

STATE OF COLORADO



DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Colorado Commission on Higher Education

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Executive Director

Colorado Commission on Higher Education Agenda

July 10, 2007, 9:00 a.m.
Colorado School of Mines
Ben Parker Student Center
Ballrooms A and B
1200 16th Street
Golden, CO 80401

- I. Opening Business
 - A. Attendance
 - B. [Approval of Minutes for the June 7, 2007 Commission Meeting](#)
 - C. Reports by the Chair, Commissioners, Commission Subcommittees, Advisory Committee Members and Executive Director
 - D. Public Comment

- II. Item for Discussion and Possible Action
 - A. [2010 Higher Education Admission Requirements \(HEAR\): Review and Proposed Options](#)
 - B. Public Comment on 2010 HEAR

If you would like to testify on 2010 Higher Education Admission Requirements, please contact Heather Delange at heather.delange@cche.state.co.us or 303-866-2723.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

JUNE 7, 2007

Chairman Ray Baker called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

Dr. Steve Jordan, President of Metropolitan State College of Denver, welcomed the Commissioners to the Auraria Campus and briefed the Commission on several initiatives being undertaken by Metropolitan State College of Denver to broaden its outreach to underserved populations.

Commissioners Ray Baker, Richard Garcia, Dean Quamme, Ed Robinson, Greg Stevinson, Joel Rosenstein, and James Stewart were present. Commissioners Richard Ramirez, Jim Polsfut and Judy Weaver were present by conference call. Advisory Committee members Representative Nancy Todd, Representative Randy Fischer and Robert Applegate were present.

Commissioner Garcia moved to approve the May 4, 2007 minutes with a second by Commissioner Quamme. The motion passed unanimously.

There were no Chair, Commissioner or Advisory Committee reports.

Executive Director Report: Executive Director Skaggs reported that the Department was prepared for the Higher Education Summit on June 8-9.

Public Comment: Hadley Brown, Vice-Chair of the Associated Students of Colorado announced that the ASC Board members had been elected.

Norman Schultz, Metropolitan State College adjunct faculty member, addressed the Commission regarding funding to institutions and proposals for the need for more full-time, introductory level faculty positions.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Dr. Julie Carnahan, Chief Academic Officer, and Matt McKeever, Director of Extended Studies, presented a briefing on HEAR 2008 and HEAR 2010. In 2008 high school graduates applying to Colorado four-year institutions are required to have four years of English, three years of mathematics, social science, natural science and two years of academic electives. The preliminary data indicate, depending on what institution the students are going to apply to, 10% to 50% of students in the high school graduating class of 2008 may not meet 2008 HEAR requirements. Each institution may admit a certain percentage of students who do not meet admission requirements. After review of data from the institutions, staff expects to make a recommendation to adjust the institutions admissions windows to accommodate implementation of HEAR 2008.

Matt KcKeever briefed the Commission regarding 2010 HEAR, which adds an additional year of mathematics and two years of a foreign language to the 2008 HEAR. The Rural School Caucus has requested changes in these requirements. At the Commission's special July 10 meeting on HEAR staff plans to present comprehensive background information and recommend possible

alternatives for revising HEAR 2010; those recommendations will be posted by June 18 for public review.

ACTION ITEMS

Fiscal Year 2008 Financial Aid Allocations: Tobin Bliss, Financial Aid Director, presented recommendations for FY 2008 need-based aid allocations, in accordance with allocation model approved by the Commission for Colorado's College Responsibility Program in November 2006 and for FY 2008 institutional merit-based and work-study allocations.

Commissioner Quamme moved to approve the request and Commissioner Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

State Guaranteed General Education Courses, Review Cycle V, Round IV: Vicki Leal, Academic Policy Officer, presented recommendations for courses for the general education guaranteed statewide transfer program, gtPathways, for guaranteed statewide transfer status, effective August 2007 (fall semester 2007) as provided in C.R.S. 23-1-125, the Student Bill of Rights. The recommendations incorporate the faculty review of 151 course nominations for the gtPathways program during Cycle V, Round IV (April 27, 2007). Ms. Leal noted that the Commission has previously approved 829 general education courses in over 20 disciplines during the first four cycles of gtPathways course nominations, which began in January 2003.

