



OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

SHEILA SIMON – LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

P-20 Joint Education Leadership Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 8, 2014 at 12:00pm

Lt. Governor's Capitol Office
Springfield, IL

Lt. Governor's Chicago Office
James R. Thompson Center
Chicago, IL

A- Roll Call

Springfield

Lt. Governor Sheila Simon
Superintendent Christopher Koch, IL State Board of Education
Executive Director James Applegate, IL Board of Higher Education
Candace Mueller, IL Board of Higher Education
Amanda Winters, IL Board of Higher Education
Brian Durham, IL Community College Board
Executive Director Janet Holt, IL Education Research Council
Steve Parrott, IL State Board of Education
Lynne Haeffele, Lt. Governor's Office
Kim Hunter Reed, HCM Strategists
Dominique Raymond, Complete College America
Rachelle Merkel, Complete College America

Chicago

Miguel del Valle, P-20 Council Chairman
Executive Director Eric Zarnikow, IL Student Assistance Commission
President Cathy Beal, IL Mathematics and Science Academy
Julie Smith, Governor's Office, Education
Amber Kirchhoff, Governor's Office
Molly Daily, Governor's Office
Marlon Cummings, Advancellinois

Telephone

Theresa Hawley, Governor's Office, Early Childhood Education

Absent

Acting Director Adam Pollett, IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
George Letavish, Governor's Office
Executive Director Karen Hunter Anderson, IL Community College Board

B- Approval of June 2014 Meeting Minutes

Lt. Governor Simon asked for a motion to approve the June 2014 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Holt and seconded by Zarnikow. Motion passed unanimously.

C- State Pathways Initiatives Discussion (2 hours, 15 minutes)

Dominique Raymond of Complete College America and Dr. Kim Hunter Reed of HCM Strategists/Lumina Foundation were invited guests, present to discuss pathways initiatives in other states and to guide thinking among JELC members regarding a pathways strategic plan for Illinois.

Raymond began with a presentation overview of higher education Guided Pathways to Success (GPS). She reviewed key GPS elements such as meta-majors, default pathways, milestone courses, and intensive advising. GPS provides students with structure, guaranteed course availability, and early warning when they deviate from their selected pathways. She reviewed pathways development work in several states, including Illinois, where two public universities (University of Illinois at Chicago and Southern Illinois University Carbondale) and the City Colleges of Chicago are building guided pathways for STEM fields. She gave several examples of university systems in other states that could inform the work going on in Illinois.

Lt. Governor Simon asked whether researchers can accurately determine the effects of GPS structures on students' progress and completion. Raymond responded that yes, with proper data systems, GPS effects can be quantified.

Director Applegate gave a University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) example, in which data systems are used to identify "milestone" (success predictor) courses and to accurately advise students. Raymond commented that the data systems don't have to be expensive or fancy; some institutions (such as Florida State University) have used simple Excel spreadsheets. She stated that large institutions need dedicated staff to attend to the data systems. Complete College America hopes to help higher education improve its systems in an inexpensive way. (Georgia State University's student data system issues 7,000 student alerts per day.) Mueller stated that college administrators must recognize the need for these systems and that UIC and SIUC are both using such systems, and Durham added that early alerts are gaining popularity on Illinois community college campuses.

Director Zarnikow asked whether GPS structures differ for traditional and non-traditional students. Raymond responded that no, the structures and concepts are the same. She cited recent data from the National Data Clearinghouse showing that about 90% of part-time/all the time students don't finish a degree. She then referenced City University of New York's ASAP system for community college students, which features block scheduling along with the key GPS structural features. CUNY's complete rate jumped significantly when GPS structures were applied. Director Applegate added that Minnesota changed its student aid system to encourage more full-time attendance, and GPS makes every course you take relevant to a student's degree and assures course availability, which are especially important for non-traditional students.

Hunter Reed referenced a “culture of completion” in which structure is an essential component, as is time to degree. Establishing GPS structures results in little or no wasted time, much faster completion, and much greater affordability. Director Applegate added that states like Maryland also found that too many degrees were requiring many hours of coursework above the norm (i.e. 120 hours for a baccalaureate degree). The state audited its requirements and has begun paring back the extra coursework. He stated that Illinois will soon undertake the same type of analysis, with the expectation of streamlining requirements.

