



**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting  
Via ZOOM Teleconference  
October 22, 2020**

**BUSINESS MEETING**

Vice Chair Vanecia Kerr called the business meeting to order at 1:00p.m.

**I. Opening Business**

**A. Attendance**

Commissioners attending: Vice Chair Kerr, Commissioners Colon, Hughes, Kostenbauer, Olena, Stich, Trujillo, Tucker.

Advisors attending: Rep. Kipp, Rep. McCluskie, Wayne Artis, Mark Cavanaugh, Brad Baca, David Olguin, Landon Pirius, Leah Porter, Misti Ruthven

**B. Minutes**

Commissioner Tucker moved to approve the minutes for the September 3, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Olena, the motion passed unanimously.

**C. Chair, Vice-Chair, Commissioners and Advisors Reports**

**Fiscal Affairs & Audit Committee** – Commissioner Tucker reported that the committee met on October 16<sup>th</sup>. The discussion focused on the student budget parameters and the funding allocation formula, both of which are action items on today’s agenda.

**Student Success & Academic Affairs Committee** – Commissioner Stich reported that the committee met two weeks ago and will meet again two weeks prior to CCHE meeting. She encouraged new commissioners to join the committee. The MSU Denver reauthorization brief was discussed as well as upcoming ed prep revisions. The committee also discussed the authorization request for Arizona College of Nursing and the innovation policy that will be presented to the commission at today’s meeting. The committee is in full support of this agenda item.



**Student Advisor David Olguin** - Student's mental health is the most detrimental problem universities are facing. There is election anxiety, academic anxiety, isolation anxiety, COVID anxiety and for some students, seasonal anxiety. We know that things are only going to get worse once the election concludes and we need to make sure we are taking care of our students. This problem goes beyond planning university-wide events and having student game nights.

- Daniel (CU DENVER SGA President) met with the CU Government Relations staff and requested to lobby on behalf of mental health funding and/or availability to students.
- CU Denver is developing an advocacy day at the capitol and will share this model with CSGC and YAC to drive civil engagement.
- CSGC has noted that the same COVID issues are persisting; equity, access to wi-fi and computers, quality of education, privacy concerns surrounding virtual instruction as well as online test proctoring with access to cameras and microphones.
- CSGC will be seeking sponsors for a bill to add CSGC to Colorado State statute. The purpose is to become an advisory council similar to SSAC and potentially connected to CDHE.
- Several members have joined the National Coalition of Student Leaders.

#### **Colorado Elections Youth Advisory Committee**

This committee advises and makes recommendations to the SOS and Colorado Elections Division on youth voter administration, programs and policies, and to build sustainable long-term infrastructure for youth voting and civic engagement.

- **Website:** [www.COYouthVote.org](http://www.COYouthVote.org) The website is the primary election project designed to promote nonpartisan materials and events from other organizations.
- **Post-Election Events:** Will focus on policy and community building opportunities.
- Seeking a relationship with CDHE to help strengthen relationships with IHE executives.

#### **Equity Champions Coalition**

- ECC is formalizing our recommendations report in November.
- We have 4 working groups driving the DEI work. This includes input from Colorado's equity leaders and student's statewide administrations.

**Executive Director Report** – Dr. Paccione recognized Chair McGimpsey for his contributions to the commission over the years and congratulated him on his professional career promotion. He will be unable to continue as Chair and Vice Chair Kerr has graciously agreed to fulfill the Chair role for the remainder of this term. She welcomed Dr. Rasmussen's Public Policy in Higher Education class from DU to the meeting. She recognized that eight of the students are part of a cohort from Colorado Mountain College pursuing an EDD from DU through a partnership with CMC. She encouraged more of these partnerships across the



state. The department hosted the third annual Free Application Day to great success. Despite the pandemic, nearly 10,000 more applications were received this year compared to last year. On the 17<sup>th</sup>, the Department released the Pathway to Affordability Annual Report on Concurrent Enrollment, and we are thankful to our friends at CDE for collaborating with us. COSI launched the Colorado Student Relief Fund. The source is GEER funds – the Governor’s emergency education relief funds – which is part of the federal CARES Act. This was \$1 million designated RFP to which institutions could apply to distribute to students who were not eligible for the CARES act funds. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, we unveiled CASFA, the Colorado version of FAFSA. This is the Colorado application for state financial aid. Legislators passed a bill a few years ago that clarified that our DACA students could qualify for in-state tuition and now for in-state state financial aid as well, so this is the application for that aid. The Department is working on the equity, diversity and inclusion reporting template. The Governor issued an Executive Order on equity and diversity and inclusion that pertains to state employees. The Department is obligated to complete a reporting template.

