MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

333 Market Street, Honors Suite, Harrisburg, PA
September 11, 2013

Chairman Wittig called for a moment of silent observance in remembrance of the lives lost on September 11, 2001.

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

Attending:

James Agras	Sandra Dungee Glenn	Jonathan Peri
Kevin Bates	Kirk Hallett	Mollie Phillips
Wendy Beetlestone	Maureen Lally-Green	Colleen Sheehan
Emily Clark	Francis Michelini	Ed Sheehan (via phone)
Karen Farmer-White (via phone)		Larry Wittig

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 8, 2013 meeting of the Council of Higher Education were approved on an **Agras/Dungee Glenn** motion.

COMMITTEE REPORT

TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER EFFECTIVENESS

Sandra Dungee Glenn reported on the August 13, 2013 meeting of the Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness Committee. Ms. Glenn reported that the committee served on behalf of the Board to consult with the Department on an alternative policy for the basic skills assessment that is required for candidates seeking a Pennsylvania teaching certificate.

Ms. Glenn explained the Board's role related to the assessments, which is defined in Chapter 49 of State Board regulations. Per Chapter 49, the Secretary of Education is responsible for designing an assessment program to measure basic skills, professional knowledge and practice, and subject matter for individuals seeking to become teachers in Pennsylvania. The regulations require the State Board to be consulted in the development of the assessment program and the establishment of the satisfactory achievement levels for the assessments.

Deputy Secretary Jill Hans and Bureau Director Terry Barnaby presented a new policy under consideration by the Department and that would provide for the use of SAT and ACT scores as an alternative to the current basic skills assessment. The policy would require students to obtain a total score that research demonstrates has a positive correlation between college enrollment, first

year grade point averages and college retention. The policy also would require a minimum score on each discreet section of the exam. Ms. Glenn noted that Deputy Secretary Hans would elaborate the specifics related to these scoring decisions in her report.

Ms. Glenn further reported that there were several questions from the committee asking the Department why the SAT and ACT exams could or would be used as a different type of measurement of competency or proficiency. Without expressing opposition to the Department's proposal, the committee inquired whether another assessment format might be used to provide alternative approaches for individuals to demonstrate proficiency.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY HIGHER EDUCATION

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

Policy for meeting the Basic Skills Assessment requirement

Ms. Hans reported that the alternative policy for meeting the Basic Skills Assessment, which was reviewed with the Board's Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness Committee, took effect on September 1, 2013. She provided a detailed overview of the new policy as follows:

- The policy establishes an alternative means for candidates seeking educator certification in Pennsylvania to meet the requirements set forth in 22 PA Code 49.18. The requirements of 22 PA Code 49.18 include a basic skills assessment to be passed prior to certification. This citation refers to an assessment of basic skills designed to measure a candidate's proficiency in fundamental academic skills. This requirement was satisfied when a student passed the "basic skills" assessment administered by Pearson, also referred to as the Pre-service Academic Performance Assessment (PAPA).
- The new policy enables students to meet the above-noted "basic skills" requirement "basic skills" by presenting, at the time of application for certification, a score of no less than 1550 on the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT). Further, the SAT score of 1550 must include no individual section (Critical Reading, Writing, Mathematics) score of less than 500. Students may not combine section scores from different tests but they may use their best score earned from one test administration. A student who presents an SAT score as noted above will be deemed to have met the requirement of 22 PA Code 49.18 and be exempt from taking the PAPA assessment.
- A score of 1550 is consistent with research demonstrating correlations between SAT scores and college enrollment, first year grade point averages and college retention. Research demonstrates that students meeting the above score have a 65% probability of obtaining a first year grade point average of at least a B-. Additionally, Pennsylvania has adopted this college ready benchmark as an academic achievement indicator in the School Performance Profile utilized for K-12 public schools.

- A composite score of 23 on the American College Test Plus Writing accompanied by a combined English/Writing score of 22 and a Math score of 21 also will exempt a student from taking the PAPA.
- Benefits of this policy include a cost savings to the student as evidence demonstrates that the SAT assessment is already administered to a large percentage of high school students and provides an accepted standardized metric of college readiness.