Commissioner Stewart moved to approve the recommended courses; Commissioner Stevinson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Revisions to WICHE Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) Policy: Dr. Julie Carnahan, Chief Academic Officer, briefed the Commission on the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), noting that it originally was designed to allow Colorado residents to attend optometry school at one of the three participating in-region WICHE institutions: University of California at Berkeley, Pacific University and Southern California College of Optometry. UC-Berkeley has now withdrawn, and due to the limited choices available to students, staff recommended the policy be expanded to include out-of-region institutions, as outlined in the proposed revision to Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Student Services Policies, Section VI, Part E attached to the meeting agenda.

Commissioner Robinson moved to adopt the recommendation; Commissioner Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Revisions to Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) Policy Due to College Opportunity Fund (COF) Stipend: Dr. Julie Carnahan informed the Commission that WICHE's Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) is a program through which students in 15 participating western states may enroll in designated programs at public two-year and four-year institutions at a reduced tuition level and presented the recommended changes to the WICHE/WUE tuition policy as outlined in the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Student Services Policies, Section VI, Part L, attached to the meeting agenda.

Commissioner Stevinson moved to adopt the recommendation; Commissioner Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposal to Offer a Masters Degree in Education at Colorado State University – Pueblo: Dr. Julie Carnahan presented a proposal submitted by the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System for Masters in Education degrees in Special Education, Linguistically Diverse Education and Instructional Technology to be offered at Colorado State University-Pueblo and recommended approval

Commissioner Stevinson moved to adopt the recommendation; Commissioner Quamme seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Colorado Higher Education Student Suicide Prevention Program: John Karakoulakis, Legislative Affairs Director, informed the Commission that pursuant to C.R.S. 23-19.5-103 (2) (a), the Colorado Commission on Higher Education is required to select one or more willing state institution by July 1, 2007, to implement the provisions of the Colorado Higher Education Suicide Prevention Act for a two year period. Adams State College and Northeastern Junior College have volunteered to implement this program beginning in the fall 2007 term.

Commissioner Robinson moved that the Commission select Adams State College and Northeastern Junior College to implement the provisions of the Colorado Higher Education Suicide Prevention Act; Commissioner Stevinson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Capital Assets Annual Report Fiscal Year 2006-2007: Andrew Carlson, Capital Assets Manager, presented an annual report summarizing the work of the Capital Assets section, the overall environment of higher education capital funding, and the annual capital budgeting process. The Annual Report is intended to function as an informational resource, similar to the Office of the State Architect's Annual Report, and to present an extensive and consistent set of data that can be updated on an annual basis.

Report on Out-of-State/Out-of-Country Instruction: Matt McKeever, Extended Campus Director, noted the Commission's statutory responsibility to approve instruction offered out-of-state and beyond the seven states contiguous to Colorado and referred to action of the Commission in 1986 to delegate to the Executive Director authority to act for the Commission to approve or deny requests for approval of such courses and programs. Mr. McKeever reported that the Executive Director has approved certain course requests from the Trustees at Adams State College and the Board of Regents at the University of Colorado.

Briefing on the National Conference of State Legislatures/State Higher Education Executive Officers (NCSL/SHEEO) Report: Julie Bell, Director of the Education Program at the National Conference of State Legislatures, reported on the Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education that the National Conference of State Legislatures published. The Commission assessed the crisis of college costs, what legislators had done to contribute to this crisis and the responsibilities and roles of state legislators in alleviating the crisis and emphasized that higher education is an investment for the states and the nation.

Commissioner Quamme moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10am.

**TOPIC: HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:
REVIEW AND PROPOSED OPTIONS**

PREPARED BY: JULIE CARNAHAN / VICKI LEAL / MATT MCKEEVER

I. SUMMARY

All applicants to Colorado's four year postsecondary institutions who graduate from high school in 2010 and later are required to meet Phase II of the Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR). A staff review of the implementation of Phase II of HEAR was prompted by the March 2006 commission meeting. During that meeting the Rural Caucus and several other individuals raised concerns about students meeting the additional mathematics and foreign language requirements. This staff report includes a snapshot of graduation and admission requirements across the nation; a review of research, legislation, and educational initiatives within Colorado; a list of meetings with constituents and interested parties; and a review of some anticipated consequences of implementing HEAR 2010.

