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Minutes of the Meeting of the
COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION POLICY, RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT
Wednesday, October 8, 2003
Florida Education Center
Tallahassee, Florida

Members Present: Akshay Desai Bob Taylor
William Gentry Pat Telson
Bob McIntyre Harold Wishna

Member Present by conference phone: Elaine Vasquez

Member Absent: Diane Leone

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

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 10, 2003, meeting were approved as circulated.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Desai had no report at this time.

Executive Director's Report

Dr. William Proctor said that he met with representatives from the Council of 100 and McKinsey and Company. They discussed collaborating on the Council's Education Committee Tuition and Financial Aid report.

Dr. Proctor also noted that he met with Mr. John Dasburg, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Governors and Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee. They discussed a variety of topics related to the university system.

Dr. Proctor reported that on September 16, 2003, he attended the State Board of Education meeting. He provided a brief update on the University Contract Study and the other activities of CEPRI. He said that he meets weekly with the SBOE's governmental relations person. This is to allow SBOE and CEPRI to keep up-to-date on activities for each group.

Dr. Proctor said that on September 24, 2003, he made a Power Point presentation on the University Contracting Study to the Board of Governors. He said that he was asked to make a final report on this study at the December 3, 2003, meeting of the Board of Governors.

Dr. Proctor said that he also attended a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative. He said that NPEC's mission is to promote the quality, comparability, and utility of postsecondary data and information that support policy development at the federal, state, and institution levels.

Dr. Proctor said that he would like to recommend that a research item be added to the CEPRI agenda. He said, to CEPRI's knowledge, there is no research on the meaning of annual yearly progress when compared state to state. He said that each state uses its own assessment and measures for annual yearly progress. He said that other states have schools that are identified as making annual progress, but may not be meeting the same standards as Florida schools. He said that there are no national benchmarks for No Child Left Behind. Dr. Proctor said that it would be beneficial for CEPRI to look at state assessment test results, compare them to NAEP scores and SAT9 scores and do a gap analysis among states. Chairman Desai asked Dr. Proctor whose responsibility is it to have consistent standards. Dr. Proctor responded by saying, based on his understanding, the Federal left it up to each state to use their own tests. Ms. Pat Telson asked what are we comparing to. Dr. Proctor said that is why it is essential that Florida undertake this effort. Mr. Bob Taylor said that this is an assessment approach that has a fair amount of validity. Dr. Proctor said that at CEPRI's next meeting, the Council can review what NAEP is and how often it is given. Mr. W. C. Gentry asked what the Council is doing in K-12 to see whether we are in a good position to comply with the NCLB standards such as, technological proficiency that will take effect next year. Mr. Gentry asked if CEPRI was aware of any review process to determine if these requirements are mandated, the State will be able to comply. Dr. Proctor said that he would gather more information and discuss at the next Council meeting. Chairman Desai said that the question is who has the oversight responsibility at the state level for the NCLB. Dr. Proctor responded by saying, it is the SBOE's responsibility. Chairman Desai said that CEPRI does not want to duplicate this effort. Chairman Desai said that we can supplement what the board is doing on the project and communicate with the SBOE on what kind of help they will need. Dr. Proctor suggested that the Council print articles in **Insight** on best practices that we see and hear and have had a chance to question and discuss. Mr. Taylor suggested that we also include in **Insight**, how we evaluate and rank tests.

Dr. Proctor said that he has received information from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board about its efforts to improve college participation rates, and that this type of effort could be undertaken in Florida, with the joint participation of the SBOE, BOG, and CEPRI.

State Board of Education/Board of Governors' Report

There was no report at this time.

Legislative Assignments

University Contracts - Dr. Nancy McKee presented the draft of the university contracts report. Mr. Taylor said there has been concern about who the appropriate contracting agency should be, but the constitution makes it clear that the Board of Governors is mandated to have that type responsibility. Its constitutional responsibilities should be highlighted in the report, since the constitution is the overriding document of the state. He also suggested the Council have a discussion as to whether or not the report should recommend that all universities participate in the contract process. Mr. Gentry indicated that if the state is going to have a seamless system, all universities need to participate so the Board of Governors can establish a system that will best meet

the needs of the citizens of the state. After discussion, the Council agreed that the report should recommend that all universities participate. Recommendations 6 and 7 were re-worded to accommodate the change.

Mr. Gentry questioned the term of the contract. After discussion, the Council agreed that the contract should be a three-year rolling agreement whose specifics would evolve over time. Recommendation 12 was re-worded to reflect the change.

