

**P-20 Council  
Third Meeting  
March 23, 2010**

**Call to Order**

Chairman Miguel del Valle called the meeting to order at approximately 1:10 P.M. on Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010. Members participated in the Council meeting at one of three sites: Chicago, Springfield or Edwardsville; or by phone.

The Chair welcomed members to the third meeting of the Council and began the meeting with an update on funding and staff support. The Office of the President at the University of Illinois has agreed to help support the operations of the P-20 Council. Charlie Evans, who directs the University Outreach Office, helped to arrange the agreement between the University and the Council. Lizanne DeStefano, Professor of Educational Psychology at UIUC and Director of the I-STEM Initiative, will serve as the Coordinator for the Council. Lizanne was unable to attend today's meeting due to a previous commitment but she will join us at future meetings.

Chairman del Valle also introduced David Smalley from the Illinois Education Research Council (IERC) and Ginger Ostro from the Illinois Scholarship Assistance Commission (ISAC). David recently joined IERC as Assistant Director and part of his responsibilities include research support and assistance for the work of the P-20 Council. Ginger Ostro was formerly the Director of the Governor's Office of Management and Budget. She has worked closely with the education agencies and has extensive knowledge of educational programs and operations in the State. Ginger will also help support the work of the P-20 Council.

The Chair announced that he continues to seek opportunities for funding for the Council. He has asked the State agencies to identify any available funds that might be used for Council activities. Lizanne DeStefano will work with the Chicago Community Trust (CCT) to develop a formal request for funding to be considered by their Education Program Committee in May. The Chair contacted CCT after the first meeting of the P-20 Council in December to determine if they would be willing to help fund Council operations.

**Ex Officio Members and Council Interviews**

Chairman del Valle informed the members of the Council that he met in late February with the ex officio members to discuss their participation and roles in the work of the Council. The group reviewed an organization chart that lists the major programs and activities of each agency. The State agencies will work with David Smalley to prepare a final version of the chart and this will be distributed to the Council members before the next meeting in May. The graph is a resource for members that will provide a better understanding of agency operations and will supplement the presentations made by agencies at P-20 Council meetings. The State agencies plan to develop a more layered and detailed graphical presentation of the chart that will allow members to drill-down in agency programs to examine functions within programs.

During the ex officio meeting, the Chair also proposed the idea of interviewing each Council member to assess their expectations for the Council; to obtain feedback on the meetings (both format and content); and to ask for suggestions for improvement of the Council meetings and operations. There was strong agreement by members to move ahead with the interviews. Lizanne will interview each Council member by phone before the next meeting in May.

There was a short discussion of the meeting schedule for 2010-2011. Members generally supported the idea of quarterly meetings (their preference will be confirmed during the interviews). The group also discussed the option of holding Council meetings in different venues to generate publicity and allow broader participation. IBHE was very successful with the Public Agenda meetings that were held across the State.

### **Mission/Vision Committee Update**

The Chair asked for an update from the Mission Committee. The Committee had originally intended to present a final draft to the Council at the March meeting. There had been discussion among the ex officio members in February about the proposed draft that had been shared with the P-20 Council members at the January meeting. There was some debate as to whether the current version fully captured the focus and purpose of the Council. The ex officio members reviewed a number of documents from other P-20/P-16 Councils that had adopted mission statements. The shared website lists several links to Council websites from other States. There was agreement that the statement should be direct and concise. Lizanne agreed to contact the Mission committee to further discuss the mission statement. Since the committee had not had the chance to meet with Lizanne before today's meeting, it was decided that they would not present a final statement for adoption at the March meeting. The group members offered several ideas and options for ways to get greater input and feedback from members on the development of the mission statement. Erica Hunt from ISU offered the option of extending the time of the next meeting to allow members to discuss and develop ideas specifically focused on the mission of the Council and its goals. This option could incorporate both the development of a mission statement and more strategic initiatives and priorities that could shape the goals and objectives of the Council.

The Chair agreed to consider this idea and also asked that the Committee go ahead with the meeting with Lizanne before the May 26<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

### **Race to the Top Update**

The Council heard from several members who had participated in the recent RTTT interview that was held in Washington, D.C. Illinois was one of 17 finalists in the RTTT Phase 1 application process. The State sent its team to D.C. for the interview with evaluators on Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. Robin Steans from Advance Illinois and John Luczak from the Joyce Foundation (both P-20 members) helped prepare the five person team for its 90 minute presentation and interview. They provided assistance in the development of the power point presentation and staged a mock interview to help team members sharpen their responses to questions. A copy of the presentation is available on the P-20 website. The five member Illinois team included three members of the P-20 Council, Miguel del Valle, Chris Koch and Audrey Soglin, and two other Deputies from the State Board of Education, Darren Reisberg and Susie Morrison. The delegation did

an excellent job in presenting the State's proposal for advancing the education reform agenda that is articulated in our RTTT application.

### **Higher Education Presentation – A Conversation with the P-20 Council**

The March presentation to the Council was a joint effort by the three higher education agencies. The presenters included:

IBHE - Judy Erwin, Executive Director

Debbie Meisner-Bertauski and Candace Mueller

ICCB - Karen Hunter-Anderson and Elaine Johnson, Vice Presidents

ISAC - Andy Davis, Executive Director

Staff from the higher education agencies discussed several key policy initiatives and programs within higher education that are likely to frame the discussion in higher education for years to come. Judy Erwin began by providing a national and international perspective of the current focus on degree attainment in higher education. She cited President Obama's stated goal that the United States will "...once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world." Other industrialized countries continue to outpace the United States in degree attainment by its citizens, particularly among the 25-34 population.

Illinois is one of 18 states that recently joined the Complete College America (CCA) alliance. CCA is focused solely on dramatically improving college completion rates. The Illinois Public Agenda set a goal for Illinois to increase its attainment rates to match those of the best states in the country. One aspect of the attainment issue for Illinois is the regional variation in degree completion. There are significant gaps by geographic region in the proportion and types of degrees attained.

ICCB presented information on college and career readiness for our students. Readiness is often a critical hindrance to degree attainment. There is significant loss in the number of students at each stage of the pipeline as students move from one level to the next. About half of the students who complete high school and enroll in a community college are required to take one or more remedial courses. In addition to readiness, college affordability clearly has an impact on the number of students who complete a degree. Students whose family income is in the two lowest quintiles graduate at much lower rates than those students with higher family incomes. The Community College Board outlined several of its collaborative efforts with ISBE and IBHE to address issues of readiness and affordability. They are working to improve teacher preparation programs; reduce the need for remediation; create common learning standards; and enhance services and programs at community colleges to improve student success rates. ICCB also serves a growing number of adult learners who are seeking new careers or training.

Andy Davis is the Executive Director of ISAC and addressed a number of issues on the topic of affordability and student financial aid. ISAC has expanded efforts to increase the number of high school students who complete and file a FAFSA form to be eligible for financial aid. They provide counselors with the Chicago Public Schools detailed information on students from CPS who file the FAFSA application. The result is a continuing increase in students who apply and receive financial aid. Funds from a federal

grant allowed ISAC to hire recent college graduates to serve as mentors and advisors to high school students who need assistance in applying to college and for financial aid. This successful outreach program serves high school students across the State. Andy also outlined the details of a legislative proposal that ISAC would like to advance after further review and discussion with legislators, higher education groups, and the Office of Management and Budget. The proposal allows the State to capitalize on the expected additional future revenue that the State would realize when students pursue post-secondary education. This bond funding could be used to provide MAP (Monetary Award Program) assistance to students who attend community colleges and who would be expected to have higher future earnings. The tax revenue from the future earnings becomes the base for paying back the borrowing. ISAC is working with the Department of Revenue to estimate the potential revenue and to determine the feasibility of administering the program. Several members of the Council felt that this program had potential to serve a significant number of students who were currently not receiving funds through the MAP program because the available funds run out before all eligible applicants can be processed. Each year about 200,000 eligible applicants are turned away because funds have been allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

### **Committee Reports**

The Assessment Committee provided Council members with an update on their activity. The Committee identified problems and areas of concern with the current state assessment system. State tests are not aligned well with NAEP and the current tests have marginal value in informing instructional decisions. The committee provided examples of test questions used in ISAT tests in Illinois as compared to questions that are used in other countries. The examples illustrated the differences in the content knowledge that the student would need in order to answer the questions. The assessment group also looked at some best practices in other States. They looked at how States provided information and feedback to teachers, students and families on outcomes, performance and readiness. The Committee will continue its work and plans to examine the future of technology based assessment. The members will provide an update on their work at the May meeting. They also plan to make some recommendations to the Council on future work that can be done in the area of assessment, data and accountability.

### **Budget Update**

The Council received a brief update on the current status of the FY 2011 proposed budget. The Governor delivered his budget address on March 10, 2010 to the General Assembly. The proposed budget reflected a \$1.3 billion dollar reduction in education funding. This reduction is the direct result of the loss of federal stimulus dollars that had been used to cover operational costs for the State Board and higher education during the two most recent fiscal years. The Governor has proposed a 1% surcharge designated specifically for education in order to prevent cuts of this magnitude in education. Several members raised questions as to whether the Council should take any position on the budget issues at this time. The Chair indicated that he did not think that the Council was prepared to take official positions at this time, but that it was important to be informed on proposed education funding for the next fiscal year.

### **Other Business**

The Chair asked Kathy Ryg and Debra Strauss to give the Council a description and update on their idea for a new Council committee. Kathy provided a short document to members that described the structure and purpose of the Student, Family and Community Engagement Committee. The committee would provide opportunities for youth, families and communities to have a voice in the deliberations of the Council. It also provides a forum for them to make recommendations to the Council on policies and programs that impact students and families. The members of the committee would represent a range of individuals, advocacy groups and organizations.

The Chair thanked Kathy and Debra for their proposal. There was general consensus that this group would be an important addition to the Council structure and a strong voice for family and community input to the work of the P-20 Council.

The Chair reminded members of the next meeting that is scheduled for May 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 and thanked them for their participation today.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Absent Members: Senator DeMuzio, Ron Huberman, Max McGee, Jeff Owen