

**APPROVED**

**March 13, 2024**

*Melissa Bealon*

Board Secretary Melissa Bealon

Item #F-1

March 13, 2024

**MINUTES – BOARD MEETING**

**January 17, 2024**

**Submitted for:** Action.

**Summary:** Minutes of the January 17, 2024, meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education held in person at Loyola University, Regents Hall, Lewis Towers, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor, 111 East Pearson Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611 online via Zoom as permitted by the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/7).

**Action Requested:** That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the minutes of the January 17, 2024, Board meeting.

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**MINUTES – BOARD MEETING**  
**November 15, 2023**

A meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education was held in person at Loyola University, Regents Hall, Lewis Towers, 16th Floor, 111 East Pearson Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611 online via Zoom as permitted by the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/7). The meeting was recorded and an announcement to that effect was made by the Chair at the beginning of the meeting.

The following Board members were present in person: *Pranav Kothari, Chair, Veronica Herrero, Vice Chair, Jennifer Garrison, Sylvia Jenkins, Sam Majka, Magnus Noble, Garth Walker, Clarence Wyatt, and Eric Zarnikow.*

Others present in Chicago: Ms. Ginger Ostro, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Nkechi Onwuameze, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Eric Lichtenberger, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Mr. Jose Garcia, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Gloria Gibson, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Ja'Neane Minor, Illinois Board of Higher Education; and, Mr. David A. Kelm, Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, a quorum was present in Chicago allowing for participation by video conference. Additionally, all action items were recorded with roll call votes. 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, Pranav Kothari**

Chair Pranav Kothari called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. Acting Board Secretary Kelm took roll call. A quorum was present.

**Opening Remarks by Chairman Kothari:**

Welcome to the first meeting of the new year of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. We are excited to, once again, meet in person at a college campus. I'd like to thank Loyola University President Dr. Mark Reed and the folks at Loyola and Arrupe College for inviting us and for allowing us to hold today's board meeting here.

We begin the new year with lots of excitement as we look toward the transformative and important work that lies ahead – with the goal of making our state's higher education system more equitable.

After convening an Equity Plan Framework Advisory Committee, the IBHE and the Illinois Community College Board released the Equity Plan Framework Guidance in November of last year. The equity plans are a key strategy in that state's higher education strategic plan and will help institutions close equity gaps in access, progress, completion, and attainment. As outlined by law, each public institution of higher education is required and each private institution of higher education is encouraged to develop and implement an equity plan and practices. Thank you to Ja'Neane Minor,

chief of staff at IBHE, and Jennifer Foster, deputy executive director at ICCB, for leading the equity plans work.

One of the Board's priorities for this year is to develop an accountability, learning, and improvement approach that will better help us implement strategic plan strategies and track the implementation of those. We collectively owe our students, families, communities, and stakeholders a clear view on where we are succeeding and where we have room to improve.

Another priority is to create a Board Committee that will focus on specific work and advise the rest of the Board on those workstreams. That Committee will be charged with developing a clear view into how we are making progress on the strategies in A Thriving Illinois and identify approaches for addressing shortfalls and celebrating wins. As is my habit, we'll be eager to engage statewide stakeholders and national practitioners to inform our work.

Both priorities will allow Board members and IBHE staff to carry out the strategies affirmatively and effectively in the strategic plan.

In a few minutes, Executive Director Ginger Ostro will present the Fiscal Year 2025 higher education budget recommendations. Before she does, though, I want to take a couple of minutes to highlight some of the recommendations. The Board is recommending an increase of 50 million dollars for MAP. MAP is one of the most powerful tools to help students from low-income households, students of color, working adults, and rural students enroll in and complete college. This will bring the total MAP appropriation to 751 million dollars – bringing us closer to funding MAP at one billion dollars over 10 years.

The Board is also recommending an increase of 450 thousand dollars for the Common App. With the Common App, students can apply to all public Illinois institutions with the same application, which is part of our effort to keep college-going high school graduates in Illinois. In 2022, public Illinois universities received more applications through the Common App than total applications in 2020 – including an increase of 10 percent in the number of applications from Illinois residents, as well as an increase in applicants of color. The Common App was implemented for first-time students, but given the success, the Board is proposing to expand it to transfer students.

Before we move on to the next item on the agenda, I'd like to talk a bit about a question that I'm hearing more and more related to higher education. And that question is: Is a college degree worth it? If you ask me, the answer to that question is a resounding yes! Higher education institutions that continue to prepare students for what's next and give them the dexterity to shift and respond to an evolving economy will succeed for years to come. I am glad to share that we have many public institutions in Illinois that are doing just that.