Part VI of this agenda item presents several options for the Commission to consider. The options should not necessarily be considered independent of one another. The goal of this meeting is to inform the Commission of findings, promote a discussion of options, and have the Commission direct staff on what option or options, if any, should be considered in regard to HEAR 2010.

Although the Phase II standards are not scheduled to take effect for admissions purposes until 2010, students who will graduate from high school in 2010 are about to enter 10th grade and they and their school districts must make curriculum decisions presently in order to be in compliance in three years. Thus, there are pressing reasons for CCHE to re-examine the Phase II policy now and consider any revisions that may be advisable, so that students and districts have time to plan accordingly.

II. BACKGROUND

Since 1986, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education has held the authority to establish statewide admission standards for public colleges and universities. C.R.S. 23-1-113 directs the Commission to establish admission standards for public baccalaureate and graduate institutions of higher education. The statute states that "The criteria established and the specified performance levels shall be consistent with the role and mission established for each state supported institution of higher education". In addition, the statute requires that the admission policies use a combination of "high school academic performance indicators" which include, but are not limited to, grade point average (GPA), class rank, and content standard performance level assessments.

The standards established by the Commission in 1987 for an entering freshman were based on the calculation of an admissions index. The index has two components: a student's high school performance (i.e., high school GPA or class rank) and performance on a standardized test. Each public four year college or university in Colorado is assigned a minimum admissible index number based on the role and mission of the institution.

In 2003, the Admissions Standards Policy was modified dramatically to include minimum academic coursework requirements, otherwise known as the Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR). Effective with applicants who graduate from high school in spring 2008 or later, in-state and out-of-state freshmen must meet both the institution's index standard and have completed the required pre-collegiate curriculum (if applicable) to meet CCHE's freshmen admission standard. Regardless of their index score, high school graduates who have not completed the required pre-collegiate curriculum will not meet the CCHE admission standard for any four-year college or university (except students age 20 or older at Metropolitan State College of Denver). The fifteen academic units required for applicants who graduate in the spring of 2008 or later are listed below. The recommended core requirement for graduates in 2010 and later increases to 18 units with the addition of a fourth year of mathematics and two units of foreign language.

Table A: Higher Education Admission Requirements

Subject	2008	2010
English	4 Units	4 Units
Mathematics ¹	3 Units	4 Units
Natural Science ²	3 Units	3 Units
Social Science ³	3 Units	3 Units
Foreign Language	N/A	2 Units
Academic Electives ⁴	2 Units	2 Units
Total Units	15 Units	18 Units

¹ Algebra I and higher

² Two units must be lab based

³ At least one unit must be US or world history

⁴ Any academic area listed above or foreign, computer science, art, music, journalism, or drama.

Included in the policy is a provision that allows each institution to admit (i.e., exempt) a percentage of students that do not meet either the index or HEAR. The percentage allowed for each institution is based on the institution role and mission. The range for this exemption window is from 10% to 20%.

March 2006 Commission Meeting

At the March 2006 Commission meeting, representatives of the Rural Caucus were given the opportunity to present their concerns about the HEAR 2010. The following concerns were raised:

- Rural schools face declining enrollments and revenues as well as problems attracting and retaining qualified teachers;
- Instructors already teach more than one subject and have additional non-curricular duties;
- 2010 requirements strain thinning budgets;
- To meet the 2008 requirements, districts have shifted from non-core to core with a loss of the arts, and physical and vocational education, thereby reducing the educational alternatives of those who are not planning on pursuing a baccalaureate degree;
- The absence of some courses, such as art, physical and vocational education, may compromise a student's scholarship opportunities; and
- The cost of distance learning programs are high and additional resources are needed from the state to put these programs in place.

The Rural Caucus requested that Phase II entrance requirements (HEAR 2010) be postponed until the state and federal governments adequately fund public schools or until there is compelling evidence that Phase I (HEAR 2008) requirements are effectively addressing concerns.

In addition to the Rural Caucus, a number of other constituent groups offered public comment.