The Council agreed that if a university did not meet its performance expectations on critical measures, it should lose its ability to increase tuition. Recommendation 35 was re-worded to clarify that point.

Mr. Taylor indicated the Executive Summary should address the potential impact of the contract, possibility by including some charts from the report. Mr. Gentry stated the Executive Summary should also make the case for tuition flexibility. He said there should be a conclusion or summary statement saying the contract approach would provide a cohesive plan for carrying out the state's objectives and avoiding duplication. Mr. Taylor also mentioned the Executive Summary does not address anticipated obstacles and issues for further study. It needs to say there are a number of things that need to be dealt with, including Bright Futures and Prepaid, and these issues are going to be addressed in some manner.

Dr. McKee suggested technical revisions to recommendations 1 and 36. Mr. Taylor suggested combining recommendations 23 and 27 to indicate the contract should meet the needs of the state, with the specifics being worked out later. Examples could be given as bullet points.

Dr McKee indicated that a revised draft would be sent to the members prior to the October 23, 2003, conference call, at which time the report needed to be adopted in order to meet the November 1, 2003, deadline given to the Council by the Legislature.

The Council commended Dr. McKee, Mr. Bob Cox, and other staff for producing an outstanding report.

Workforce Development Education – Ms. Tara Goodman presented an overview of funding for apprenticeship programs in Florida. Findings from surveys of local educational agencies and apprenticeship sponsors were discussed which showed a variety of local arrangements for apprenticeship programs and considerable financial commitments from apprenticeship sponsors. Recent trends in apprenticeship data show increases in enrollment and decreases in direct expenditures reported by community colleges and school districts. In conclusion, Ms. Goodman noted that this study seeks to address two key questions related to apprenticeship funding: 1) Should apprenticeship programs be funded using the same methodology as other career and technical training programs? 2) How should new funding be provided for the start-up of new apprenticeship programs? Chairman Desai said that with apprenticeship programs, it appears that we are looking at the marginal cost of serving programs, based on an earlier CEPRI study of apprenticeship. Mr. Taylor commented that apprenticeship programs are automatically going to be tied to the economic needs of the state by the sponsor. Chairman Desai asked if there is a way to look at this in terms of a cost-benefit analysis at the amount of funding needed for each unit produced (i.e., program completer). Mr. Harold Wishna expressed concern about large numbers of immigrants (non-English speakers) that need to acquire skilled workforce training; Ms. Goodman

noted that many programs in that area of the state do serve non-native citizens in their apprenticeship programs.

Mr. Juan Copa presented an overview of some of the key issues and challenges the Council faces in developing a new funding methodology for workforce education. Mr. Copa's presentation focused on the pros and cons of issues including a separate funding category for workforce, the governance of workforce under community colleges, and the aspects of competition and measurement in a performance-driven funding model. Mr. Taylor noted that in developing a new approach to workforce funding, the Council cannot be limited by the notion of maintaining the current dual-delivery governance structure. He added that somebody needs to have the primary responsibility for workforce education. Chairman Desai indicated that with one single point of delivery, the state can do a better job of defining what outcomes are needed from the workforce education system for the future economic development of the state. He suggested that a system could consist of a certain number of fixed needs (e.g., public service jobs) and variable needs (e.g., currently, computer-related jobs) dependent on future job growth projections. Under such a system, the process is simplified, where the state identifies its needs, and the workforce education system is provided funding incentives to produce those outcomes.

Master Plan

Collaborative Efforts – Dr. Pat Dallet reported that a follow-up meeting had been scheduled with representatives of several statewide organizations to discuss strategies to maintain the momentum of current K-20 reform efforts. Assisting with the meeting will be individuals working with the National Business Round Table and such statewide initiatives as the Prichard Committee in Kentucky. In response to a question from Mr. Taylor, Dr. Dallet said that a clear focus, strong leadership, and sufficient funding will be needed for any collaborative effort.

Dr. Dallet also reviewed a packet the members received with publications describing the work of the Lumina Foundation/Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education **Changing Direction Project** during its first year. Included, were case studies for the participating states and several national analyses related to tuition, financial aid and higher education finance.

Survey on Florida's Sunshine Law - Dr. Jon Rogers reviewed the findings of an e-mail survey to education leaders on Florida's Sunshine Law. The survey was sent to school board and trustee board chairs, superintendents, and presidents. Dr. Rogers reported that the responses revealed a mix of opinion in regard to the Sunshine Law, with comments in support of the law, points of concern regarding how the law may impede effective board management, and recommendations for revisions to the law.