Proposed Revisions to Program Guidelines for School Counselors

The PA School Counselor Guidelines Committee recommended merging the two certifications currently issued by the Commonwealth into one comprehensive PreK-12 certification for all school counselor candidates. Ms. Hans noted that the Department would be moving ahead to address the change. She provided the following background and rationale for the change in certification:

Background for Certificate Change

- In 2006, former Governor Ed Rendell requested that a committee be formed to submit revisions to Chapter 354 addressing guidelines for school counselor preparation programs. The committee submitted proposed revisions to PDE later that year. The committee received positive feedback on its submission along with a request to wait as the guidelines format was in the process of being redesigned and codified.
- Since that time, the committee has weathered numerous PDE personnel changes as well as major formatting revisions to the guidelines.
- More recently, the committee sought public comment and received positive support for the change. The recommended change also was announced to the State Board of Education's Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness Committee during its August 13 meeting.

Rationale for Certificate Change

- Since 2000, the profession of school counseling has experienced sweeping changes at both the preparation and practice levels. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the national accrediting body for school counselor university preparation programs, has updated and revised its standards twice (in 2001 and 2009). Similarly, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) developed the National Model in 2003 (revised in 2005 and 2012) and the School Counselor Competencies in 2008. In addition, since 1996 the Education Trust's Transforming School Counselor National Initiative has called for school counselors to change from being primarily mental health clinicians to leaders and advocates who ensure college and career success for all students. Finally, Pennsylvania has introduced important changes such as the Standards Alignment System and the Career Education and Work Standards that greatly impact the role and function of school counselors.

Committee Recommendation

The following recommendations were made related to school counselor programs in Pennsylvania:

- *Certification revision from two levels, Elementary (K-6) and Secondary (7-12), to one Elementary and Secondary School Counselor (PreK-12) certificate.*
  - The certification revision is a shift from the two certifications currently granted within the Commonwealth to one comprehensive PreK-12 certification for all school counselor candidates. This recommended change reflects the role of school counselors as developmental experts who are uniquely trained to meet the needs of all students across the PreK-12 continuum. To adequately address the varied academic, career, and personal/social needs of all students, school counselors must understand the entire developmental spectrum in order to prepare students for success in their current grade levels and for the transitions beyond. This change to a PreK-12 certification aligns Pennsylvania with 44 other states that currently certify school counselors in this fashion. It allows greater staffing flexibility for school districts as well as school counselors themselves. In addition it aligns school counseling with the other education specialist certifications.
- *Revised Chapter 354, General Standards and Specific Program Guidelines for State Approval of Professional Educator Programs, Specialist - School Counselor.*
  - The significantly revised guideline framework aligns school counselor preparation programs with 21st century educational reform that emphasizes accountability, closing achievement gaps, college and career readiness for all students and data-driven decision making. These changes ensure that all preparation programs are founded upon a firm base of educational equity and social justice and provide a rich, diverse and extensive set of developmentally appropriate field experiences for every candidate.

Ms. Glenn asked if the change to consolidate school counselor certification to a comprehensive PreK-12 certificate appropriately meets the varying developmental needs of students in different grade levels.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Michelini called for public comment. The following individuals offered remarks to the Board.

- Judy Bookhamer, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania School Counselors' Association, spoke in representation of the school counselors of the commonwealth as well as the guidelines committee formed under the Rendell Administration. Ms. Bookhamer stated that the committee is happy with the program changes for school counselors and expressed thanks for the work that has gone into the proposed revisions to program guidelines for school counselors, for recognizing the transformed role of the

school counselor and for bringing conclusion to what they have been working on for a very long time. She said this action will ensure Pennsylvania is bringing school counselors into the best practices of the 21st century, and that the change to a Pre-K to 12 certification and the revised guidelines will align with the educational reform and best practices in the profession