For example, the Principal of New Vista High School raised the following issues:

- Many K-12 administrators are concerned about graduation requirements and the availability of resources to hire qualified mathematics and foreign language teachers;
- A college degree may be necessary to obtain a job but may not be necessary to do a job;
- An estimated five percent of jobs in America require Algebra II, an ACT benchmark for college readiness;
- The demand for mathematics is not as clear as the demand for critical thinking;
- Pre-collegiate coursework has been a predictor of future success, but more courses taken does not mean more success as other characteristics determine academic and professional success; and
- The (2010) requirements may lower the diversity of students at colleges.

The President of the Colorado Arts Consortium testified that the removal of arts from the curriculum leads to the crisis in mathematics and science.

As a result of the presentation by the Rural Caucus and other constituent groups, the Commission directed staff to undertake a review of 2010 Higher Education Admission Requirements.

Review of HEAR 2010

During the course of the review staff has met with several organizational and individual stakeholders including: Rural Caucus, State World Language Advisory Council (SWLAC), Colorado Education Association, Colorado Association of School Executives, Colorado Association of School Boards, Academic Council, Deans And Directors of Admission, the Data Advisory Group, and members of the business community. In addition to meeting with the various groups, staff reviewed reports, professional papers, and research from numerous national and state level sources.

The remaining sections of this agenda item are a summary of the findings from the staff review. The *National Policy Context* provides information on aligning standards of high school graduation with college readiness. A companion power point presentation (for the July 10 CCHE meeting) will provide a snapshot of the status of graduation and admission requirements (P-16 requirements) around the country. The section on *Colorado Policy Context* provides a summary of research specific to concerns raised by the Rural Caucus, a review of the Colorado Education Alignment Council's work and a description of legislation and other public initiatives that concern the transition from high school to college. The section *Policy Implications* focuses on the intent of the policy, discrepant policy aspects, and effects the implementation might have on enrollment and access.

III. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

The origins of concerns about alignment between high school and post-secondary education can be traced back to the publication in 1983 of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's *A Nation at Risk*. That report called for increased rigor at the high school level and recommended that high school graduation requirements be strengthened to include: four years of English, 3 years of Math, 3 years of science, and 3 years of social studies. The Commission also recommended that students take at least one half year of Computer Science; and, for college-bound students, two years of foreign language.

Since 1983, we have seen several major education policy initiatives, including the standards movement, a dramatic increase in structured accountability systems, the elimination of affirmative action practices at the post-secondary level and the advent of 2001's No Child Left Behind. All this has brought high school graduation standards and

college admission requirements to the forefront, with particular focus on rigor in the high school curriculum, graduation standards and requirements, college readiness and issues of access and opportunity.

Approximately a decade ago, Oregon, Georgia and Maryland were all engaged in P-16 initiatives, including the establishment of P-16 councils, reviews of standards-based assessment systems, and admission standards. Nationally, as P-16 initiatives and reforms enter their second decade, states continue to grapple with other issues in an effort to establish a streamlined “pipeline” of education. In several states, roadblocks persist. Past practices, governance structures, and cultural and economic issues often limit or even prevent implementation of states’ P-16 policy initiatives.

K-12 and post-secondary education have evolved as two separate systems. The lack of connection has confounded efforts to make the two systems coherent. In many states, like Colorado, constitutional or statutory requirements of local control of the K-12 system present particular challenges to establishing a K-16 pipeline. K-12 policy in the US has been focused more on retention and high school completion than on what graduates should know and be able to do to succeed after high school. In some cases, funding structures and formulas have impeded reforms. Still, states kept up efforts to streamline the transition between K-12 and post-secondary education, with considerations now also including issues of access and equity, as well as workforce training and economic competitiveness.

In 1999, Cliff Adelman’s seminal work examined what contributes most to long-term bachelor’s degree completion (Adelman, 1999). Following Adelman’s work, others analyzed high school students’ habits, especially the critical senior year. Examinations of student habits revealed a disconnect between what it takes to finish high school and what the students face as first-year college freshman (Kirst, 2001, p. vi). Other researchers examined how postsecondary admissions and placement requirements aligned with state standards and the impact of increased rigor in high school academic programs, upgraded course requirements and end-of-course exams (Cohen, 2002, p. 2). The disconnect between K-12 and post-secondary education systems across states, and how the disjointed systems were conspiring to limit opportunity, especially for low-income, first generation minority students was also examined. (Venezia, et.al., 2003, p. 2).