Dr. Proctor reported that he has received numerous calls from newspaper editors and reporters in regard to this project. He spoke with an attorney from the Attorney General's Office and will follow up with the attorney with more specific questions regarding the operation of boards and institutions within the law. Mr. Taylor said that it is clear that the operation of the governance structure and the individuals in leadership positions are affected by the law. It appears that there may be a need for specific adjustments to allow the board and institution to work better. Ms. Pat Telson commented that there have been difficulties with issues of student discipline and personnel. Mr. Gentry agreed that the law may need to be tweaked to make the system work more efficiently. Dr. Proctor said that he will seek clarification from the Attorney General on specific issues and points of concern and suggested a public hearing on these findings.

Other Items of Interest

Mr. Wayne Blanton, Executive Director of the Florida School Board Association, said that he would be glad to assist the Council with the Sunshine Law issues. He said that the FSBA has done hundreds of workshops.

Mr. Blanton said that when you talk about school board issues, Florida is unique. He said for example, California has over 900 school boards, most of which are very small with the exception of Los Angeles and San Francisco. He said that California is in the process of breaking up the Los Angeles School District. There are 880,000 students and the plan is to divide it into four or five districts. He said that while Florida only has 67 school districts, there are about 16,000 school boards in the United States and 80 percent of them have less than 5,000 students. Mr. Blanton said that of the top fifty school systems in the U.S. in student population size, 12 of them are in the State of Florida. Florida is one of the few school systems in the country where the superintendent and the school board are constitutional officers. He said that most school boards in the country are created by the Legislature in some capacity and are governed by the Legislature. He said that under Article 9, local districts are authorized to either appoint or elect superintendents. He said that Florida is one of three states with elected superintendents. Of the 67 school districts in Florida, 43 have appointed superintendents. Mr. Blanton said that due to the size of districts and the number of students served, school board members in Florida spend more time in their jobs than the average school board members throughout the country. Mr. Blanton said that he believes Florida has the most diverse school board members in the country because of their salary. Mr. Blanton said that he does not believe Florida's governance system needs a major overhaul, but that dividing the larger school districts into smaller school districts could be discussed. He said that when dividing up districts is considered, it may not be better for the community. Mr. Blanton said that he looks forward to working with the Council. Dr. Proctor observed that the statutory responsibilities of school board members, are similar to those of a community college or university board member, and it appears that the higher education boards are much more policy oriented. He said that school boards seem to be more involved in administrative issues than policy. Mr. Blanton responded by saying that the Florida School Board Association invests time into making sure the superintendents and board members understand what their roles are and what their administrative and policy functions are. Mr. Blanton said that he does not believe that appointed personnel should be able to raise, lower, or levy taxes. He believes that people who levy taxes should be elected. Mr. Blanton said he believes that school boards are the frontline of democracy in the U.S.

Mr. Taylor said the laws have controlled the structure of Florida school boards for some time. Mr. Taylor asked if the Council should review this issue and if it is consistent with the school board needs today. Mr. Blanton said that this is an issue that the Council needs to discuss. He said that it is hard to put student performance and achievement on an equation with the size of a school district. Mr. Blanton said that he has not found any studies that show the size of a district having any correlation with student performance. Mr. Taylor said that there are three items that warrant discussion: 1) elected governance in the district school systems and appointed officials in the other two sectors of the K-20 system, 2) the issue of compensation, and 3) effectively running large districts. He said that the objective is the quality of education that is provided. Mr. Taylor said, if we have undesired impacts as a result of structures created half a century ago, that are not leading to the best results, it would be worth reviewing. Mr. Blanton said that he believes the governance system is not bad at any level, but thinks that on all three levels we could enhance academic

achievement. He said that high test scores in districts around the country come from districts, universities, and community colleges making financial commitment to be the best.

Ms. Telson said that her concern is the size of schools, and said that she would prefer K-8 schools throughout Florida instead of middle schools. Mr. Blanton agreed that schools in Florida are too big and this is an issue that is worthy of discussion. He said that some states would say that smaller schools do produce higher academic performance. There are hundreds of studies that shows small schools are safer. Mr. Blanton offered to work with the Council on the most appropriate school size to foster high academic achievement.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12, 2003, at the Florida Community College at Jacksonville.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m. on Wednesday, October 8, 2003.

William B. Proctor
Executive Director