Raymond also referenced higher education’s progress toward encouraging full time attendance. For example, Connecticut sends out full-time student aid award letters to part-time students, and many change their minds and enroll full-time when they see the amount of aid they will receive.

Durham emphasized that two key element of GPS – guaranteed course availability and flexible scheduling—will be essential for non-traditional students.

Raymond went on to highlight the Sinclair Community College (OH) student management planning tool (“My Academic Plan” or MAP). For students at Sinclair, advisors can concentrate on assisting students rather than scheduling, since GPS takes care of the program and course sequences. [From the college website: “First, MAP helps you design a customized and efficient program of study. Then, MAP helps you link together all of the components of your school career—from course offerings to registration—so you can see and anticipate the decisions that will shape your college career. Finally, MAP helps to keep you on track by helping you and your advisor monitor your progress along your educational route. This keeps you pointed toward program completion and prevents course redundancy and confusing semester-transition decisions.”]¹

Raymond also cited work being done at Georgia State University, which has eliminated the underrepresented student equity gap in completion since instituting GPS. The system employs alerts and interventions/course corrections in real time. Most emphasis is placed on students in the “murky middle” – those who are not stellar students and not failing, but rather will benefit most from GPS structures.

Finally, Raymond suggested that Illinois consider some regional approaches, citing Baltimore and also the University of Houston and its work with nearby community colleges. She also referenced legislation passed in Indiana requiring the redesign of course requirements using GPS structures. She offered to create a GPS DropBox for JELC participants with a variety of GPS resources and examples.

Durham asked how the GPS meta-majors map to the Perkins 16 career clusters. Raymond demonstrated the overlaps and also said the meta-majors are not set in stone; states and institutions can adapt them as needed. Durham then asked how we might assure students and parents that GPS is not just a form of “tracking”. Raymond made the distinction between tracking, which forces students into pre-determined paths, and GPS “informed choice,” which gives students many options and then helps them achieve their goals more quickly and affordably.

¹ [http://www.sinclair.edu/semesters/map/?searchTerm=my academic plan](http://www.sinclair.edu/semesters/map/?searchTerm=my%20academic%20plan)

Hunter Reed then brought the group into a discussion of next steps in strategic planning to organize and strengthen Illinois' various pathways initiatives for the benefit of students.

She started with a review of Illinois' promising efforts to build pathways momentum, including:

- Adopting formal pathways policy resolutions by the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission;
- Sharing GPS concepts and gauging institutional interest at the Lt. Governor's Lumina-sponsored Scaling Up Conference in October 2013;
- Attaining a Complete College America technical assistance grant for establishing STEM GPS structures at several Illinois institutions;
- Creating a startup inventory of current PreK-12/college/career pathways initiatives; and
- Engaging state leadership (through JELC and the P-20 Council) in active planning for action.

Hunter Reed suggested that the state should undertake a comprehensive "Environmental Scan" to include:

- Data/Pipeline Issues
- Current pathways projects
- Resources/support systems
- Stakeholders
- Champions/Policy Leaders
- Thoughtful skeptics

An in-depth discussion ensued, with participants stating that we need common goals and that we could come up with a variety of existing measures for those goals. Along with the common goals, the state also needs institutional and individual commitments. The Illinois Community College Board offered to lead the effort, using "collective impact" strategies.

The Complete College America representatives suggested starting with academic maps developed from institutional course catalogs. They also suggested that a working group be formed to include PreK-12 school superintendents and 2-year/4-year provosts or chief academic officers. Smith suggested that ICCB look at already-functional regional partnerships as sources for leadership and commitments. Director Applegate introduced the possibility of issuing a Request for Proposals to the regions, with early adopters winning the first grants, thus encouraging others to join in. Smith liked the concept, but pointed out that it would likely require more than \$1 million in state incentive funding. Raymond suggested that the state also consider local/regional funders who might contribute to the work in their regions.

At the October 10th JELC meeting, Janet Holt and Lynne Haeffele will report back with a draft framework for defining pathways initiatives and initial work on a program scan.

Director Zarnikow stated that data reporting will create incentives for moving to pathways-type structures. For example, reporting differences across institutions regarding their course requirements for the same majors could create peer pressure and competition. This would mean that the course requirement inventory by IBHE would be of critical importance.