During the same timeframe, the Association of American Universities and the Association of American Colleges and Universities examined what factors and attributes contribute to success in college, and specifically what students need in high school in order to be successful in college (Conley, 2003, LEAP National Leadership Council, 2007). Their combined research over nearly five years demonstrates that rigorous high school coursework and K-16 alignment is a key to success in post-secondary education. The research also demonstrated that students who employ personal habits, such as critical thinking, an inquisitive nature, and an unconditional acceptance of critical feedback, are more likely to be successful (Conley, 2003, p. 8).

Beginning in 2000, Achieve, Inc. and ACT, along with Adelman's follow up study guided the thinking and policy in the area of P-16 research. Adelman's *Toolbox Revisited*, published in 2006 reinforced the conclusions of the original report and added new information about bachelor's degree completion (Adelman, 2006, p. xv). It found that academic intensity of the high school curriculum counts more than ever (Adelman, 2006, p. 16). Additionally, Adelman suggests (as other researchers have) that it's not enough to simply count Carnegie units; rather, high school course content must be examined for rigor.. Finally, Adelman suggests that the combination of getting beyond Algebra 2 in mathematics and taking three Carnegie Units in core laboratory science (biology, chemistry, and physics) is more critical than taking three units in foreign language or AP classes (Adelman, 2006, p.19).

Current P-16 education policy discussions have come to focus on rigor in the high school curriculum, or core. In addition to looking at Carnegie units and "seat time," education researchers and analysts have studied the relationship between high school curriculum and college persistence and success, with particular emphasis on completion of a core curriculum, with core curriculum defined as 3-4 years of math, four years of English and 3 years each of Social Sciences and Science.

The research has been both revealing and informative. The findings of Achieve, Inc., ACT and others have reinforced Adelman's work, with consistent themes in the literature reinforcing the similar research observations:

- rigor within high school curriculum is of paramount importance;
- three to four years of mathematics beyond algebra II leads to success in post-secondary education;
- 95% of students who completed a high school curriculum at the highest levels of academic intensity earned a baccalaureate degree;
- students who entered college directly from high school tend to experience higher levels of success sooner;
- overall strength of high school work is the strongest predictor of post-secondary success (even more so than socioeconomic status);
- many high schools are not providing the necessary quality and rigor that Adelman and others encourage;
- expansion of AP offerings and opportunities doesn't necessarily improve college readiness;
- expectations of post-secondary professors and instructors differ greatly from what high school teachers find important and teach;
- college professors and instructors teach depth (a few key concepts/competencies across curriculum); high school teachers teach breadth, (teaching smaller amounts across a much wider spectrum);
- many researchers believe this disconnect between curriculum and pedagogy in the two education systems is a direct result of the growth in state content standards;

- graduation requirements must be aligned with college and work readiness expectations;
- graduation requirements should include: 4 years of English, at least 3 years of mathematics, including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, 3 years of science, including rigorous courses in biology, chemistry and physics, and 3 years of social studies (ACT, 2007, p. 30, CollegeBoard, 2006, p. 1, ACT, 2005-2006, p. 2, Adelman, 1999, 2006).

IV. COLORADO POLICY CONTEXT

Colorado has seen a noticeable increase in public policy activity concerned with aligning high school and post-secondary education.

Several groups in Colorado have independently discussed and analyzed the HEAR policy changes and related alignment initiatives. As a follow up to the March 2006 commission meeting, the Rural Caucus submitted the “Rural School District Study: The Impact of the Higher Education Admissions Requirements on Colorado’s Rural School Districts”. This report includes data from a survey tool sent to 140 rural school districts, exploring resource barriers to meeting HEAR.

The survey was guided by several themes: number of highly qualified teachers; high school curricula and graduation requirements; changes made to accommodate Phase I HEAR; and, adjustments needed to meet Phase II HEAR. Based on the responses received, implementation of Phase II of HEAR as planned, rural school districts will experience:

- a decreased breadth of education offered;
- a drop in rural students applying for and attending four year institutions in Colorado; and
- a possible decline in high school graduation rates.

Recommendations from the Rural Caucus publication include:

- postpone Phase II HEAR until effectiveness of Phase I can be studied;
- develop a weighted admission system;
- allow more flexibility in the types of courses that satisfy the requirements; and
- engage in a collaborative dialog that examines what works in K12 and higher education.

