

APPROVED

SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

September 15, 2020

MINUTES – BOARD MEETING
August 4, 2020

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: Minutes of the August 4, 2020 meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education held via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640 enacted June 12, 2020, and the Illinois Governor Disaster Proclamation dated July 24, 2020.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the minutes of the August 4, 2020, Board meeting.



STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

MINUTES – BOARD MEETING
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A meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) was called to order at 1 p.m. via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640 enacted June 12, 2020, and the Illinois Governor’s Disaster Proclamation dated July 24, 2020.

The following Board members were present: John Atkinson, Chair, Jennifer Delaney, Andrea Evans, Teresa Garate, Jennifer Garrison, Veronica Gloria, Veronica Herrero, Alice Marie Jacobs, Pranav Kothari, Kenneth Shaw, Clarence Wyatt, and Eric Zarnikow.

Others present: Mark S. Jamil, Burke, Burns & Pinelli, LTD.; Ms. Ginger Ostro, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. James Allen, Southern Illinois University; Dr. Larry Dietz, Illinois State University; Dr. Lisa Freeman, Northern Illinois University; Dr. Gloria Gibson, Northeastern Illinois University; Dr. David Glassman, Eastern Illinois University; Dr. Cheryl Green, Governors State University; Dr. Austin Lane, Southern Illinois University; Dr. Dan Mahoney, Southern Illinois University; Dr. Z Scott, Chicago State University; Dr. Jose Torres, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy; Dr. Brian Durham, Illinois Community College Board; Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, Community College Presidents; Ms. Joan Knox, Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities; Dr. Tonya Troka, Proprietary Advisory Committee; Ms. Danielle Dertz, Midwestern Career College; Ms. Olga Gusak, Midwestern Career College; Mr. Jeremy Oberfeld, Midwestern Career College; Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Eric Lichtenberger, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Mr. Nyle Robinson, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Arthur Sutton, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Melissa Hahn, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Karen Helland, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Jaimee Ray, Illinois Board of Higher Education; and Ms. Tracy Rembusch, Illinois Board of Higher Education.

A. Call to Order/Roll Call

- **Call Meeting to Order, Chair John Atkinson**

Chair John Atkinson called the meeting to order. Legal Counsel Mark Jamil took roll call. A quorum was present.

- **Welcome and Remarks by Chair John Atkinson**

Chair Atkinson introduced President Dan Mahoney of the Southern Illinois University (SIU) System, who began his tenure in March, and Dr. Austin Lane, Chancellor of SIU Carbondale, who began serving July 1. Dr. Mahoney thanked Chair Atkinson for the welcome and IBHE, other public university presidents, and SIU for all the support during the past few months. He stated that the Governor had visited the area and asked for the community to continue wearing masks. The students are returning soon, and they want to keep them safe and healthy.

Chair Atkinson introduced the new chairs of two of the Board's advisory committees: Dr. Shawn Schumacher, Faculty Advisory Council, and Dr. Tanya Troka, Proprietary Advisory Committee. He thanked them for their leadership.

Chair Atkinson acknowledged leaders in Illinois from the legislative branch who were in attendance: Senator Pat McGuire, who has been an incredible voice for higher education; Representative Emanuel "Chris" Welch, who has been a leading voice for education; and Representative Sonya Harper. He stated that the Board looks forward to working with each of them as we think about how to improve the higher education system, and he thanked them for being present.

Chair Atkinson noted the Board of Higher Education was convening at a particularly challenging time for our State and the nation as a whole. Leaders and communities are grappling with the realities of the pandemic, its impact on the economy, and the ways in which persons of color are disproportionately affected. Each Board member serving on this body is committed to the mission of the Board to advance educational opportunity, and our focus on equity continues. He stated we still have a lot of work to do in pursuit of our equity mission in that the completion rates for students of color remain far below the rates for middle class White and Asian Americans. There are also gaps for rural students and low-income students.

He stated that Executive Director Ostro is developing our strategic planning process with a goal to engage stakeholders beginning in September. It is anticipated that a draft strategic plan will be brought before the Board in March of 2021. This process has been somewhat delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we will soon be moving forward.

Chair Atkinson reported he agreed to co-chair a working group convened by Chicago State University's President Zaldwaynaka "Z" Scott. They will look at how we can improve African American student access and success. This work should contribute to the Board's strategic plan.

