

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA  
Ad Hoc Committee on Educational Attainment  
JANUARY 7, 2019  
MINUTES**

Dr. