



**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting
Via ZOOM Teleconference
April 2, 2021**

BUSINESS MEETING

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

I. Opening Business

A. Attendance

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

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

B. Minutes

Commissioner Abramson moved to approve the March 5, 2021 meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the motion passed unanimously.

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

Chair Report – Chair Kerr thanked everyone for the continuous engagement that has happened throughout the month. She encouraged participation in the Governor’s Build Back Stronger Listening Tour in the week ahead.

Vice Chair Report – Vice Chair Hughes reported that Round Tables discussions are happening around the state on how federal stimulus dollars can and will be used. The commission is drafted a letter recommending that some of those dollars be directed toward financial aid to entice students back to campus. Commissioners will be asked for their agreement to this letter.

Commissioner Reports – Commissioner Abramson reported that the Building Back Stronger Listening Tour has been remarkable success. He encouraged all to attend whenever possible. There was concern that there was no listening tour event specifically about education. Education and specifically higher education and the effects of the



pandemic have been part of the discussion in these events so far. It is a priority across the state for all stakeholders.

Fiscal Affairs & Audit Committee – Commissioner Tucker reported on the March 26th meeting. The Adams State capital renewal project was discussed in detail and an action item is being brought forward at today’s meeting. The committee continues to review the State financial aid allocation scenarios and will bring those toward a vote next month. Advisor Cavanaugh spoke to the committee about independent higher education and private non-profit institutions, and clarified that, in his presentation last month, these institutions were seeking greater involvement in aid discussions. Commissioner Tucker reported that Step 1 and 3 of the Funding Formula, the Funding Formula and equity topics were discussed at a meeting of the Colorado Trustee Network.

Student Success & Academic Affairs Committee – Commissioner Stich reported that the committee will have two items on the Consent Agenda during today’s meeting. The committee also discussed the ongoing updates and revisions to Educator Preparation programs and the work of Dr. Brittany Lane. A small working group has been created to engage in further discussion about this work. The commission also discussed next steps following the Equity Day of Dialogue event.

Advisor Reports- Advisor Cavanaugh reported that there is an effort gaining ground nationally to double the amount of Pell grants. He suggested that the Commission may want to consider a letter of support for this effort.

Advisor Porter reported that the Colorado PTA will be holding its 99th Annual Convention on April 17 & 18. All Commissioners are invited to attend.

Representative McCluskie reported that the Joint Budget Committee balanced the budget last week. All reductions to higher education from last year’s process have been restored. Institutional funding will be returned to 2019/2020 levels with an additional \$100 million added in through the funding formula. The budget begins in the Senate on Monday and will visit the House on April 12th.

Executive Director Report – Dr. Paccione thanked the JBC and Rep. McCluskie for all their work on behalf of higher education in Colorado. The department held the first Equity Day of Dialogue event on March 15th. It was a virtual event with more than 300 participants. The Governor signed an equity day proclamation, which was followed by IHE Presidents and Chancellors all signing an equity declaration for their institutions. Dr. Paccione reported that right now in Colorado there are 80,000 students who are eligible for SNAP benefits. She highlighted other data related to student food insecurity. She also noted that \$30-\$50 million is being left “on the table” due to lack of FAFSA completion for Colorado students. The department is working on a campaign with DHS to address these issues.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.



II. Consent Items

- A. Recommend Approval of Middle School Math Endorsement at Metropolitan State University of Denver – *Dr. Brittany Lane*
- B. Degree Authorization Act – Recommendation of Authorization Status Change for University of Maryland Global Campus – *Heather DeLange*

Commissioner Abramson moved to approve Consent Items A and B. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kostenbauer and passed unanimously.

III. Action Items

- A. Recommend Approval of Revised Adams State University Plachy Hall Capital Renewal Budget Request – *Lauren Gilliland*

Ms. Gilliland, CDHE, presented a request from Adams State University (ASU) for an additional \$1.7 million in state funding for their Plachy Hall HVAC upgrade and replacement. She explained the history of the project's funding. ASU received an appropriation for phase one of the project in the FY 2018-19 Long Bill, only to discover the project could not be phased. Leadership changes led to ASU to not request until the FY 2020-21 budget cycle. Budget constraints due to COVID-19 caused the project to be removed from the Long Bill. In July of 2020, House Bill 20-1408 passed, which appropriated what was thought to be sufficient funds to complete the Plachy Hall project. ASU could not complete the project, which requires heating systems be taken offline, in Summer of 2020, and therefore had to delay until Summer 2021. When the project was rebid in March 2021, the original project budget of \$6.1 million increased by \$1.7 million.

Ms. Gilliland expressed concern over ASU's lack of detail surrounding this increase, which was generally attributed to COVID-19 related materials inflation. She also noted there was only one bidder, leaving an opportunity for price gouging. Nevertheless, she recommended that the additional funds be approved given that the project is urgent. She noted that the State Architect's assessment was that the building is at serious and immediate risk for loss of use.