He asked that the Board reflect more deeply, not only on the students that we are currently serving, but on the ones we are not. This includes adult learners and especially low-income and rural communities as well as those who have been hurt by the pandemic. The budgets of our State and our institutions have been seriously impacted by the pandemic, and we are hoping that the federal packages being considered will include more resources to address critical needs.

Chair Atkinson closed his remarks by showing materials from the new IBHE public education campaign called "Stay the Course." It is designed to encourage people stay on track with their education, remain enrolled in their college coursework, and complete their degrees. He presented imagery from the campaign and key messages, all of which are being shared with colleges and universities around the state so that institutions can partner with the IBHE and other advocacy groups to promote the "Stay the Course" message. We are also working with Illinois Student Assistance Commission and the Partnership for College Completion in co-messaging.

Chair Atkinson asked Executive Director Ostro for her report.

- **Remarks by Executive Director Ginger Ostro**

Executive Director Ostro reported on the work being done during the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus has been on students who are most at risk of not beginning or completing college – first

generation, low-income, rural, African American, and Latinx students. She outlined the four strategies the IBHE has undertaken: Stay the Course public education campaign; high school to college transition; equitable distribution of GEER funds; and the Fall Opening Committee.

Ms. Ostro reiterated the importance of the Stay the Course campaign and encouraged Board members and others to share the social media messages and images broadly.

She then focused on the High School to College Working Group, which had representatives from each of the State's education agencies, K-12 school district leaders including Board member Garrison, and admissions and enrollment management professionals from community colleges and public universities across the state. The Working Group members identified a series of recommendations, best practices, tools and resources for high schools, colleges and universities, and state policymakers to support recent high school graduates in continuing their postsecondary learning journeys despite the challenges of the pandemic. These strategies and best practices are posted on the IBHE website. Ms. Ostro encouraged everyone to review and use these resources.

She then reported on the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund. She stated the funds available to the Governor were about \$108 million with nearly half – \$48 million – dedicated to higher education. GEER funds were distributed to community colleges and public universities based on a formula that provides more money per student for institutions that serve a higher percentage of Pell students. The underlying premise is equity and driving those resources to the institutions that serve students with the greatest need. In addition, \$3 million in GEER funds will be available to private universities and public universities via a competitive request for proposals. Eligible four-year institutions will be able to apply to meet additional urgent needs of students due to COVID-19. All higher education GEER funds are to be used to recruit or retain students who are at risk of not beginning or completing their college work.

The fourth strategic area is the Fall Opening Committee. The IBHE guidance for "Safely Launching Academic Year 2020" was issued in late June and recently updated. This guidance is intended to support postsecondary institutions as they prepare for the fall term and address the challenges presented by the pandemic.

Ms. Ostro addressed a public comment from the June 2020 meeting, which concerned the Grow Your Own program. After speaking with both of the individuals that presented public comment and the Grow Your Own Illinois organization, they have agreed that the rules as drafted do allow for the Peoria organization to serve as a fiscal agent, which is what the request was at the June meeting. No further action is required by the Board, and no further changes to our rules are required.

Executive Director Ostro reported that we are encouraging our institutions to identify students to serve on the Board's Student Advisory Committee (SAC). These students will be seated prior to the Board's September 2020 meeting, and the SAC will be an integral part of the strategic planning process as we work to engage students.

B. Presentation and Discussion

Chair Atkinson thanked Ginger and Eric Lichtenberger for the work they have done to present the equity data being shared with the Board today. He introduced Dr. Kayla Elliott, Senior

Policy Analyst for Education Trust and Mr. Jaime Merisotis, President and CEO of the Lumina Foundation. Dr. Elliott and Mr. Merisotis will serve as discussants.

Executive Director Ostro shared a presentation, “Assessing Equity in Illinois Higher Education.” She reported that ten years ago Illinois adopted the 60x25 goal that 60 percent of adults should have a secondary degree or credential. This was driven by the workforce estimates of the time that said about 60 percent of the jobs would require education post high school. We have made progress towards the goal, but the State is currently not on track to reach it. When looking across demographic groups, there are differences and outcomes for African American and Latinx students. There are also differences among those families with limited resources. This creates a two-part imperative for us first to increase postsecondary attainment and to meet Illinois workforce and economic needs and second to close equity gaps.