In August of 2006, Dr. Charles V. Branch and Dr. Karen Krupar of Metropolitan State College of Denver completed the “Needs Assessment Report of the Rural School Districts for Accessing Student Achievement Potential in Rural Counties, also based on a

survey sent to the rural schools. The report focused on courses offered in the rural schools as well as available alternatives to meeting Phase II of HEAR.

The survey found that the first three courses of the mathematics series (Algebra I, II and Geometry) were offered in 43 of 44 schools. 7.5% of the schools did not offer Trigonometry and 22.5% did not offer Calculus. The report states that Spanish is the primary foreign language offered in rural school districts and that all 43 of those districts that responded offer Spanish. The survey also found that: 86% of those that responded have only one teacher for Algebra I and II; 83% had at least one NCLB highly qualified teacher for geometry and 85% had one teacher in Trigonometry; and that 28% did not have a NCLB highly qualified Spanish teacher.

The Colorado Association of Schools Boards (CASB) conducted several regional meetings to discuss the P-16 system, graduation requirements, rigor in curriculum, and high school graduation requirements. One of the questions that framed the discussion was, "Should the state and districts explore ways to align education systems from pre-school to post-secondary in a more effective way?" A summary of the meetings is included in the publication, *The Next Generation of Colorado Education*, 2007.

The CASB members were hesitant to offer full support to a P-16 alignment agenda, derived from a "distrust of the CCHE" due, in part, to the lack of involvement of the K-12 community in recent alignment initiatives. The CASB publication suggests a mixed reaction to the 2003 HEAR policy changes:

some districts enthusiastically adopted the draft CCHE requirements as their own high school graduation requirements; others began examining the process of how they might meet or adapt the new requirements within their own realities; and others devoted their energy to trying to change CCHE's draft.

The report goes on to note "mistrust towards CCHE and its motives" and that "any alignment effort that is seen to be led by CCHE is designed primarily to benefit higher education and is unlikely to be trusted by K-12". One common theme of the CASB study is the "perceived lack of real dialogue between the K-12 community and policy makers. CASB is in agreement that "it is time to take our education system to the next level" and suggests the process must include collaboration between state leadership and local communities to be successful.

In 2006 the Colorado Education Alignment Council (CEAC) released recommendations to align the secondary education system with the expectations of the business community and the postsecondary education system. CEAC was comprised of 30 individuals representing the K-12 education system, the postsecondary education system, the business community, and lawmakers from around the state. CEAC developed recommendations based on the research provided by the Fund for Colorado's Future. The recommendations directed specifically to the K-12 system were:

- statewide high school graduation requirements be adopted;
- model content standards be revised; and
- the K-12 assessment program be revised to align with the new standards.

In addition to its K-12 recommendations, CEAC made two recommendations to the higher education system specific to Admissions Standards Policy:

- align the coursework portion of the admission standards in the fall of 2012 and thereafter with the minimum set of high school graduation standards that is adopted by the State Board of Education;
- continue to allow four-year public postsecondary institutions to establish admission standards that exceed those in the Admission Standards Policy.

On May 2, 2007 Governor Ritter signed into law House Bill 07-1118 which establishes a process for developing guidelines for high school graduation at the state level. Those guidelines will be considered at the local level as each school district board revises its own graduation requirements. In addition the legislation directs the Commission on Higher Education to work with the State Board of Education to align admission requirements and graduation standards for the fall 2012 entering freshman class. (In addition to House Bill 07-1118, there were seven other bills introduced during the 2007 legislative session that addressed alignment between high school and post-secondary education, graduation requirements, and related topics on standards, and accountability.)

On April 24, 2007 Governor Ritter and Lieutenant Governor O'Brien announced the formation of a new P-20 Education Council. The goal of the council is to ensure Colorado's educational systems, from pre-school to grade 20, are aligned along the state's "education highway" and also aligned with the needs of today's employers.

IV. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Agenda items prepared for the June 2003 and October 2003 CCHE meetings and the underlying staff research addressed the correlation between high school coursework and college success and supported a recommendation to add a coursework component to the college admission standards for four year public institutions in Colorado. While this requirement may produce the intended and presumed decrease in remediation rates and increase in retention and graduation rates, questions remain about the unintended consequences of the policy.

Four components of current policy affect first time freshman admission: HEAR; window size; index scores; and, institution role and mission. The 2003 policy changes added the HEAR and reduced the window size for some institutions. Together, these two new components could increase the number of students who do not meet admission standards.

The minimum index score for admission depends on each institution's classification set out in its statutory role and mission; i.e., highly selective institutions have a higher minimum index scores compared to moderately selective institutions, and so on. The HEAR, on the other hand, are uniform for all graduates and colleges: all applicants must meet all coursework requirements regardless of the selectivity of the institution to which they apply. High school graduates who do not meet HEAR Phase II (2010) requirements and cannot be exempted through an admissions window will not be able to attend any four year institution..

While it is obviously not possible to predict the effect of the Phase II HEAR on access to higher education three years ahead of time, several questions arise regarding both access and enrollment impact:

- How will failure rates under Phase II HEAR affect enrollment and finances at public four year institutions?
- Will Phase II HEAR result in reduced numbers of college graduates over time?
- Will students not admissible under HEAR attend a community college? What is the risk they will not pursue postsecondary education?
- Can the community college system handle the additional, potentially large increase in students not admissible to the four year institutions?
- Will this policy end up lowering success and persistence at four year institutions?

With regard to the Foreign Language component of Phase II, it is notable that the only the University of Colorado campuses require the equivalent of one year of college-level foreign language (or two years of high school level) to earn a bachelor's degree.

VI. PROPOSED OPTIONS: 2010 HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

This agenda item, the accompanying staff presentation and the expected public comment are designed to provide background information and frame discussion of several options for Phase II of the HEAR, currently scheduled to take effect in 2010. Staff have not attempted to draft revised policy for any of these options. Depending on the Commission's choice of policy option(s), staff will draft formal language for any revision the Commission prescribes, for consideration at a meeting in the fall.

Option A – Delay of Phase II Implementation to a date certain with a Comprehensive Review of Admissions Policy

In light of the yet-to-be-determined efficacy of HEAR, revise the Admission Standards Policy so that the Phase II of HEAR takes effect with those applicants who graduate from high school in 2012 (or a specified later year) and undertake a comprehensive review of

admissions policy, including an analysis of the Phase I (2008) HEAR on enrollment, remediation, and retention.

Option B – Separate Foreign Language and Mathematics Components of Phase II Implementation with Optional Reduction in Requirements or Waiver Process

B1. Foreign language.

Revise the Admission Standards Policy to

- (a) eliminate the foreign language requirement; or
- (b) replace the foreign language requirement with two years of electives; or
- (c) retain the requirement but permit school districts to request a temporary waiver.

B2. Fourth year mathematics.

Revise the Admission Standards Policy to

- (a) eliminate the fourth year mathematics requirement; or
- (b) replace the fourth year mathematics with one year of electives; or
- (c) retain the requirement but permit school districts to request a temporary waiver.

In either case in which the Commission might select the waiver option, staff presumes that a school district would be required to demonstrate and certify its inability to meet the Phase II requirements. Staff recommends that the details of any such the waiver system should be developed in cooperation with K12 and higher education stakeholders.

The following table represents possible scenarios that could result from the Commission's selection among the foregoing options:

Table B: 2010 Course Requirement Options

Course Subject	Current Phase II	Option B1&2 (a)	Option B1&2 (b)	Option B1&2 (c)
English	4	4	4	4
Mathematics	4	3	3	4*
Science	3	3	3	3
Social Science	3	3	3	3
Foreign Language	2	-	-	2*
Academic Electives	2	2	5	2
Total Units	18	15	18	18

* Optional waiver for school districts that demonstrate inability to meet requirements

Option C – Phase II Implementation in 2010; Requirements Aligned with Institutional Selectivity

Revise the Admission Standards Policy to adjust and align Phase II requirements with institutions’ admissions selectivity. HEAR Phase II requirements would vary in the same manner as the current admissions policy in which minimum index requirements are based on the selectivity of the institution. Staff would work with a group of admissions officers and K12 representatives to develop a recommendation for the requirements for each higher education institution.

C.R.S. 23-1-113.

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