Director Applegate broached the subject of the senior year in high school as being a critical juncture and also an opportunity. For example, students who are ahead in their graduation requirements could use the senior year for dual credit/dual enrollment opportunities, thus getting a head start on college credit. Those who are behind could take mandatory “remedial” coursework while it is free, rather than waiting until college entry.

Senator del Valle asked several key questions: How do all the pathways pieces fit, how does the state communicate the “60 by 2025” goal, and what is each entity’s role in reaching that goal? He stated that communication and common language are desperately needed. Raymond said that focusing on what individuals, institutions and agencies can do now to contribute to the goal will create momentum when early results start coming in.

In her closing comments, Hunter Reed summarized the overall pathways discussion and outlined steps for moving forward. She urged the state to complete the environmental scan/inventory; develop common language for describing pathways structures and processes; use data to create a compelling case for change; and create specific roles for individuals, institutions and agencies. She encouraged both a statewide and regional approach that recognizes unique community differences. Hunter Reed emphasized developing a specific action plan within the next 3-4 months, seizing the current window of opportunity, and recommended that JELC continue its active engagement in this effort and bring it forward to the broader P-20 Council, in order to ensure ownership, activate the strategic plan, and create opportunities for scaling and timely implementation.

After thanking the guests for their assistance and insights, Lt. Governor Simon asked that the agencies send information about pathways initiatives under their purview to Brian Durham at ICCB.



D- Agency Updates (20 minutes)

Director Applegate noted that the IBHE Board Meeting will be held in DeKalb on August 5th and will focus on improving PreK-12 to college alignment, particularly relating to the Common Core Standards. The Board is also looking at the “60 x 2025” goal and how to integrate certificates and certifications into the completion picture.

Director Holt announced the 12th Annual Focus on Illinois Education Research Symposium to be held October 7 and 8, 2014 at the DoubleTree by Hotel in Bloomington. The registration deadline is Monday, September 15th. She also noted the publication of a new IERC report called *Outmigration and Human Capital*, which is available on their website.² Copies will also be sent via email to meeting participants.

Brian Durham announced registration for the Forum for Excellence conference on September 23-24. The Forum is designed to highlight career and technical educational initiatives and effective practices selected by ICCB and serve as a launch to the year’s professional development delivered through the Regional Network.³ He also reminded participants that the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment

² <http://www.siu.edu/ierc/publications/index.shtml>

³ <http://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/illinois-career-and-technical-education-professional-development-center/forum-for-excellence/>

Partnerships (NACEP) will hold its annual meeting in Chicago October 26-28th. Lt. Governor Simon will deliver a welcome address.⁴

Durham also announced to awarding of “dual credit enhancement grants” to multiple community colleges throughout the state, promoting innovation and expansion of dual credit opportunities. This complements recent dual credit rules changes that open up possibilities for early college opportunities for high school students, regardless of age.

Mueller announced that IBHE has submitted a proposal to Complete College America for a math pathways grant.

Superintendent Koch participated in a panel discussion at the IBHE Board meeting to increase support for the upcoming PARCC tests based on the Common Core Standards, and also new ACT options for students. He also said that ISBE is meeting with legislators regarding the pending school funding reform bill (SB 16), and that the agency has a list of potential improvements to the bill.

Kirchhoff presented a report regarding work the Governor’s Office has done to inventory community collaboration work statewide.

President Beal announced that Dr. Jose Torre will become IMSA’s next president in September. She also noted that according to alumni data, IMSA graduates state in the state at a higher-than-average rate, even though surrounding states are actively recruiting IMSA graduates. She noted that changes in the Chicago employment market are making it very attractive to STEM talent.

Director Zarnikow reported that work on the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) continues. ISAC, IDES and Illinois State University have responded to a state Request for Proposals with a joint proposal. Also, ISAC was designated to apply for a statewide federal GEAR UP grant. ISAC is currently working on a legislatively mandated report on the potential for a “Pay It Forward” student assistance program. The report is due to the General Assembly on December 1st.

Senator del Valle noted that Lt. Governor Simon has played a very effective facilitation role in leading the JELC. He would like to see the group get as much done as possible during the remainder of her term in office. He asked the participants to focus closely on the pathways topic and develop an action plan with timelines as soon as possible.

D- Other Business

No other business was introduced.

E- Next meeting is October 10th, 2014

F- Adjournment

⁴ <http://www.nacep.org/nationalconference/chicago2014/>