It's no secret that our state, and nation, frankly, are experiencing workforce shortages in many industries. The ways jobs are performed in certain industries are changing. And technology is bringing about new advancements and changing our daily way of life. To meet the demands of workforce shortages and an evolving society, we must have educated and skilled workers.

A college education is one of the leading predictors for getting out of poverty. Someone with a college degree is likely to earn higher wages throughout their lifetime than someone without a college degree. There's extensive research that proves that a college degree is the key to social and economic mobility for everyone, especially people of color. For people of color who have been

systemically disadvantaged, obtaining a college degree could be life-changing for them and their family for generations to come.

In a country, like ours, that is becoming more and more diverse, a college campus can offer unforgettable and life-changing experiences – experiences that later create positive contributors to society. And, through programs like Arrupe College, we see how institutions are transforming to ensure the next generation enrolls, persists, and completes.

Many are understandably worried about the rising costs of a college education. As the father of a 2-year-old, I know I am. For students and families who are just a bit closer to their college years, continued public reinvestment in higher education, institutional focus on improvement, and Governor Pritzker's fiscal leadership will continue to reduce the financial barriers to higher education.

Together, we'll continue to work toward a thriving and more equitable Illinois. There's lots of exciting and important work going on. Thank you to our partners, stakeholders, and the staff at IBHE for making it all happen. And with that, I'll pass it to Executive Director Ginger Ostro for her report.

Executive Director Ginger Ostro, IBHE, provided a brief report including updates regarding ECACE and Smart Start, Nurse Educator fellowships, Diversifying Faculty Initiative applications, equity maps, and release of second report of data about students who are parents.

## **B. Presentations**

- Panel from Arrupe College including Jennifer Boyle, Senior Associate Dean of Arrupe College of Loyola University and four participating students.

## **C. Public Comment**

Chair Kothari asked General Counsel Kelm if any member of the public in person or on-line had requested time to address the Board. General Counsel Kelm indicated that several members of the public requested time to address the Board.

- Isabella Pruitt, SIUE, discussed the need for mental health days for college students.
- Dr. Jennifer Juarez, Latino Policy Forum, discussed ECACE.
- Eduardo Monk, ISU Student Government President, discussed the need for mental health days for college students.
- Diya Dileep, UIC Student Government, discussed the need for mental health days for college students.
- Jelani Sadiq, Advance Illinois, discussed Thriving Illinois and equity, institutional funding and the funding commission.

## **D. Action Items**

### **1. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Recommendations**

Executive Director Ginger Ostro provided an overview of Fiscal Year 2025 budget recommendations for the Agency and higher education in Illinois.

Chair Kothari noted the following in his comments:

- The budget continues to invest in the priorities this Board has established in A Thriving Illinois;

- An additional \$50 million in MAP to bring the total to \$751 million, more progress toward our goal of \$1 billion;
- Increasing operating funding for public universities and community colleges, adult education, and career and technical education by five percent;
- Supporting the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity with nearly \$30 million to continue scholarships and mentoring to expand and upskill the early childhood workforce;
- Maintaining funding for the AIM HIGH scholarship at \$50 million and expanding Common App to reach Community College transfer students; and
- Expanding funding for dual credit grants and for apprenticeship grants.

Board Member Garrison moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Recommendations. Board Member Jenkins seconded the motion. A roll call was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **2. Consideration and Approval of Program Modification of New Units of Instruction at Public Community Colleges (Dr. Nkechi Onwuameze)**

Illinois Central College is seeking approval for an Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) in Art and Design and an Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) in Music. The proposed AFA degrees are closely aligned with lower division coursework at universities offering related programs to ensure seamless articulation process when transferring to a four-year institution.

Board Member Majka moved to approve the two programs. Board Member Herrero seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **E. Consent Agenda Action Items**

- 1. Consideration and Approval of a non-instructional capital project for the University of Chicago.**
- 2. Consideration and Approval of Board Minutes – November 15, 2023.**
- 3. Consideration and Approval of Board Retreat Minutes – November 15, 2023.**

Board Member Shaw moved to approve both items on the Consent Agenda. Board Member Noble seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved unanimously.

### **F. Other Business**

The next Board meeting will be held Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at Monmouth College. Additional details about the meeting and agenda will be posted on the IBHE website.

### **G. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion of Board Member Zarnikow and seconded by Board Member Herrero, a roll call vote was taken, and by unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by David A. Kelm, Acting Secretary to the Board and General Counsel.