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**NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE FULL COUNCIL AT ITS NEXT MEETING. SHOULD REVISIONS BE MADE, THEY WILL BE INCLUDED AS AN ITEM IN THE MINUTES OF THAT MEETING.**

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
**COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION POLICY, RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT**  
Wednesday, May 14, 2003  
Sheraton Suites Orlando Airport  
Orlando, Florida

**Members Present:** Akshay Desai                      Bob Taylor  
                                 Diane Leone                                      Pat Telson  
                                 Bob McIntyre                                      Elaine Vasquez

Vice Chairman Akshay Desai opened the meeting and welcomed the Council members.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the April 9, 2003, meeting were approved as circulated.

**Executive Director's Report**

Dr. William Proctor announced the resignation of Chairman Phil Morgaman. Dr. Proctor said it was appropriate at this time to nominate a new Chairman. Ms. Pat Telson nominated Vice Chairman Desai as the new Chairman. It was seconded and approved.

Chairman Desai expressed his appreciation and opened the floor for nomination of a new Vice Chairman. Ms. Elaine Vasquez nominated Mr. Bob Taylor as Vice Chairman. It was seconded and approved.

Dr. Proctor noted that he and Mr. David Wright would be attending the State Higher Executive Officers meeting in Denver at the end of May 2003. Dr. Proctor noted that on May 16, 2003, Dr. Pat Dallet and Mr. Wright would make presentations at the annual NASSGAP/NCHELP Financial Aid Research Conference on the use of financial aid data for state policy decisions.

Dr. Proctor noted that he was invited to attend the Council of 100 meeting and discuss higher education. He said that funding for the universities would be a priority with the Council of 100 group.

Dr. Proctor turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Taylor. Mr. Taylor noted that the Council of 100

Education Committee consists of about 40-50 people, roughly half of the overall Council. He noted that there are two groups: one looking at higher education funding and the other at teacher quality. Mr. Taylor suggested we collaborate more with the Council. Mr. Taylor noted that several issues came out of the meeting on funding Bright Futures and Universities. Mr. Taylor also noted that the director of the McKenzie Consulting Firm extended an offer to help with education funding issues. Mr. Taylor noted that this would extend our firepower and would add another measure of creditability.

Chairman Desai noted that he approved of the idea to have ongoing interaction with the Council of 100 and explore working with the McKenzie Consulting Firm. Ms. Telson made a motion for the Council and staff to interact with the Council of 100 and explore working with McKenzie Consulting Firm. Ms. Elaine Vasquez added that the Council construct a letter to McKenzie stating that CEPRI appreciates their offer to assist. This was seconded and approved. Mr. Taylor will invite a member from the Council of 100 to the next CEPRI Council meeting scheduled in June.

Ms. Diane Leone asked if there are any other groups or associations that the Council should consider for support of what CEPRI is doing. Chairman Desai noted that Enterprise Florida is a private sector business group that the Council can interact with. Dr. Proctor noted that he also touched base on education issues with Tax Watch.

Dr. Proctor noted that students are no longer required to take the CLEP test for Bright Futures. This was a test that the students were not required to pass and it was costly to the institutions. He also noted that the Legislature passed a bill dealing with K-20 accountability.

Chairman Desai suggested passing a motion thanking Chairman Morgaman for his dedicated service to PEPC as well as CEPRI. A motion was made by Ms. Vasquez to invite Chairman Morgaman to the June 2003 meeting for recognition. This was seconded and approved.

### **Master Plan**

Mr. Taylor referred to the draft statement, Creating a Highly Successful Education System for Florida, and said that it had been further refined based on conversations with the Council of 100 and a group of business representatives in Lee County. He said that one draft identifies an overall goal that represents a key leverage point: providing students with the necessary preparation to have several viable alternatives after graduation from high school. He said this provides a single yardstick and consistent long-term focus. Second, three types of major initiatives to achieve this goal are identified: Structural (Funding, Leadership); Key Elements (Teachers, Early Learning, Career Education); and Coordination. Mr. Taylor noted that there is no AARP for children and what is needed is a broad based coalition to assure that the identified goal and initiatives are achieved, similar to the organizations in North Carolina; Parents for Better Schools, North Carolina Partners, and Everybody's Business. The members discussed the role of the Council in identifying what such a group would look like.

