MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

333 Market Street, Honors Suite, Harrisburg, PA
May 8, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Francis Michelini at 1:05 pm.

Attending:

Erin Agnew	Sandra Dungee Glenn	Mollie Phillips
James Barker	Kirk Hallett	Colleen Sheehan
Kevin Bates	Maureen Lally-Green	Ed Sheehan (via phone)
Wendy Beetlestone	Francis Michelini	A. Lee Williams
Emily Clark	Jonathan Peri	Larry Wittig

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the March 13, 2013 meeting of the Council of Higher Education were approved on a **Williams/Dungee Glenn** motion.

COMMITTEE REPORT

TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER EFFECTIVENESS

Sandra Dungee Glenn reported on the May 8, 2013 meeting of the Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness Committee. Ms. Glenn reported that the committee received a presentation from Dr. Carolyn Dumaresq, Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, providing an update on the Educator Effectiveness Initiative to create a new evaluation tool for classroom teachers beginning July 1, 2013. Dr. Dumaresq's presentation reviewed the evaluation tool's forms and rubric Ms. Glenn reported that the committee also received a presentation from Marc Mannella, CEO and founder of KIPP Charter Schools in Philadelphia, and Kate Sobol, a partner with The New Teacher Project, regarding the development of effective principals. Their presentations raised awareness of the relationship between teacher effectiveness and school leader effectiveness, reflected in research. Handouts from the presentations were made available to Board members.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY HIGHER EDUCATION

Ms. L. Jill Hans, Deputy Secretary for Postsecondary/Higher Education provided the following report:

GED® Testing in the Commonwealth

Context

- According to 22 PA Code 4.72, the Department of Education is authorized to award the Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma (PA's high school equivalency credential) based on passing GED test scores.
- Historically, the GED Test has been a product of the GED Testing Service and used to determine high school equivalency. Since its inception in the 1940s; the GED Test has been a paper-based, multiple choice test. It has been revised several times since first being implemented, including changes to scoring and development of new testing formats. The most recent version of the GED test was introduced in 2002.
- Until March 2011, the GED Testing Service was a branch of the American Council on Education (ACE), a non-profit organization. In March 2011, ACE and Pearson Education created a non-profit/for-profit collaboration resulting in the GED Testing Service, LLC. This newly-formed organization then produced a new GED test. This is a significant event in that it is the first time the GED test has been linked to a for-profit organization.
- Costs incurred by GED Testing Centers in Pennsylvania are covered by fees paid by individuals taking the tests. Each GED Testing Center determines its own fees, ranging from $65-$150. For computer-based testing, the fee was set by the GED Testing Service at $120.
- In addition to the cost of the tests to test takers, the Commonwealth supports staff in the Division of Adult Education to manage the handling of transcripts and diplomas and to maintain the GED database.
- The GED test is available in Spanish and French, as well as English.

Significant Issues/Challenges

- Two significant developments occurring in GED testing include the implementation of a computer-based version of the current GED 2002 test (undertaken since March 2012), and the expiration of the GED 2002 test (both paper-based and computer-based) as of December 31, 2013, and the implementation of a new test, GED 2014, effective January 2, 2014.
- Individuals who have taken the GED 2002 version exam but have not passed all modules of the exam by the end of 2013 will have to begin again with the 2014 test version. There will be no grandfathering of individual parts of the exam.

The GED 2014 is a significant change from previous GED Tests, with the goal of making it more rigorous and a more precise indicator of high school equivalency and college and career readiness. It will be limited to a computer-based model. (Paper-based testing will be available in very limited cases where testing accommodations are required by an individual.) The new GED test will be aligned with Common Core standards and will include a variety of question formats – a deviation from the last test format of strictly multiple choice questions.

Division of Adult Education

- Within the Division of Adult Education, the GED State Administrator is working to ensure Pennsylvania's capacity to address testing needs for both the close out of the GED 2002 test and the introduction of GED 2014. There are an estimated 150 test centers expected to be operational by the end of the calendar year. The Division has been working to assist current and new test centers to align with the required technology and ensure that test centers understand the necessary steps to become a certified test center by Pearson Vue.
- Since January, the GED State Administrator has participated in education outreach to the field by communicating at the following venues beginning in January, 2012:
    - Regional meetings of GED test enters
    - Adult Education Conferences, including those specifically geared to Adult Education Technology
    - County Warden Conferences
    - Webinars for Adult Education providers
    - Philadelphia Stakeholders Meetings
    - State Adult Education Conferences
    - Workforce Development Conferences

Costs

- Currently, GED test centers across the Commonwealth set their own fees for testing. These fees range from $65 to $150. The new computer-based testing fee of $120 was established by Pearson Vue and approximates the true cost of administering the tests. GED Testing Service conducted an affordability study of potential examinees and found that they are willing to pay the $120 fee.
- Computer-based testing also has provided the opportunity to expand the number of test centers beyond the current number of 118 and increase the frequency of times the tests are offered.

What are other states doing?

- On a national level, there have been some concerns with the changes to the GED tests. Concerns are based on cost and academic rigor of the tests. As a result, several states have issued RFPs for alternative tests for determining high school equivalency within their states.
- Only recently have alternative tests been made available and Pennsylvania will continue to monitor testing by Pearson Vue and the alternative vendors and report back to the Board as more information becomes available.

Pennsylvania Statistics

Calendar Year	# Test Takers	# Completed	# Passed	Passing %
2010	24,269	21,632	15,298	71%
2011	22,450	19,961	14,311	72%

2012	20,779	18,320	12,885	70%

Teacher Information Management System (TIMS)

- At this time last year the Department was six months into the implementation of the new electronic teacher certification application system known as TIMS. For various reasons this was a difficult implementation that included serious technical challenges which then led to long backlogs of processing applications.
- The new TIMS has been operational for approximately eighteen months and the Department is processing applications that have been in the system and in a ready to review status of approximately two weeks.
- The Department is preparing for our busy season with new graduates applying for certificates over the summer by implementing new standard operating procedures, continuing training evaluation staff on new procedures, utilizing annuitant staff and priority processing of applications so that new graduate applications are afforded the fastest turnaround time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Francis Michelini, Council Chairman, announced that the Board's Final Omitted Revision to Chapter 31 was approved unanimously by the Independent Regulatory Commission. The regulation was subsequently approved by the Attorney General, and was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on May 4, 2013. The change to Chapter 31 is now in effect, and the Board's consideration of this matter has come to a close.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Karen Molchanow

Karen Molchanow
Executive Director