Ms. Bookhamer further stated that the changes ensure that school counselors are prepared to deliver developmental comprehensive programs, which speaks to Ms. Glenn's question. She said that in order to design truly comprehensive programs, school counselors at the elementary level need to understand where students are headed next, and, by the same token, counselors at the secondary level need to know where those students came from. Ms. Bookhamer went on to address personal-social aspects of counselors' work, stating that school counselors are trained in three domains (academic, career, and personal-social) and that the training focuses equal importance on academics as it does supporting students' personal-social needs. In conclusion, Ms. Bookhamer thanked the Board for all it does for education generally and for its support, appreciation and recognition of the school counselor profession.

- Susan Buzzen, resident of Chester County, stated that she had two questions regarding Common Core curriculum

  Dr. Michelini and Chairman Wittig responded that the Council of Basic Education was the Council to whom her questions should be addressed, and Ms. Buzzen agreed to hold her questions until that portion of the meeting.

- Janice Bowman, resident of Allentown, stated that she thinks that with all the different people, behavioral specialists, and IEPs, kids are getting confused because so many people don't know them. She asked if there are six people involved, how do they know the child? She stated that we are missing one-on-one and that counselors in Allentown have so many students that children are being lost as far as the psychological problems and special education needs. She questioned how many children are in special education, saying the number increases every year, and said she doesn't believe some of them need to be in the program. She said she feels this results in all these separate people and fewer teachers. Ms. Bowman asked why are we not focused on education for the child, not only college but business or whatever they want to do. She stated that were she a counselor having to deal with all of this she would not be happy and repeated that we are losing.

- Ms. Glenn responded that she was neither questioning nor discouraging the movement of the certification change, rather she acknowledged that there are increasing demands on a decreasing number of professionals and that the span their responsibilities seems to be growing. Her question pertained to whether there are supports in terms of educational

preparation keeping up with the times. Ms. Glenn also noted that the Board is not responsible for the funding resources to support such policies but that there is a need to understand the implications for the field as such policies are set.

- Joan Duvall-Flynn, representative of the Pennsylvania conference of NAACP branches, spoke about the pervasiveness of emotional and psychological trauma amongst children who live in adversity, community chaos, poverty, and homes where there are drug-addicted parents. Ms. Duvall-Flynn stated that these children attend public school by and large, and that there needs to be a well-trained counselor in every school building in the commonwealth and one per grade level in every high school because children need someone to anchor them, to understand what they're going through and to help them to process it. She further stated that these counselors need to be trained in emotional and psychological trauma, not that they need act as a therapist, but that they need to know when a referral is needed. She asserted this staffing would cut down on drop-out rates, suicide rates, low test scores, and everything negative that is happening to our children, and wanted it to be understood that for many children, their continued lives rest in the hands of a competent counselor.

- John Hotchison responded to the previous commenter that there is a lot of talk and money going toward organized special interests and stated that the real need is for people within a community to take on responsibilities. He acknowledged that some people cannot because of economic needs, but he expressed opposition to providing money to just one area of professionals to deal with problems rather than having a community own its problems and let the people themselves solve them. Mr. Hotchison stated that he knows there is data collected, but that doesn't help, it just finds the problem or points it out. He further said that we need to help the community, not just the students or the professionals. He expressed dismay that charities used to fill this need because they felt a responsibility for it, but now they are being pushed out because they are not professionals. He asserted that we need to get everybody involved, rather than concentrate on one end or the other and push the middle out. Mr. Hotchison asked again that the communities be helped, and said that taking money from them and said segregating it to a certain thing that promotes that narrows it down too much.

- Dr. Michelini responded with a reminder that the diffused nature of school governance and the importance of interest in local school boards, local administration and their financial structures, are not issues under the State Board's jurisdiction. He clarified that the Board can deal with the broad policy of how to prepare the best teachers, how to prepare the best counselors, and what role the State plays in monitoring the quality of those school staff.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Karen Molchanow

Karen Molchanow
Executive Director