Ms. Leone asked about the development of a communication/marketing plan as well. In response to Chairman Desai, Dr. Proctor said that he has scheduled meetings with the Commissioner every other week and that he has met with the new Chancellor for Colleges and Universities. He recommended adding reports from both the State Board and the Board of Governors to the Council agenda and requesting time for the Council on their agendas as well. Ms. Vasquez asked about a Council newsletter and after discussion moved that this be done. At the request of Ms. Telson a prototype and list of potential recipients will be provided at the next Council meeting. Other suggestions included a Member/Staff Speakers Bureau, and Forums on specific topics that could be scheduled in conjunction with or as part of Council meetings. The Chairman stressed the importance of proactive communication and Mr. Taylor said that once the problem is

presented, solutions can be offered. He asked for feedback on whether the overall approach outlined is doable and staff concurred. Ms. Joanne Bashford, Miami-Dade Community College, asked how the Master Plan would relate to the Strategic Plan. Mr. Taylor replied that we are all addressing the same overall goals and that the imperatives and initiatives are all pieces. He said that the vision and implementation strategies would add to the overall effort.

**Funding** – Dr. Nancy McKee presented information regarding litigation that has affected education funding. While there have been no lawsuits affecting higher education funding formulas, several cases have had a direct impact on K-12 funding formulas. Dr. McKee also presented information related to the impact of federal funds on state education funding.

### **PreK-3 Initiatives**

Chairman Desai introduced Mr. Patrick Galatowitsch, Principal of Rolling Hills Elementary School. Mr. Galatowitsch came to Rolling Hills in 1994-95. At that time, the school enrollment was 50% African American, 40% White, and 8% Hispanic. He noted that during this time period the scores on national achievement tests were in the lower 20 percentile in reading and lower 30 percentile in mathematics. Mr. Galatowitsch noted that today the school is almost 80% African American, less than 6% White, and 12% Hispanic. He noted that the test scores have tripled. He added that this year, 90% of the students scored 3 and above on the Writing Achievement Test. Last year, 54% of the students scored at 3 or above in reading in Third grade. They are hoping to see similar results in Fourth and Fifth grades. He noted that the bottom line is the students have achieved tremendous results, in a short period of time, in spite of changing demographics that would predict the opposite to occur. Mr. Galatowitsch said they have done a number of things that have helped them be successful. They have adopted very high standards and expectations at Rolling Hills Elementary School. A Student Progression Form was developed. He said that students in the K-5 grades, who do not reach a certain level, do not go to the next grade level. In August, the students get a list of exactly what the expectations are; where they are expected to be; that they need to be on time; and the consequences of tardiness and absence, etc. He said that these standards were set at level two on the FCAT. He said that this is the minimum children need to read. He still retains some students that are in a level two on the FCAT. There are different criteria for each grade level and each student needs to show that they are well-rounded, not just a level one on FCAT. He does not believe that one test should retain or promote students. He said it is important to look at a diversity of assessment instruments to determine if the student is ready. Four years ago, he retained 120 students and was supported by the area superintendent. He said that he has held back over a 100 students every year, which applies to K-5 grades. Children in Kindergarten must read before First grade. A chart was presented to show the students that scored a level one on the FCAT test in reading in the Third grade. He also said that this year, 32% of the students scored a level one, 57% scored three or above, and almost none scored at level two. Out of 41 students, which constitute the 32%, 28 were new students at Rolling Hills this year. He noted that he cannot educate students who are not at his school, yet he is graded on these students. He said we have an accountability system that grades him on how other schools educate students. Mr. Galatowitsch said that he could not teach students 2 ½ years worth of education in six months. He said that standards are not consistent across districts and this State. He noted that this is a real problem and the students are the ones that suffer. He said that mobility is a fact of life and we cannot change mobility, but we can make sure we have consistency in the standards and expectations. When students are mobile, they can pick up where they left off. He noted that the district has taken steps to develop a curriculum alignment that addresses this issue.