**D. Public Comment** –Marley Weaver-Gabel, Rocky Mountain Policy Fellow at Young Invincibles spoke to the commission. The tragedy of chronically underfunded higher education has a waterfall effect. When funding is cut from the federal government it falls on the state. When state funding is cut, universities must increase tuition rates placing a heavy burden on the shoulders of Colorado students. The funding formula will not and cannot be truly equitable until there is a base funding adjustment that uplifts our institutions with historically low funding and prioritizes students that need and deserve adequate and just resources to be educated. More direct action is needed which will come from a base adjustment that takes into consideration the students that are served and the other funding channels for each institution. We need change that will work now to make our higher education system more equitable. She asked the commission to take bold, courageous steps to create a base funding adjustment plan that will satisfy the master plan goals, and fund institutions more equitably and ultimately deliver upon the commitment to educate all of the diverse students in Colorado.

## II. Consent Items

- A. Recommend Approval of Two-Year Cash List for Colorado Mesa University -- *Lauren Gilliland*
- B. Recommendation for Renewal of Full Authorization for Aspen University – *Heather DeLange*
- C. Approve Program Plans and Waivers for FY 2021-22 Requested Capital Projects -- *Lauren Gilliland*

Commissioner Kostenbauer moved to approve Consent Items A - C. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Colon and passed unanimously.



### III. Action Items

#### A. Student Budget Parameters – Fiscal Year 2021 – *Emily Orr, Emma Fedorchuk*

Emma Fedorchuk, Budget and Finance Analyst, presented the proposed 2021-22 student budget parameters, used by institutions to establish cost of attendance for students. A student's cost of attendance determines the amount of need-based financial aid for which they may be eligible. Ms. Fedorchuk explained that there were no significant changes to the methodology, with the exception of a decrease to the upper limit of the books and supplies budget. This portion of the budget was decreased to reflect the ability for students to save on textbook costs through online sources, open educational resources, and other methods.

#### B. Funding Allocation Formula and November 2 Budget Request – *Jason Schrock, Emily Orr, and Emma Fedorchuk*

Jason Schrock, Chief Financial Officer, provided an overview of the Commission's authority to approve a series of funding allocation scenarios to be used in the Governor's November 1 Budget submission. He then reviewed the formula approach that had been previously approved by the Fiscal Affairs and Audit subcommittee which utilizes Step Two the HB 20-1366 formula to allocate the entire higher education operating appropriation, and encourages additional investment in higher education. Emily Orr, Budget Director, discussed two formula scenarios that contemplated a 10% reduction and flat funding relative to FY 20, with all dollars flowing through Step Two of the formula. Dr Paccione reiterated that all scenarios being discussed were pre-decisional as the actual budget request would not be public until November 2, 2020. Ms. Orr then described formula scenarios that incorporate and acknowledge the core minimum cost increases that institutions experience using Step Two of the formula. Ms. Orr described a "top down" or "bottom up" approach by which core minimum costs could be utilized in Step Two of the formula. The top down approach uses the statewide core minimum cost increase total as the starting point and distributes that amount through the metrics in Step Two, whereas the bottom up approach uses the individual governing board allocations generated as a result of the Step Two metrics to ensure that each individual governing board has their core minimum cost increase met. Ms. Orr went on to explain that this top down/bottom up approach was only using the FY 2022 core minimum cost increases and that if the FY2021 core minimum cost increases were also to be acknowledged, an even greater amount of General Fund would be needed to either carry out the top down or bottom up approach. Commissioner Colon asked if institutions had provided any feedback to which Mr. Schrock answered that the spreadsheets had been shared with institutions, but no feedback had been received due to the very short timeframe in which the formulas were developed. Advisors Baca and Cavanaugh and Commissioner Tucker also asked clarifying questions. Mr. Schrock went on to describe the assumptions that should be taken into consideration when balancing institutions' core minimum cost increases with tuition. Historically



there has been a cap on the percentage increase to undergraduate resident tuition. Although the Governor's budget request is confidential until November 2, Mr. Schrock alerted the Commission that there would be a cap on resident undergraduate tuition rate increases and that the Governor's office had expressed a desire for the Commission to serve a role in an appeal process so that institutions could seek to increase their resident undergraduate rate beyond the cap. Mr. Schrock referenced the agenda item summary and listed criteria the Commission could consider in an institutional appeal to increase tuition above the cap. Commissioner Hughes asked about the possibility of multi-year approach to tuition rate setting which sparked a conversation about the link between General Fund investment and tuition rate setting.

#### **IV. Discussion Items**

##### **A. Proposed CCHE Policy Section VII: Policy Innovation – *Dr. Kim Poast***

Dr. Kim Poast, Chief Student Success & Academic Affairs Officer, introduced a policy designed to encourage innovation by enabling institutions to apply for time-limited exemptions from selected CCHE policies. Commissioner Hughes moved to change the item to Action. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tucker and passed unanimously. Commissioner Stich moved to approve the proposed policy. Seconded by Commissioner Hughes, it passed unanimously.

