
ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY FUNDING

Illinois Commission on Equitable Public University Funding

November 9, 2021: 1:00pm-3:30pm CT

Meeting #1 Notes

Welcome & Background

Co-Chair John Atkinson provided background information regarding the meeting logistics and fulfilling the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

Co-Chair Leader Kimberly Lightford provided a welcome to all commission members and provided a brief background on the creation of the Commission and the importance of the work. There have been challenges in the past with ensuring there is appropriate support. Disadvantaged communities need fair funding in order to serve their students and to repair damage caused by historic and systemic racism. Co-Chair Leader Lightford shared that she hopes the Commission can yield recommendations on how to address equitable funding and opportunities for all students moving forward.

Introductions

Dr. Toya Barnes-Teamer provided a brief background of HCM Strategists, the consultants engaged to support the Commission, and the HCM Strategists team introduced themselves: Dr. Jimmy Clarke, Ms. Martha Snyder and Ms. Katie Lynne Morton.

Toya facilitated a round robin of introductions of all the Commission members. Commission members were asked to introduce themselves including their name, position and organization and one of two questions: 1) Why are you interested in serving as a Commission member regarding this work? or 2) What do you see as a goal or outcome for the Commission?

Co-Chair Representative Carol Ammons provided a welcome and shared thoughts to help guide the start of the work and the importance to focus on the mission of the Commission. Co-Chair Representative Ammons shared that we need to replace "equality" with "equity" and meet people where they are and their needs. The Commission's job is to come with a centered approach that will fund higher education institutions. The focus on equity will drive the Commission by way of the data that is seen.

Overview of Charge

Toya introduced Co-Chair Deputy Governor for Education, Martin Torres, who provided an overview of the charge. Co-Chair Torres spoke about the importance of providing opportunities and support to all students. Co-Chair Torres shared the desire to collaborate and contribute to a process of creating a set of recommendations that are actionable and achievable.

Co-Chair Atkinson gave an overview of the charge set out in legislation. By July 1, 2023, the Commission is charged with evaluating the existing funding methods and recommending specific data driven criteria and approaches to adequately, equitably and stably fund public universities. There are 13 criteria in total to consider, along with fulfilling the principles for new funding system outlined in the higher education strategic plan and considering the recommendations of the Chicago State University Equity Working Group on Black Student Access and Success. The Commission will hear today about both. All criteria, meeting materials and resources will be available on a dedicated IBHE website. Co-Chair Atkinson introduced IBHE Executive Director Ginger Ostro to provide a high-level background on the

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creation of the IBHE Strategic Plan and the principles for an equitable, sufficient and stable higher education funding system.

IBHE A Thriving Illinois Principles for an Equitable, Stable, and Sufficient funding system

Executive Director Ostro provided an overview of *A Thriving Illinois* with a slide deck that outlined that the state cannot survive without a strong equitable higher education system. The plan was built on core principles:

- students are our priority,
- equity drives our system,
- higher education is a public good that enriches life,
- our diverse institutions work in concert, and
- we reinforce the P-20 education system, talent, research and innovation drive our economy.

The work is grounded in data. Strategies outlined in the strategic plan are designed to Close equity gaps, Build a stronger financial future and Increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth. Executive Director Ostro offered a reminder that the recommendations compiled by the commission should be aligned with the principles outlined in *A Thriving Illinois*. The full plan can be found on the IBHE website and was circulated to the commission members prior to the meeting.

Co-Chair Leader Lightford provided comments following the presentation around hold harmless provisions and asked whether this refers to new, additional resources. Co-Chair Leader Lightford also shared background information from the K-12 funding model and raised points to consider as this commission moves forward with the creation of a funding formula.

Co-Chair Torres shared the importance of understanding of putting together a plan that fosters equity and meets the state's vision but does so in a way that is actionable and achievable. Commission member Robin Steans also shared her appreciation towards the data and principles that Executive Director Ostro shared. Commission member Dan Mahoney shared additional background followed by Commission member Sheila Caldwell asking what standard equity is being measured against.

Chicago State University Equity Working Group on Black Student Access and Success Findings & Recommendations

Toya introduced Commission member President Zaldwaynaka ("Z") Scott who provided background of the Equity Working Group for Black Student Access and Success in Illinois Higher Education. This statewide working group convened 45 multi-sector leaders to come up with recommendations for increasing equity for black students and communities in Illinois. The equity working group studied data and made multi-industry recommendations over a six month time period with meetings held monthly. The work of the equity working group was grounded by the following mission statement: "The Equity Working Group will identify actions needed to close equity gaps to enable Black students, families and communities to thrive and survive in Illinois."

There were seven focus areas: affordability, institutional funding, institutional preparedness and support, enrollment and program choice, climate and culture, connection to career and student well-being.

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Each focus area was assessed for potential interventions. The Action Plan has actionable solutions for each focus area. Following the release of the Action Plan, CSU announced the creation of the Illinois Center for Education Equity and are currently planning the first meeting of the center's advisory council. Recommendations can be found in the Action Plan that was circulated to the commission members prior to the meeting.