Ms. Vasquez asked if Mr. Galatowitsch was aware of the deficiencies of children on his chart when they arrived at his school. Mr. Galatowitsch said that they make sure the students are assessed right away. He said that he has two significant programs; 1) After School Program for tutoring, and 2) Reading Lab. He

noted that his school is a B school and they do not get any extra performance money. All students below grade level participated in the programs and he has seen a tremendous improvement. He noted that funding has been tough. Ms. Vasquez asked if he considered supplementing the Reading Lab with parent volunteers. Mr. Galatowitsch noted that they have a difficult time with parents volunteering. He said many of the parents in his area are unable to tutor.

Ms. Leone asked if the teachers were skeptical about his approach for improvement. Mr. Galatowitsch said that it was hard for them at first because of it being a new approach. When they first started it was a task. The teachers were used to having 20% of the students at grade level, now it's close to 70-80%. When the year starts, the only students who are low are the new students entering school. Ms. Telson asked how many new students each year. Mr. Galatowitsch responded that there are several hundred new students each year. He noted that attendance has improved due to the attendance policy.

Mr. Galatowitsch said that this year they initiated a Parent Involvement Progress Report. When the students get their report cards the parents also receive their progress report. Parents are graded on whether their child's homework is done, if they get their child to school on time regularly, if they communicate with their child's teacher, and if they participate in school events. One of the school's partners in education, Papa John's Pizza, rewards parents with a free pizza if they get a "satisfactory grade." He also requires the teachers to assess the students in August so they have a beginning benchmark. This permits them to immediately implement strategies to help all students be successful. He meets with the teachers in December to go over how much progress the students have made and which students will not be promoted based on reviews conducted in October. The parents get a letter pertaining to retainment in October, January, and March, if the student is still below grade level. School personnel meet with every student who is below grade level in reading, writing, or math in the Spring. They don't wait for the FCAT results to come back because the FCAT level one is below the school standards.

Chairman Desai commended Mr. Galatowitsch for being able to address a major national priority. Chairman Desai noted that this subject is dear and close to the President's heart. He noted that he visited the White House last week for a reception. The subject was not education, but in an impromptu speech, the President spoke about addressing the bigotry of low expectations, which Mr. Galatowitsch has practically overcome. Chairman Desai said that was one of the Council's objectives. Chairman Desai asked Mr. Galatowitsch what specific actions have been implemented and what actions at the State level are needed. Mr. Galatowitsch said that the bottom line is high expectations for academics, attendance, and consistent enforcement of discipline. He said they have expectations for teachers; they are teaching the standards, they are assessing the standards, they are identifying the students that are not meeting the standards, and then together they develop intervention K-5 grades. He said this is the critical mass of creating change that's effective.

Chairman Desai asked that once Mr. Galatowitsch identified what needed to be done, what were the barriers and challenges, and how did he overcome them. Mr. Galatowitsch responded that the primary barriers are communication and developing consistency. He said that the principal should be the leader, following through, and modeling that consistency.

Mr. Galatowitsch said that he has proposed \$30,000 for a new way to do staff development and reading. He wants to have his teachers come back during the summer and spend a week together with a group of 20 diverse students. The teachers will work together and teach the students reading skills.

Vice Chairman Taylor presented a scenario by placing Mr. Galatowitsch on the Council and read him one of the Council's key initiatives for improving the entire education system, which is to provide highly effective early learning.

**“All young students will establish a sound base for their future learning and personal development and specifically be able to read on the grade level by the end of grade three.”**

Vice Chairman Taylor asked Mr. Galatowitsch what two or three State policies would he change or implement if he had the chance. Mr. Galatowitsch responded by stating: 1) Include Pre-K in schools, 2) Teach reading instruction in our colleges of education, 3) Develop and support programs in the early grades that make a difference for student achievement, and 4) Provide consistent standards at each grade level.

Mr. Bob McIntyre asked Mr. Galatowitsch to send the Council a copy of his reading proposal.

The Council continued with further discussion. The Council thanked Mr. Galatowitsch for his excellent presentation.

