MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

333 Market Street | 1st Floor
Harrisburg, PA

March 12, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Council Chairman James Grandon at 2:00 pm.

Attending:

James Agras *(via phone)*	Sandra Dungee Glenn	Colleen Sheehan
Carol Aichele	Karen Farmer-White	Craig Snider *(via phone)*
Kevin Bates	James Grandon	A. Lee Williams
Wendy Beetlestone	Kirk Hallett	Larry Wittig
Emily Clark	Justin Reynolds	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

COMMITTEE REPORT

TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER EFFECTIVENESS

Sandra Dungee Glenn extended the Committee's thanks to the Board and to members of the Department for very thorough presentations on the progress around educator effectiveness, the new evaluation process for teachers, and the developing evaluation process for principals and nonteaching professionals. Ms. Glenn reported that the Committee also received an annual report on teacher certifications issued by the Commonwealth, as well as a recommendation from the Department for the creation of a new Education Specialist certificate for School Speech and Language Pathologists.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY HIGHER EDUCATION

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

High School Equivalency Assessment

- There are two avenues for a student in Pennsylvania to earn a high school credential once they have left the traditional K-12 education system. One way is to attend an institution

of higher education, such as a community college, and earn a minimum of 30 college credits. The second avenue is to pass the Pennsylvania-approved high school assessment - the GED test.

- After a period of twelve years, the GED Testing Service revised its assessment to be more in line with current college and career readiness standards. The 2002 version of the GED expired in December of 2013 and was replaced by the 2014 version of the exam.
- During December of 2013, Pennsylvania's GED testing sites were able to accommodate a significant increase in the number of subtests administered. A total of 16,000 subtests were administered in December 2013, compared to 6,500 subtests in December 2012.
- The newly revised assessment, known as GED 2014, was implemented successfully in January 2014. In addition to alignment with national college and career readiness standards, the GED 2014 is available via computer-based testing only. A paper-based format is available to students who qualify for certain testing accommodations.
- The Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education (OPHE) was very involved in communication efforts at many venues during the last two years regarding the expiration of the 2002 assessment and encouraged testing centers to communicate to students the importance of completing the five-part battery of tests prior to the end of the calendar year. This communication was important because GED Testing Service maintained a policy of no grandfathering of passing scores from the 2002 assessment to be used in combination with the 2014 assessment.
- In response to this no grandfathering clause, many testing centers added testing opportunities in the last quarter of the year to accommodate a higher than normal testing volume. OPHE also helped identify and reserve testing opportunities for students who were unable to secure a test center appointment at a location closest to their home.
- Additionally, Ms. Hans reported that she was in communication, on several occasions, with the GED Testing Service to inquire about opportunities to combine passing scores from the 2002 assessment with passing scores from the new 2014 assessment.
- Ms. Hans said there has been progress made in her conversations with GED on that subject and reported that her office is currently determining how grandfathering of scores might be accomplished, given technical challenges, should we determine this to be our next step. She noted that there are definite scoring challenges to overcome and we are addressing these in a fashion that would maintain the integrity of the scoring for all students.
- Ms. Hans said she expects to have greater detail on the progress of this work to share at the next State Board meeting.

American College Application Campaign: ACAC

- OPHE will be participating in a new initiative this year called The American College Application Campaign® (ACAC). This initiative is supported by the American Council on Education and has already been implemented in many states. It is a national effort to

increase the number of first-generation and low-income students pursuing a college degree or other higher education credential.

- Specifically, the focus of this effort is to help high school seniors navigate the complex college admissions process and ensure they apply to at least one postsecondary institution.
- The ACAC initiative began in 2005, in a single North Carolina high school in Chatham County. By November 2011, the event was sponsored in 488 high schools, representing every district in the state, with over 25,000 North Carolina students submitting 61,854 applications.
- OPHE's work will begin later this month with the convening of a steering committee comprised of high school principals, guidance counselors, college admissions personnel, private licensed school and private college representation as well as state university representation. In addition, several members from the Department representing K-12 and Postsecondary will participate.
- OPHE will have the support and guidance of the American Council on Education throughout this pilot program with the intent to use existing college access support structures, build on them and expand them.
- While this first year is a pilot program, OPHE will be looking for ways to replicate success in additional high schools and support more students in subsequent years.
- Specifically, ACAC, through the American Council on Education, will provide technical assistance, specialized training, webinars and consultation, access to proven practices and resources as well as support for evaluation of the program.
- While the Department has been unable to secure federal grant funding under the College Access Challenge Grant in the current year, some of that work has continued with funding from alternate sources, including nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education. OPHE is looking forward to supplementing that work with this new initiative.

Ms. Dungee Glenn said she has received calls related to grandfathering of past GED scores and asked to speak with Ms. Hans after the meeting for more detail on that effort.

Ms. Dungee Glenn also offered a comment for the record. She stated that while the ACAC is a laudable campaign, based on her experience in Philadelphia the district is currently facing a ratio of 3,000 students for every counselor. She stated that the change that would have the most positive impact in helping such students attend college would be the institution of a fair funding formula that provides the in-school supports necessary to assist such students in the college application process and that we can build a system around.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

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 2:15 p.m.

Karen Molchanow

Karen Molchanow
Executive Director