

APPROVED
JANUARY 13, 2021

Item #F-2
January 13, 2021

MINUTES – STRATEGIC PLAN BOARD MEETING
December 8, 2020

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: Minutes of the December 8, 2020, Strategic Plan 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, the Illinois Governor's Disaster Proclamation dated November 13, 2020, and Executive Order 2020-71.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the minutes of the December 8, 2020, Strategic Plan Board meeting.



STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

MINUTES – STRATEGIC PLAN BOARD MEETING
December 8, 2020

A meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) was called to order at 9 a.m. via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640 enacted June 12, 2020, the Illinois Governor's Disaster Proclamation dated November 13, 2020, and Executive Order 2020-71.

The following Board members were present via video conference: John Atkinson, Chair, Max Coffey, Maria Cruz, Jennifer Delaney, Derek Douglas, Andrea Evans, Jennifer Garrison, Veronica Gloria, Veronica Herrero, Alice Marie Jacobs, Pranav Kothari, Kenneth Shaw, Clarence Wyatt, and Eric Zarnikow.

Others present via video conference: Mr. Mark S. Jamil, Burke, Burns & Pinelli, LTD.; Ms. Ginger Ostro, Illinois Board of Higher Education; 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. Dan Mahoney, Southern Illinois University; Dr. Zaldwaynaka Scott, Chicago State University; Dr. Brian Durham, Illinois Community College Board; Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, Community College Presidents; Dr. Shawn Schumacher, Faculty Advisory Council; Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit, Illinois Board of Higher Education (present in person at IBHE offices); 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.

The meeting was conducted by video conference as allowed by Public Act 101-0640 and roll call votes were recorded for each matter acted upon. The IBHE's Executive Deputy Director was physically present at the IBHE offices. The audio of the meeting was recorded and may be requested on the IBHE website.

A. Call to Order/Roll Call

• **Call Meeting to Order and Remarks, Chair John Atkinson**

Chair John Atkinson called the meeting to order. Interim Secretary Rembusch took roll call. A quorum was present.

Chair Atkinson reported that the IBHE Board has met several times to launch the process for developing a new Strategic Plan for higher education in Illinois.

He noted that on September 15, 2020, the Board met with UPD Consulting to discuss the timeline and framework for the strategic planning process. He stated the Board discussed comments from a variety of stakeholders including institutional leaders, legislators, faculty, and students about

why the Strategic Plan matters and what they hope it will accomplish. This information was used to outline draft statements of vision, core principles, and priorities. He reported that after the September 2020 meeting, broad stakeholder input from a survey distributed across Illinois was collected; additional focus groups were convened; and input on the draft vision, core principles, and priorities was solicited.

Chair Atkinson also highlighted the October 26, 2020 meeting where the Board reviewed additional stakeholder feedback and further refined the draft statements of vision, core principles, and priorities. He stated that we requested that stakeholders continue to provide feedback about the working documents via the IBHE website.

Finally, Chair Atkinson noted that the Executive Committee met on November 16, 2020 to finalize the working vision statement, core principles, and priorities so these documents could be used to guide the Strategic Plan advisory committee. He reported that UPD consultants and IBHE staff have conducted a series of regional and targeted focus groups and extended the time for responding to the survey in order to obtain additional input.

Whereupon Board Member Mackenzi Matthews entered the meeting.

B. Presentation and Discussion

Ms. Stacey Jordan, UPD consultant to the strategic planning process, indicated she would be providing for the Board an update about the status of the process thus far, information about the strategic plan advisory committee and the design work groups, and an overview of the stakeholder engagement report provided in Board materials.

Ms. Jordan stated that the Executive Committee confirmed the overarching vision, core principles, and priority areas for the strategic plan at the November 16, 2020, meeting. The three working priorities are improving affordability to increase access and manage costs; increasing postsecondary credential and degree attainment and develop talent to drive Illinois economy; and closing equity gaps. UPD used this information to obtain further insights from stakeholders through a second phase of outreach. This phase two of the engagement process included a series of targeted focus groups with regional stakeholders. She stated that UPD with IBHE staff conducted 20 of these regionally based focus groups involving 170 individuals. All the information gathered from stakeholders will be shared with the advisory committee as this group is convened.

Ms. Jordan described the ways the advisory committee and the design work groups would function in order to develop a plan and strategies to achieve the vision and priorities for higher education in Illinois. The advisory committee will be comprised of a wide variety of stakeholders and meet five times from December 2020 to March 2021. The advisory committee will develop the overarching strategies to achieve the three priorities and will subsequently charge design work groups to further develop these strategies and related action steps. The work products of these design work groups will be shared with the advisory committee for final review by the IBHE.