### **Presentation by Ms. Polly Roper, Principal of Blankner Elementary School**

Ms. Telson introduced Ms. Polly Roper, Principal at Blankner Elementary School. Ms. Roper said that the school is 47 years old. She has been there ten years. Ms. Roper believes that the length of time an administrator stays at a school does make a difference. The parents of Blankner Elementary are the ones that requested a K-8 school. She said that a lot of the students transferred to private schools by the end of Fourth grade because she could not give them the middle school experience they were requesting. Ms. Roper presented her proposal for a K-8 school to the school board, which took about 8 months to convince the board that they could do this. Ms. Roper said that Blankner Elementary is the only K-8 school in Orange County that has a building that is built for a K-8 population. The school is considered a prototype because of this. There are 930 students enrolled at Blankner Elementary School: 60% White, 27% African American, and 8% Hispanic. The school is about 33% free and reduced lunch. Ms. Roper said that when she arrived at Blankner Elementary the school was about 78% free and reduced lunch. Blankner Elementary is a five star school for the State of Florida. Ms. Roper said that consistency is a major key and expectations need to be high. She said consistency is enhanced because the students are with you through the Eighth grade. Blankner has a bully-proof program. There is a curriculum strand designed to improve the way students treat each other. The students wear uniforms at Blankner. This is a school requirement, not a school board requirement. She said it has helped with discipline.

Ms. Roper said that last year, the three K-8 middle schools in Orange County had the highest FCAT scores among middle schools in the State of Florida. She said that this year, Blankner's average score in writing for the Eighth grade, was a 4.3. There are a number of programs and clubs at Blankner: 1) Exploratory Spanish Class; 2) Athletic Program; 3) Tutoring Program; 4) Drama Club; 5) Instrument Club; 5) Fellowship Christian Athletics; 6) Art Club; 7) Exceptional Education Program; 8) AIM Program; 9) Partnerships; and 10) Before and After School Program. Ms. Roper also said that students are returning from private schools.

Ms. Roper said that her biggest challenge is funding. Blankner is funded as an elementary school. Dr. Proctor asked why Blankner is funded as elementary and not middle. Ms. Roper responded that it is because Blankner is a K-8 school. The Council thanked Ms. Roper for her presentation and the excellent work she is doing.

### **No Child Left Behind**

In introducing “Florida’s Plan for School Accountability under No Child Left behind (NCLB),” Dr. Wiegman noted the emphasis placed on NCLB by John Dornan, Executive Director of the North Carolina

Public Schools Forum. As the most recent Congressional reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the NCLB legislation calls for a considerably stronger federal role in holding states accountable for closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged and advantaged students. To maintain eligibility for federal Title I funding, NCLB requires all states, districts and schools to ensure that all students become proficient in reading, math and science by 2013-14 as measured by state test results.

Due to the strength of its system of standards, assessment and accountability under the "A-Plus" program, Dr. Wiegman stated that Florida is well positioned to implement the NCLB requirements. Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) scores from 2002 and 2003 will be used to determine whether each school meets the 2002-03 Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) standards. In addition to a total school score, AYP will be calculated for each student subgroup, categorized by race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch status, exceptional student disability and Limited English Proficient participation. While all schools and districts will receive an AYP rating, those schools receiving federal Title I funds are subject to progressive School Improvement sanctions if AYP requirements are not met for two consecutive years.

In comparing and contrasting A-Plus and NCLB, Dr. Wiegman pointed out that the NCLB requirements are notably similar to those in the first year of A-Plus implementation. Since 1999, however, A-Plus has steadily evolved from rating schools solely on "status" or snapshot assessment results to incorporating individual student learning gains. In addition, A-Plus no longer uses the FCAT scores of multiple subgroups, but rather only the learning gains of all students who are in the lowest twenty-five percent of readers in each school.

Dr. Wiegman closed by highlighting Florida's major NCLB implementation challenges. The integration of the NCLB requirements into the A-Plus system; building public awareness of, and support for, the changes; recruiting sufficient numbers of highly qualified teachers, expanding the capacity of Title I schools and securing continued Federal and State funding will be critical for NCLB to be viewed as a further catalyst for improving student achievement in Florida.

### **Lumina Project – Trends in Student Aid and College Pricing**

There was no report given at this time.

### **Other Items of Interest**

There were no other items of interest.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 11, 2003, at Florida Atlantic University in Ft. Lauderdale.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, 2003.

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William B. Proctor  
Executive Director