

Restructuring Subcommittee Meeting  
SCHEV Main Conference Room  
September 10, 2009

Council Members Present: Gilbert Bland, Chair, Susan Magill, Katharine Webb, Alan Wurtzel

Institutional Representatives Present: James McNeer, President, RBC; Taylor Reveley, President, CWM; Henry Wolf, CWM Rector; Vern Lindquist, RBC Provost; Kathy Hornsby, CWM board member; Michael Fox, Chief of Staff, and Secretary to the Board, CWM; Fran Bradford, Associate Vice President for Government Relations, CWM

SCHEV Staff Present: James Alessio; Daniel LaVista; Tod Massa; Lee Ann Rung

Mr. Bland called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Introductions were made, and Mr. Bland said the subcommittee was looking for ways to create a “win-win” situation.

Mr. Alessio provided background details about the Restructuring Act.

President McNeer provided information about issues Richard Bland College (RBC) is facing in the areas of student advising and graduation rates. Richard Bland anticipates a similar number of graduates next year and will likely have the same problem meeting next year's targets. He also expressed his concern about the term “certification” as it relates to Restructuring, saying that the general public interprets it as meaning that the institution is not accredited. Approximately 35-40% of incoming freshmen take developmental courses, which requires more student advising and mentoring. RBC has instituted a new requirement of 2.5 GPA for students in the resident halls.

Mr. Wolf and Ms. Hornsby stressed the involvement of the RBC leadership with the College of William and Mary (CWM) board of visitors. Board members are invited to attend onsite visits at RBC, and RBC leadership staff attends CWM board meetings. It was reported that the CWM Board, which has responsibility for RBC, is very supportive of RBC.

There was some discussion about the recommendations from the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) related to best practices. The problem is that RBC has no staff to accomplish what APA is suggesting. The issue of continuity that was mentioned in the APA report was discussed and Dr. McNeer reported that RBC is reconstituting the Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

Mr. Wurtzel asked if CWM could provide senior level staff support in the areas of coaching, counseling, and mentoring to RBC to help solve problems with remedial education, much like the Phoenix Project.

It was mentioned that too much focus is placed on numbers when more focus should be placed on best practices for retention. Mr. Wurtzel reminded the institutions that the targets and thresholds are numbers mutually agreed upon between SCHEV and the institutions and are not static.

Mr. Reveley felt the current system is broken. He stated that when targets aren't able to be met, the current regulations do not allow for accommodation of unique situations. He feels a more common sense approach is required when exceptions need to be made.

It was mentioned that policy questions should be framed after asking the legislature what they want higher education to be in Virginia. It was suggested that SCHEV coordinate efforts between the legislature and the institutions to determine a specific course of action to accomplish desired outcomes.

Mr. Reveley said it was important to engage in reality and listed the following facts:

1. Virginia has a great state system of higher education. Tax payer support is vital to 2-year institutions and one size does NOT fit all with regard to funding the institutions.
2. Virginia is a relatively low tax state with many unmet needs.
3. Virginia higher education has no political power.

He felt it was important to agree on the facts and then determine what actions are needed. In addressing these facts it could be determined that institutions such as UVA and CWM would best be left alone with little state intervention. However, for institutions such as RBC more tax dollars are vital to their mission and survival.

Although there was no final plan submitted by RBC, the subcommittee members felt satisfied that RBC will work together with CWM. RBC was asked to submit a progress plan to the Council before the October meeting that would include:

- What the institution has done to address the concerns of the APA with regard to best practices
- An explanation of increased student tutoring and mentoring
- Examples of ways in which CWM could assist RBC
- A statement indicating that any incentive dollars that are received would be dedicated to improving retention

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

---

Gilbert Bland, Subcommittee Chair

---

Lee Ann Rung, Mgr. for Executive and Council Affairs