Mr. Kevin Daniel, ASU, answered questions on the cause of the increase. He explained that ASU had been unable to get much detail on the cost increase beyond that it was primarily due to the increase in price of materials. ASU had contacted the contractor, but the contractor needed to communicate with the subcontractors for more detail. Mr. Daniel also offered additional information on the risks of not completing this project this summer.

Commissioners asked Ms. Gilliland for more information on the process and timeline of having the funding approved. She explained that there was an opportunity for the funding to be included in the Long Bill if the Commission passed the request at this meeting. She also explained why the funding was not eligible for the emergency supplemental process, which would allow additional time to gather more information. Representative McCluskie expanded upon the Joint Budget Committee's (JBC) process and assured commissioners that she would take their concerns into consideration when the request comes before JBC.



President Lovell, ASU, offered her perspective on the request. She discussed the use of the building, expanded upon its deteriorated state, and emphasized the funding's importance.

Commissioner Hughes moved to approve the funding request and forward it to the Capital Development Committee for consideration. Commissioner Tucker seconded, and the motion passed 9-2. Multiple commissioners who voted to approve expressed their hesitancy in doing so and displeasure with the situation. Ms. Gilliland agreed to provide a memo to the Capital Development Committee and JBC reflecting the Commission's vote as well as its concerns.

IV. Discussion Items

A. Proposed Revisions to CCHE Policy Section IP: Educator Preparation – *Dr. Brittany Lane*

Dr. Lane presented the changes to CCHE Policy I: Part P: Educator Preparation. Changes. These are largely due to SB20-158 (Concerning Measures Related to Professional Training for Educators) include: 1) Changes to the performance-based measures for authorization and reauthorization of programs; 2) a new “conditional” outcome for reauthorization; and 3; supports for new units of educator preparation.

Commissioner McGimpsey moved this discussion item be recategorized as an action item, seconded by Commissioner Hughes. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Hughes moved to vote to on the full extent of the recommended changes, seconded by Commissioner Colon. The motion passed unanimously.

B. State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE) annual report – *Leslie Levine, SACPIE Chair, Early Childhood Manager at Cooking Matters Colorado; and Darcy Hutchins, PhD, Director of Family, School, and Community Partnerships at CDE*

Dr. Lauren Ramsay, CDHE, provided an overview of CDHE's involvement in the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE). Michael Vente, CDHE, serves as the department's representative on the Council. Dr. Ramsay introduced Leslie Levine (SACPIE Chair, Early Childhood Manager at Cooking Matters Colorado), who in turn provided a summary of SACPIE's mission/vision, statutory authority/directives, and work to align efforts in Colorado around national standards for family-school-community partnerships in education. She also highlighted elements of SACPIE's annual report on promising practices related to family-school-community partnerships in Colorado. Chair Levine welcomed further input and insights from CCHE members and advisors to support the work on these important topics. Dr. Brittany Lane, CDHE, also provided an synopsis of her work with related SACPIE initiatives to better equip educators with training and tools related to family-school-community partnerships.



- V. Colorado’s Area Technical Colleges (ATCs) – *Randy Johnson, Executive Director, Emily Griffith Technical College; Dr. Teina McConnell, Executive Director, Pickens Technical College; Dr. Allen Golden, Executive Director, Technical College of the Rockies; Ed Bowditch, Lobbyist, Area Technical Colleges*

The Executive Directors of Colorado’s area technical colleges shared the mission, vision, and challenges for each of their schools. The ATCs were recognized for their important contribution to higher education across Colorado. There also was discussion on transfer agreements, FTE funding, and placement services that are currently in place at each institution.

VI. Commission Initiatives

A. Legislative and Budget Update – *Chloe Figg and Jason Schrock*

Mr. Jason Schrock, CDHE, provided a state budget update. He indicated that the state budget and state funding for higher education had improved greatly from a year ago. The 58 percent state funding reduction for higher education in FY 2020-21 was being restored in the FY 2021-22 budget by the Joint Budget Committee (JBC), and institutions were receiving an additional 9.6 percent increase. (The JBC’s funding decisions are not final until the state budget is approved by the full legislature and the Governor.) Of the 9.6 percent increase, half will be allocated through step 2, the performance component, of the funding formula, with the remaining amount of the increase being allocated through step 1. The step 1 funding includes four components: funding for the enrollment of first-generation students, underrepresented minority students (URM), Pell students, and for the retention of URM students. Funding for state financial aid was also increasing nearly 10 percent by the JBC.

Mr. Schrock indicated that the JBC also approved continuation of funding for the open educational resources (OER) program, as well restoring the educator loan forgiveness program that had been cut a year ago. Mr. Schrock closed by indicating that the JBC had approved \$177 million in state funding for higher education capital construction and maintenance projects.

Mrs. Figg and Ms. Chaparro gave a legislative update on bills impacting higher education and the Department’s legislative agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 4:03pm.

