

**MINUTES  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

333 Market Street, Honors Suite, Harrisburg, PA  
January 11, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Wittig at 1:05 p.m.

**Attending:**

James Agras (via phone)  
Andrew Ahr  
Carol Aichele  
Jay Badams (via phone)  
James Barker (via phone)  
Nathan Barrett  
Nicole Carnicella  
Sandra Dungee Glenn  
Sen. John Eichelberger  
Kirk Hallett

Shirlann Harmon  
Maureen Lally-Green (via phone)  
Jonathan Peri (via phone)  
Colleen Sheehan (via phone)  
Craig Snider (via phone)  
Lavinia Soliman  
Joshita Varshney  
Karen Farmer White  
Larry Wittig

**CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Larry Wittig, Chairman of the State Board of Education, opened the meeting of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Wittig welcomed Nathan Barrett, a new member of the Board, and announced that he will serve on the Council of Basic Education. Mr. Wittig also thanked Representative Stan Saylor and now-Congressman Lloyd Smucker for their contributions and reported that they no longer will serve on the Board as both have moved out of their roles as Chairmen of the House and Senate Education Committees. He welcomed Senator John Eichelberger, the new Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, as a new member of the Board who will serve on the Council of Basic Education. Mr. Wittig then announced that Representative David Hickernell was named the new Chairman of the House Education Committee and, as such, will join the Board on the Council of Higher Education. Finally, Mr. Wittig acknowledged the return of junior postsecondary student member Andrew Ahr from his semester studying abroad.

Mr. Wittig reported the forthcoming retirement of Lee Williams from Slippery Rock University. To maintain compliance with a statutory requirement for the Council of Higher Education to include a faculty member actively employed by an institution of higher education, Mr. Wittig announced that Dr. Williams will be re-assigned to the Council of Basic Education and that Dr. Colleen Sheehan, of Villanova University, will be re-assigned to the Council of Higher Education, effective with the Board's next meeting in March.

Mr. Wittig then acknowledged James Grandon for the meeting of the Council of Higher Education, and Mr. Grandon called the Council meeting to order.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the November 9, 2016, meeting of the Council of Higher Education were approved on a **Dungee Glenn/Snider** motion.

## **COMMITTEE REPORT** **TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER EFFECTIVENESS COMMITTEE**

Sandra Dungee Glenn reported that the Committee met earlier in the day to receive the Department of Education's annual report on certifications. Ms. Dungee Glenn highlighted data from the report that shows a sustained decline in the number of Instructional I certificates issued by the Department. A copy of the report was provided to all Board members.

Ms. Glenn said the report lacked data on the cause of the downturn in certifications, and suggested that the Board consider formulating a research project to voluntarily gather data from schools and postsecondary institutions regarding motivations, incentives and challenges to attracting individuals into the teaching profession. Ms. Glenn's proposal was well-received by the Board.

## **REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY** **POSTSECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

Dr. Wil Del Pilar, Deputy Secretary for Postsecondary and Higher Education, provided the following report.

Pennsylvania has awarded grants to 36 institutions of higher education totaling \$921,629 under the Governor's It's On Us PA campaign. The campaign supports work to reduce/eliminate campus sexual assaults. In response to questions from Lavinia Soliman, Dr. Del Pilar discussed how grantees were selected and measures of success for the program.

Dr. Del Pilar reported that the Department has approved 47 institutions to participate in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), putting Pennsylvania among the top 3 states nationally in terms of participating institutions.

Dr. Del Pilar stated that he expects to learn whether Pennsylvania was selected to receive a Lumina Foundation Attainment Challenge grant by mid-January. He reiterated that the focus of a campaign supported by the grant will seek to assist individuals with some college but no degree to some level of degree completion. Approximately 1.4 million Pennsylvanians fall into that demographic. Dr. Del Pilar also reported that Pennsylvania was one of five states selected to participate in Complete College America's "15 to Finish Campaign," and said this effort will serve as another strategy toward achieving the statewide 60% attainment rate goal.

Dr. Del Pilar discussed the Reach Higher Initiative, which focuses on providing school counselors with tools to support student retention.

Dr. Del Pilar provided an update on the Rural Regional College (RRC). He noted that the RRC submitted its college plan, and said the Department has 60 days to review and provide a response to the plan. The plan is being reviewed by both internal and external reviewers.

Finally, Dr. Del Pilar announced that Pennsylvania was selected by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) as one of five states to participate in an initiative to expand educator diversity by looking at the teacher pipeline, recruitment, and retention.

Upon time for discussion, Ms. Glenn noted that Complete College America is focused on four-year graduation rates and questioned whether affordability is a bigger factor in degree completion. Dr. Del Pilar responded that there are other issues that impact a student's ability to complete a degree in four years, including remediation and course scheduling for non-traditional students. Chairman Wittig commented that making dual enrollment courses commonly accepted as transfer courses also would help four-year graduation rates. Dr. Del Pilar replied that Pennsylvania is one of few states that lacks legislation regarding dual enrollment. Mr. Peri commented that independent colleges and universities prepare almost half of the students who attain bachelor's degrees in Pennsylvania and noted that those institutions have immediate capacity.

Mr. Wittig asked whether there is data that shows an increase in campus sexual assaults relevant to co-ed dormitories. Dr. Del Pilar responded that there is not a lot of research in that area.

Nicole Carnicella asked whether the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) is involved in discussions about postsecondary education strategies to ensure that there are jobs available for students to enter. Dr. Del Pilar responded that L&I is included at the table for almost every initiative he discussed during his report.

Ms. Glenn asked whether work still occurs to project job needs and any mismatch with local education. Dr. Del Pilar noted the work of the Georgetown University Center for Education and the Workforce in this field, and also noted that part of the Reach Higher Initiative is to get this information into the hands of school counselors.

### **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 2:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie Jones". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Stephanie Jones  
Administrative Assistant