##### **B. Reauthorization of Educator Preparation Programs at Metropolitan State University of Denver – *Dr. Brittany Lane***

Dr. Brittany Lane, Director of Educator Preparation, discussed the reauthorization status of Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSUD). The reauthorization of educator preparation programs is conducted in tandem with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The State Board of Education approves the program content based on the recommendations of CDE staff and then forwards that approval to CDHE for consideration in the final approval of a program for the remainder of the statutorily required performance-based measures under C.R.S. 23-1-121 (2) (a-f). CDHE staff then forward its recommendation to the CCHE for 1) Reauthorization, 2) Probation (a status under which the IHE cannot admit new students), or 3) Termination. S.B. 20-158 was passed in June 2020 which grants the Department the additional outcome of conditional reauthorization, a determination that will allow IHE's to be re-reviewed after one year during which the IHE will remedy specific areas for improvement.

Dr. Lane explained that the Department has engaged CDE and the reauthorization subcommittee of the Colorado Council of Deans of Education to re-write the educator preparation policy to include, among other things, the conditional



reauthorization status option. That work is currently being conducted and a draft will be brought forward for Commissioners' s review shortly.

CDE – which does have such authorization – has placed MSUD on conditional reauthorization pending changes to the reading content in two of MSUD's programs: elementary education and early childhood education. Commissioners Stitch and Hughes discussed that based on staff feedback and further discussion during the SSAA committee meeting, it is appropriate to approve the reauthorization of the educator preparation unit and educator preparation programs at MSUD with the note that should the State Board of Education rescind authorization following the March 2021 site visit, the CCHE authorization will be rescinded and reviewed at that time.

**C. Proposed Changes to CCHE Policy I, L: Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways Policy – *Dr. Chris Rasmussen***

Dr. Chris Rasmussen, Senior Director of Academic Pathways and Innovation, introduced proposed policy changes to codify that GT Pathways is a lower-division general education curriculum (designed to be completed in the first two years of study), and that all courses added to GT Pathways database are to be 100/1000 level or 200/2000 level. The exception is GT-CO3 courses (Advanced Written Communication), many of which are listed at the 300/3000 level. The codification was requested by the General Education Council and designed to resolve an issue that has been brought to the Council occasionally over the years.

**D. Annual Report on Concurrent Enrollment in Colorado, *Michael Vente***

Michael Vente, Senior Director of Research and Data Governance, provided Concurrent Enrollment numbers for Academic Year 2018-2019. The updated numbers are included in CDHE's annual report on Concurrent Enrollment, a joint report between the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Mr. Vente shared several highlights from the report, including statewide increases in Concurrent Enrollment and ASCENT participation especially for minority students. Additionally, through Concurrent Enrollment and ASCENT programs, over 3,000 students earned some type of postsecondary credential in 2018-2019 while still in high school. Mr. Vente said CDHE continues to address barriers districts experience in offering Concurrent Enrollment and working to ensure universal student access to Concurrent Enrollment programs. Mr. Vente also outlined research projects related to Concurrent Enrollment, including results from CDHE's research funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences and the Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab. The results showed impressive postsecondary and workforce outcomes for Concurrent Enrollment students.



## E. Recommendation of Provisional Authorization for Arizona College of Nursing

Heather DeLange, Director for the Office of Private Postsecondary Education, provided the background for the Arizona College of Nursing proposal to establish two Colorado campuses: Denver in October 2021 and Colorado Springs in October 2022.

Ms. DeLange provided a brief history of the College, its current campuses and an overview of the average of the NCLEX pass rates for Arizona College graduates. Ms. DeLange stated that the College will not open until it receives approval from the Colorado Board of Nursing for its Bachelor of Nursing program.

Ms. DeLange offered support should the Commission decide to move the item from discussion to action. She clarified that two votes were needed: one for each campus. The Commission voted in favor of Provisional Authorization for each Colorado campus.

Commissioner Colon moved that the items be taken for Action. Seconded by Commissioner Tucker, it passed unanimously. Commissioner Colon moved to approve the items. Seconded by Commissioner Tucker, it passed unanimously.

## V. Commission Initiatives

### A. OER Annual Report Briefing—Spencer Ellis

As this initiative begins its last year of funding, Spencer Ellis briefed the CCHE on the findings of the 2020 OER Annual Report as required by statute. In October 2020, the OER Council and CDHE published a report on the impact of the first- and second-year grant cycles. With the disbursement of \$550,000 in grants in FY 2018-19, students saved \$3.9 million in textbook costs in the 2019-20 academic year. This is more than a 700 percent return on investment which far exceeds the program's goals and the national average for similar programs. In its inaugural year, the program impacted 30,464 students enrolled in more than 100 course titles with OER grant materials. In addition, 127 Open Educational Ambassadors were trained across 35 institutions. With the award for \$1 million in grants in FY 2019-20, the number of impacted course titles rose to 205. CCHE affirmed its commitment to OER. The impact of year two grant funding on student savings will be reported in 2021. Full report can be found at: [http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/FINAL\\_OER\\_Report\\_2020\\_9\\_29\\_20.pdf](http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/FINAL_OER_Report_2020_9_29_20.pdf).

The meeting adjourned at 4:28pm.