Commission member Lisa Castillo-Richmond shared her appreciation for the groundwork that has already been completed. Commission member Jack Wuest offered comments on the need to support students in finding jobs.

Toya and Co-Chair Atkinson offered a housekeeping reminder that those who wish to provide public comment to be sure to add their name to the Q & A section by 2:30pm.

Logistics and Workplan

Toya introduced Martha Snyder who provided information around the commission's logistics and workplan. Martha will help elevate relevant content, work and reports already completed (both within and outside of Illinois). This context will help inform the discussion and work moving forward. Four guiding questions include:

- What is the current state of Illinois public university funding?
- What are the various factors and conditions that influence how the state invests in universities?
- What are the implications for advancing equity and other state goals and priorities?
- What are recommendations to establish a more adequate, equitable and stable funding system?

The goals and scope were introduced to the commission members, and were also shared in the welcome packet prior to the meeting.

The work will be divided across nine commission meetings between 2021 and July 2023. Meetings 2-5 will help level set and bring in context of the current state, and act as foundational meetings. Meetings 6-7 will be focused on formula modeling and review with Meetings 8-9 focusing on the recommendations and final report. Anticipated meeting topics were shared via the slide deck. Commission member Simón Weffer asked a question regarding formula modeling. Commission member Ralph Martire shared that the more details the commission can offer, the better. Commission member Senator Chapin Rose offered information regarding his experience of problems that students are facing in trying to apply and be accepted to institutions within the state.

Public Comment

Toya reminded members of the public that they have up to three minutes to provide public comment.

- Ms. Jennifer Delaney, member of Illinois Board of Higher Education and an associate professor of higher education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, provided public comment. Ms. Delaney shared that it was helpful to have context and that the linkages to the strategic planning process with IBHE was helpful. When looking at funding formulas, they are most useful in increasing transparency and thinking about the way in which the postsecondary sectors are funded. There was a lot of ambition heard in the introductions, especially ambition around creating a more equitable funding world for the students in the state of Illinois. Three areas shared: Principle of stability (predictability in funding), Interconnectedness of funding for higher education (from a student perspective), Transparency and Accountability (measurable metrics).

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Next Steps and Looking Ahead to Meeting #2

Martha Snyder shared that the next meeting is scheduled for February 2022 (exact date TBD). The next meeting is anticipated to include information on Illinois university funding: Overview and History (trends and elevating ongoing work); Lessons from K12 Evidence-Based Funding; Perspectives from the Higher Education Working Group; Perspectives from the Public Universities; Orienting around Common Terms and Definitions. The goal of the second meeting is to level-set and lean into specific terms that are included in the charge. Ralph Martire shared that there was a new report published November 9, 2021 that is available and he can share .

Closing Announcements and Adjournment

Executive Director Ostro shared that information is available on the IBHE website. All materials and additional resources will be available.

Co-Chair Atkinson reminded the commission that Illinois has great institutions doing amazing work and thanked the IBHE and HCM teams that have done the work behind the scenes. Co-Chair Leader Lightford echoed thanks to IBHE and HCM as well as thanked President Scott and all the Commissioners for their time. It was noted that the Commission can look at the K-12 formula and how it was created, the wins and the items that needed to be juggled along the way to help establish this formula. (Co-Chair Leader Lightford shared concern regarding timing of the April and June 2023 meetings and alignment with the general assembly schedule.)

Co-Chair Torres thanked all the commissioners for their time.

Co-Chair Representative Ammons provided closing comments and words of encouragement, including the navigation frustrations that students are facing while going into college. Toya shared that a brief survey would be shared with commission members to provide feedback.

Commission Members in attendance

Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford, Co-Chair
Representative Carol Ammons, Co-Chair
John Atkinson, Co-Chair
Deputy Governor for Education Martin Torres, Co-Chair
Senator Scott Bennett
Representative Mike Marron
Assistant Republic Leader Chapin Rose
Representative Katie Stuart
Sheila Caldwell
Andreas Cangellaris
Lisa Castillo-Richmond
Dr. Wendi Wills El-Amin
Cherita Ellens
Lisa Freeman
Gloria Gibson
David Glassman
Cheryl Green
Dr. Diane Otieno Owino
Guiyou Huang

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Terri Kinzy
Dan Mahony
Ralph Martire
Dennis Papini
Javier Reyes
Zaldwaynaka "Z" Scott
Robin Steans
Respicio Vazquez
Simón Weffer
Jack Wuest
Eric Zarnikow

Commission Members not in attendance

Deputy Republic Leader Dan Brady
Senator Dale Fowler (Dana Hoover represented)
Brandon Kyle

Support Team Members in attendance

Ginger Ostro
Ja'Neane Minor
Emily Chase
David Antonacci
Toya Barnes-Teamer
Martha Snyder
Jimmy Clarke
Katie Lynne Morton