Today’s presentation is the first in a series of presentations and discussions that will look broadly and deeply at the data to help with our strategic plan. This will also be on our website for future reference.

The information shows we are failing African American students on attainment, retention progression, placement and development education, access to early college, and completion attainment and earnings post college.

Ms. Ostro presented data illustrating evidence about the persistent equity gaps faced by African American and Latinx students. She stated this makes it important to understand how our education system is serving our students of color. She presented on enrollment, retention, transfer students, access to early college, developmental education, completion, completion rates, and earnings post-college.

The general picture that Ms. Ostro took away from the data is that our system is failing African American students every step of the way. There are positive signs with Latinx but still persistent gaps in placement in developmental education, not having proportional access to dual credit, gaps in completion rates, and lower earnings than their white peers. She reported that we clearly have work to do to close race and ethnicity gaps in Illinois.

She also highlighted some of the progress made, including a working group on developmental education that just issued its recommendations and the Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Act helping to change this pattern as well.

Mr. Jaime Merisotis reported that Illinois has increased its attainment rate over the last decade and that number has increased both for degrees and for non-degree credential certificates. He stated there is an enormous gap in higher education for African Americans, about 20 percentage point gap and nearly 30 percentage point gap for the Latino population.

He stated Illinois cannot meet the 60x25 goal without increasing attainment in closing gaps for students of color. He reported Illinois should develop its own unique approach and drawing from knowledge learned from other states, such as California and Texas. In California and Texas, neither has reached their attainment goal but both states are seeing credential completion rates for students of color growing faster than ever before which is helping to close the equity gaps and reach attainment goals. He discussed the graduation initiative used by California State University which was designed to eliminate completion gaps and add hundreds of thousands of new

credentials to the state. They also transformed developmental education which resulted in a big increase in students passing their development education requirements. Texas has seen their six-year completion rate increased by more than six percent in the last decade, significantly for African Americans and Latinos. Additionally, Texas has one of the most comprehensive longitudinal data systems in the country.

Mr. Merisotis stated that California, Texas, and other states show that it can be done. It does take an intentional equity-minded strategic plan that can address the talent development needs in the state. He said we are aware that unfair and inequities exist mostly for people of color and low-income individuals and equity is Lumina's mission. He encouraged us to make it ours. Lumina recently announced they are committing \$15 million over the next three years to a fund for racial and equity resources.

Last, Mr. Merisotis stated he is pleased to see that Illinois has a strong data system. He suggested using this to remove and repair inequitable outcomes. His advice is to set goals and hold ourselves publicly accountable to metrics for performance and to set a standard that models a trajectory for students of color. Lumina is available to add research and policy support. They have also added committed to additional investments to the strategy labs and technical assistance fund. This is being expanded to include COVID-19, a related policy response and recovery effort for racial equity and to ensure educational quality.

Dr. Kayla Elliott offered her remarks with an accompanying PowerPoint presentation. She began with key questions including: Why do you think it is hard to talk about race and responses to race and education policy? How do your colleagues, community, and partners react to conversations about race and policy? Dr. Elliott acknowledged the difficulty of these conversations but stated that reality requires us to confront these issues head on.

Illinois does a better job enrolling Latinx students. She reported that Illinois ranks 18 out of 41 for states overall attainment for African Americans and 26 out of 44 states for Latinx attainment. Dr. Elliott stated that people of color earning a degree from a public university might be the most promising pathway toward economic security and upward social mobility.

Dr. Elliott discussed the recent hardships report which pushes back on the urge to use income specifically to address racial disparities. For a variety of reasons, income levels mask important disparities, and equity gaps cannot be adequately resolved by framing the discussion in terms of income alone. She showed the differences in default rates in student loans, specifically the default rate between African American and white students which is 25 percent. This is similar to the gap for the lower to middle income group.

Dr. Elliott closed with a few options to consider as the Board continues with its strategic planning process, both from the report and from an equity perspective. She feels it is particularly important when designing equity-based policies to review a series of questions such as: What biases or stereotypical assumptions made about students with the policy? Also, what types of words are being used to describe the beneficiaries of the policy or the words that include or exclude students that have been historically underserved? Does the policy position include the policy position, participation, and success of students from racial ethnic and indigenous communities?

