher education) providers. PAC-TE seeks assurance that all non-IHE providers will be held to the same rigorous standards for program approval as institutions of higher education with approved post-baccalaureate teacher certification programs.

Dr. Savitz said that PAC-TE supports a single program approval process that:

- Requires all program approvals, traditional or alternative, baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate, to meet the same high approval standards
- Includes peer review of evidence that standards are achieved
- Engages well-prepared reviewers who are representative of the teaching profession – pre-K-12 classroom teachers, school administrators, and teacher educators

- Ensures program quality and certification competencies are not compromised for the purpose of delivering an accelerated program, and
- Focuses on a common set of candidates' skills, knowledge and dispositions, regardless of a candidate's educational and experiential background.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOUNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned.

Karen Molchanow/sf

Karen Molchanow
Acting Executive Director