Ms. Priya Shankar, also with UPD, provided an overview of the stakeholder engagement report which summarizes the feedback garnered in phases one and two. She reported that the results from the survey data discussed at the October 26, 2020 meeting were foundational to setting the strategic plan vision and core principles. Ms. Shankar noted that the survey was widely distributed to a range of stakeholders including student, faculty, college administrator, K-12

administrator, community member, early childhood education, and employer groups. She highlighted the survey design which asked respondents to select issue areas that were important to them from among and within eight broad categories. The eight categories included cost, enrollment, equity, quality of instruction, student supports, employer/higher education relationship, operating structure, and high school transition. Ms. Shankar provided an overview of the issue areas of greatest interest to the stakeholder groups. Across all groups, issues pertaining to higher education cost and equity were most frequently selected.

Ms. Jordan presented to the Board a look at the topics surfaced by stakeholders through the survey and various stakeholder groups. Under the priority area of Improving Affordability, Increasing Access and Managing Costs, stakeholders expressed the importance of addressing costs associated with tuition, books, and internet; student debt; understanding priorities and responsibilities for students; stabilizing state funding structures; providing programs for high school students; and transferability issues. In relation to the priority area of Postsecondary Credential/Degree Attainment and Talent Development, stakeholders noted the importance of communicating the value of higher education; creating connections with employers; hiring more faculty and staff of color; and creating opportunities for collaboration across colleges and universities. Under the priority area of Closing Equity Gaps, stakeholders emphasized expanding opportunities for asynchronous learning; hiring multilingual counselors and resource staff for undocumented students; providing culturally competent support for underserved students; increasing investment in and utilization of minority business; and prioritizing equity-driven decisions about programs. She invited comment from Board members on the engagement report.

Dr. Kenneth Shaw stated there are topics that have been mentioned that should be addressed such as governance, COVID-19, and funding. Dr. Shaw feels it is important to be prepared for the universities and the public, so they know we have a plan and priorities. He asked about completing the plan by March 31, 2021. Ms. Jordan responded that the timeline is ambitious, but she feels confident the planning process can be completed by this date.

Mr. Eric Zarnikow asked if Ms. Jordan or Ms. Shankar were surprised with any of the results. Ms. Jordan and Ms. Shankar responded that the higher education community emphasized the need to make sure students are really prepared for the workforce and have basic skills to start a job in terms of preparing for an interview, knowing how to show up, and knowing how to negotiate for salary as just a few examples.

Chair Atkinson asked about respondents to the survey in terms of geography, cultural background, and diversity. He asked if there was a good representation of all. Ms. Shankar stated that they did not ask for geographical representation with the survey. Ms. Ostro reported that between 20 and 30 percent of survey respondents chose not to identify. Both indicated there may be some gaps in terms of representation. The November 2020 focus groups were organized to specifically obtain input from underrepresented groups.

Ms. Stacey Jordan reviewed the next steps for the Board which include January and February meetings focused on the Strategic Plan and developments from the advisory committee. The process will conclude with a March 31, 2021 meeting where the Board will be asked to review and approve the final version of the Strategic Plan.

C. Public Comment

Dr. Erika Hunt, also speaking on behalf of Dr. Darlene Ruscitti who is the regional superintendent of the DuPage County Regional Office of Education, urged the Board to place emphasis in the new Strategic Plan on goals tied to investments in education preparation programs. She stated there is a dire shortage of teachers right now and asked the Board to prioritize and to continue to invest in educator preparation programs. Dr. Hunt encouraged the Board to also invest in efforts to increase the diverse educator pipeline in the State. Dr. Hunt asked the Board to consider the return of the Higher Education Cooperation ACT (HECA) grant program to support such initiatives. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak.

Dr. Diane Rutledge introduced herself by stating she is a member of Leading Ed Partnerships and is a long-time advocate for the importance of educational leadership. She noted that she was one of the original 12 superintendents in the Wallace Foundation's research on school leadership, and she worked with Illinois State University Dean Dr. Dianne Ashby to create a model for developing aspiring principals into leaders who could create the conditions for improved student achievement. She reported the key to the new model was the partnership between the universities and school districts. Dr. Rutledge encouraged the Board to keep school leadership as a high priority when developing the Strategic Plan. She also stated the importance of working with other agencies so that we are all making sure we have successful students who become involved citizens in the State of Illinois. Dr. Rutledge thanked the Board for the opportunity to share her comments.

Dr. Jim Wolfinger, Dean at the College of Education at Illinois State University (ISU), reported that ISU prepares about 800 educators per year. Dr. Wolfinger stated that a recent Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) report shows there are about 5,000 unfilled positions in the field of P-12 education around Illinois. He discussed the teacher shortages in Illinois as well as the diversity issue in the teacher pipeline. Dr. Wolfinger reported the recently adopted ISBE plan is to increase by five percent per year the students of color in educator preparation programs by 2023 and to increase by ten percent the candidates of color in leadership programs. He emphasized the importance of strategies to diversify the pool of aspiring educators, as well as how to give these diverse students access to preparation programs, support when they are enrolled, and help to secure employment in Illinois. Dr. Wolfinger stated ultimately the question to consider is how this will work with the IBHE Strategic Plan and the future of Illinois. He stated will all need to come together to work on this pressing social need. Dr. Wolfinger thanked the Board for their time.

D. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion of Mr. Eric Zarnikow, second by Dr. Derek Douglas and by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 a.m.

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