

**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**  
January 11 & 12, 2005  
Florida Association of Community Colleges  
Tallahassee, Florida

**Members Present:** Akshay Desai                      Bob Taylor  
W. C. Gentry (via phone)                      Elaine Vasquez (via phone)  
Rajendra Gupta (via phone)                      Harold Wishna  
Bob McIntyre

**Members Absent:** Pat Telson

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the December 9 & 10, 2004, meeting were approved as circulated.

**Chairman's Report**

Chairman Aksay Desai commended the Governor, the executive branch, and the legislative branch on passage of the universal pre-K which has all the elements of choice and efficiency. He said that at the same time they were able to achieve that without raising taxes.

**Executive Director's Report**

Dr. Proctor asked Mr. Taylor to comment on a meeting sponsored by the Florida Association of District School Superintendents they attended. Mr. Taylor said it was recognized that unless there is a way to have high level, highly coordinated, well-resourced focus on making the right things happen, they do not happen. He said it was an open issue that needs attention.

Dr. Proctor said there are a lot of states interested in how to get more adult learners involved in postsecondary education and how to get adult learners up to the educational level to get involved. SREB has a project going in a couple of states, and more should be heard about it next year.

Dr. Proctor reported that Dr. Dave Spence, the first executive director of the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, will assume the presidency of the Southern Regional Education Board this summer.

Dr. Proctor introduced Dr. Mike O'Farrell, staff director of the Senate Education Committee, who commented on the upcoming legislative session. He said over 200 charter schools are now receiving \$27 million in state funds and there remains a need for better data on student outcomes and other

indicators of effectiveness. He said adequate support for career preparation programs will be a funding issue. Dr. O'Farrell also noted that apprenticeship programs may receive additional attention. He said other issues that are likely to be addressed include middle schools, funding for the class size amendment, voucher accountability, and, at the postsecondary level, access to the baccalaureate degree and questions concerning who should provide this access and how it should be funded and governed. In response to a question from Dr. Desai, he said specific information on increased needs for dollars, teachers, facilities, and equipment related to class size has been difficult to obtain and there has been no specific legislation filed on this issue. Dr. O'Farrell thanked the members and staff for their work, and at the request of Mr. Taylor, agreed to return after the session for a debriefing.

### **State Board of Education Report/Board of Governor's Report**

Dr. Debra Austin, Chancellor of the Division of Colleges and Universities, spoke on the A+ Program and the advance placement courses for high school students and what that can do to help them in their admission process to the university and the practice of the tenth graders taking the PSAT.

She said the Board of Governors appreciated the work CEPRI did on the Medical Education Needs study. She said there was no way her office would have the resources to have produced that report.

The Board has identified specific goals for 2012 for the state university system. Those goals are system wide – increasing the number of baccalaureate, master's, professional and doctoral degree programs; assisting the state in meeting its critical need programs such as education, engineering, and other areas.

Her office has produced a white paper on the state of chiropractic education in Florida. It shows where chiropractic schools are located and what they do. The paper also asks whether the education/training involved with chiropractic education is consistent with the mission of a research university in the state of Florida; if this is an appropriate utilization of the scarce fiscal resources in our state; and how the chiropractic program fits with the goals of the BOG strategic plan.

### **Master Plan – Major Initiatives**

**A+ Program** - Commissioner John Winn spoke on the A+ Program. By offering vouchers to students at failing schools, the Florida A-Plus choice and accountability system was intended to motivate those schools to improve their academic performance. Under this plan, each public school in Florida is assigned a grade, A through F, based on the proportion of its students passing the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). Students attending schools that receive two "F" grades in four years are eligible to receive vouchers that enable them to attend private schools or to transfer to another public school.

The results show schools receiving a failing grade from the state in 1999 and whose students would have been offered tuition vouchers if they failed a second time, achieved test score gains more than twice as large as those achieved by other schools. While schools with lower previous FCAT scores across all state-assigned grades improved their test scores, schools with failing grades that faced the prospect of vouchers exhibited especially large gains.

The performance of students on academic tests improves when public schools are faced with the prospect that their students will receive vouchers. These results are particularly relevant because of the similarities between the Florida A-Plus choice and accountability system and the education initiatives proposed by President George W. Bush.

**Leadership** – Deleted from the agenda.

### **Studies/Assignments**

**Public Broadcasting** - Dr. Mark Peach reviewed revisions to the Public Broadcasting report. Council approved the changes. Several additional changes were recommended. The report was provisionally approved. Chairman Desai will check additional revisions before final approval.

**Instructional Materials Pilot – Instructional Materials** - Council members received an overview of the study including an explanation of the textbook adoption process in Florida and a review of the applicable legislation regulating the process of instructional material purchase and acquisition. By statutory requirement, public schools and school districts in Florida must purchase instructional materials from the Florida School Book Depository, but a one year pilot study was conducted allowing three school districts to investigate the cost savings that might be realized through the purchase of used materials. Polk, Pasco and Hernando County participated in the pilot study, and their full year savings amounted to a very small percentage of their total expenditures on instructional materials. Council members had a number of questions concerning the current book depository system and will have representatives from the Florida School Book Depository and a used book vendor speak to the Council at the February meeting.

**In-service Education** - Council members received a brief update on the status of the In-service Education study. Several staff development administrators from around the state as well as Department of Education personnel have been interviewed to determine the sources of staff development funding in addition to the state allocation. Specific budgetary information is still being gathered and a more comprehensive report will be provided at the February meeting.

### **Former Representative Fred Lippman**

Former Representative Fred Lippman invited the Council to meet at Nova Southeastern University in the future. He complimented the Council on the Medical Education Report.

### **Dr. Carolyn Herrington/Dr. David Figlio**

Dr. Carolyn Herrington from FSU spoke on the A+ Plan. She said the most important issue people want to know about the A+ Plan is whether it improves student achievement. She said there is clear indication that there is achievement gain and the A+ Plan is a major factor. It has also been a focus of major support by the Governor in terms of the actual pedagogy of teaching reading.

Dr. David Figlio from the University of Florida said the strongest feature of the A+ Plan is the set of incentives that have been established. He said the major thing Florida should be thinking about over the next few years is not making the A+ Plan look like No Child Left Behind. He suggested the A+ Plan could consider small changes to the basic structure. The small changes could be in

terms of no accountability system from the beginning and identification of every possible loophole that could be exploited. The A+ Plan could work to close some of the loopholes. Another thing is to provide explicit incentives, not just financial incentives, for schools and school districts but explicit incentives for school administrators to encourage continued improvement in innovation.

### **Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida**

Mr. Ed Moore, Executive Director of ICUF, said that ICUF has grown to 28 member institutions that share the same characteristics as their 11 public university sister schools. ICUF institutions are diverse and have different missions. They serve a variety of students and offer a wide selection of undergraduate, graduate, and first-professional programs. Total enrollments at ICUF institutions range from approximately 500 to 19,000 students. Compared to the SUS, ICUF institutions have consistently smaller undergraduate class sizes. ICUF institutions awarded 38% more first-professional degrees than the entire State University System.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m., Wednesday, January 12, 2005. The February meeting will be held in Tampa on February 15 & 16, 2005.



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William B. Proctor  
Executive Director