Board Member Gloria asked about the investment to higher education. Does this mean specifically towards diverse faculty? Do they see certain kinds of investments work better than

others? Dr. Elliott responded that depends on the type of institution but thinks identifying the needs of the specific institution is the best approach.

Board Member Delaney thanked Executive Director Ostro, Mr. Merisotis and Dr. Elliott for their presentations. She feels we need to think about the need for data and being very careful of the things that we measure and making sure that the things we measure are things we want to track. She stated this is an important role we have, and we should make ourselves accountable. Mr. Merisotis responded it is really important to have both good statewide data and good data at the institutional level in order to be able to measure where you are and be able to measure the progress that you're achieving over time.

Board Member Zarnikow pointed out the difference in data between African American males and females. He stated that African American females have been making gains where males are going in the opposite direction. He asked if the panelists feel like there needs to be gender specific data and policies. Dr. Elliott thinks it could be some targeting resources at the state level or it could be technical support around both data and student success initiative. Mr. Merisotis feels the gender issue is wide and deep. The recession has affected men and women of color, particularly African American women and Latinx. He is in favor of targeted strategies but also thinks it is important for us to recognize the longstanding gaps in educational attainment that we have seen among women and particularly in certain fields.

Board Member Shaw stated he feels it is important to borrow from other states that are successful with demographic profiles similar to Illinois. He also believes we need to set goals that are realistic and then hold ourselves accountable and periodically report not only our successes but the things that are not going well.

Board Member Garate stated she did not believe there was anything unexpected with the data and reports but maybe a bit more disheartening when looking at the numbers. She discussed collaborating with the K-12 system and working on the preparation of how we are preparing the communities of color for higher education. Dr. Garate feels this is a good foundation for our strategic discussion. Dr. Elliott stated the need for equity-minded policy and for us to ask ourselves what other rules or policies are impeding access and impeding attainment. She discussed the financial aid programs and the need for removal of the inclusion of formally incarcerated students and justice-impacted students.

Board Member Herrero asked about debt forgiveness. Mr. Merisotis stated it can be good, but it is not going to drive the long-term change that we need. He stated this is doing nothing to help new students or new costs; it is only addressing the issue of the excessive borrowing for the students already in the system. He feels we need strategies to help students going forward into a system of lifelong learning where they will not continue to accumulate debt.

Board Member Zarnikow reported that grant programs are not impacted by prior convictions. He stated that the state's monetary work program does not eliminate students because of a prior conviction; the only limitation is if someone is currently incarcerated.

Chair Atkinson thanked both Mr. Merisotis and Dr. Elliott for taking their time to serve as discussants and share their insights.

C. Public Comment

Mr. Roderic Moyer, a senior at Northern Illinois University requested to speak regarding his final undergraduate academic assignment, the KK Project, and an effort to raise funds in honor of an NIU campus safety officer who was particularly instrumental in his efforts to address racially-motivated complaints against him. Mr. Moyer asked our leaders to reach out and get involved when hearing about on-campus injustices. Chair Atkinson thanked him for his remarks and leadership.

D. Action Items

1. New Units of Instruction at Public Community Colleges

Dr. Bernoteit presented the contents of this item.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education on motion made by Dr. Teresa Garate and seconded by Dr. Jennifer Garrison hereby grants authority to Kennedy-King College to offer the Associate of Applied Science in Game Design and Development subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

And, hereby grants authority to South Suburban College to offer the Associate of Applied Science in Emergency Medical Services-Paramedic and the Associate of Applied Science in Hospitality Management subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. New Operating and/or Degree Granting Authority for Independent Institutions

Dr. Bernoteit presented the contents of this item. Discussion followed as Board members raised several questions about the proposal by Midwestern Career College to offer the Associate of Applied Science in Diagnostic Medical Imaging Radiography degree.

Chair Atkinson asked about the cost of this program as compared to other similar programs in the region, including the City Colleges of Chicago. He noted that the per credit hour rate for the proposed program appeared to be more than double the in-district per credit hour costs of similar programs at Illinois community colleges, resulting in a cost for potential students at the out-of-district rates charged by these same community colleges. He inquired as to why potential students would be attracted to a program at this higher program cost of \$24,600 plus fees. Dr. Bernoteit invited leaders from Midwestern Career College, including Chief Executive Officer Jeremy Oberfeld, Vice President of Academic Affairs Olga Gusak, and Lead Instructor Danielle Dertz, to respond to questions. Mr. Oberfeld noted that students sought programs at Midwestern Career College because they could begin the applied coursework more quickly, suggesting that prerequisites at other institutions delayed their ability to take these core classes. Board Member Kothari asked about student debt and practices they would use to control student loan default rates. Institutional leaders responded with information about how they educate students about their financial obligations if taking out loans. Board Member Jacobs asked about the fees charged by the

institution on top of the \$24,600 in tuition. Vice President Gusak responded that fees included some costs for textbooks with online subscriptions available to reduce these prices, as well as approximately \$200 associated with licensure testing for employment. Board Members Garate and Herrero inquired about enrollment projections and clinical placements, respectively. Mr. Oberfeld noted that Midwestern Career College is recognized by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists and that graduates of other related programs at the institution were interested in returning to the school for this degree program to add qualifications based on employer need. Employer partners who provide clinical placements for the institution's related programs were also indicating interest. Mr. Oberfeld also described the institution's outcomes for these other programs, including a 100 percent pass rate on their AAS in Diagnostic Medical Sonography and nearly 80 graduates of these programs were between 71 percent and 88 percent. Board Member Shaw inquired of Dr. Bernoteit if there was further information to share with the Board, and Dr. Bernoteit indicated that the Board item was reflective of the information derived from staff review of the application. Chair Atkinson closed the discussion and thanked the leaders of Midwestern Career College for their responses.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education on motion made by Dr. Eric Zarnikow and seconded by Dr. Jennifer Garrison hereby grants to Midwestern Career College Authorization to Grant the Associate of Applied Science in Diagnostic Medical Imaging Radiography in the Chicago and West Suburban Regions, subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

The motion passed with seven ayes from Board Members Delaney, Evans, Garate, Garrison, Kothari, Shaw and Zarnikow; and three nays from Board Members Atkinson, Gloria, and Jacobs. Dr. Veronica Herrero recused herself and abstained from the vote.

3. New Units of Instruction, Public Service, and Research at Public Universities

Dr. Bernoteit presented the contents of this item.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education on motion made by Dr. Kenneth Shaw and seconded by Ms. Veronica Gloria hereby grants to Southern Illinois University Carbondale authorization to grant the Doctor of Medical Science in the Southern Region, subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

And, hereby grants to University of Illinois at Chicago authorization to grant the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Linguistics in the Chicago Region, subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

And, hereby grants to University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign authorization to grant the Master of Veterinary Science in Livestock Systems Health in the Prairie Region, subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

The motion passed unanimously.

E. Consent Agenda Action Items

The Illinois Board of Higher Education on motion made by Dr. Jennifer Delaney and seconded by Dr. Jennifer Garrison unanimously approved Item Nos E-1, 2, 3, & 4. The motion passed unanimously.

1. Board Meeting Minutes – June 9, 2020

The Illinois Board of Higher Education unanimously approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting of June 9, 2020.

2. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – July 2, 2020

The Illinois Board of Higher Education unanimously approved the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of July 2, 2020.

3. Confidentiality of Executive Session Minutes and Destruction of Verbatim Recordings.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education unanimously approved the Confidentiality of Executive Session Minutes and Destruction of verbatim Recordings.

4. Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Report as of June 30, 2020

The Illinois Board of Higher Education unanimously approved the Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Report as of June 30, 2020.

F. Informational Item Not Requiring Board Action

1. Fiscal Year 2021 Illinois Cooperative Work Study

G. Other Business

The next Board meeting will be September 15, 2020. The format for this convening has not yet been determined.

On behalf of the Board, Chair Atkinson thanked the staff and team for the equity data work and all they do. Board Members Herrero agreed and thanked Eric Lichtenberger for his work with the data interactive maps. She challenged the Board and herself to do something with it. Board Member Kothari also agreed and is interested in the credential data.

H. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Atkinson adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Rembusch, Interim Secretary to the Board.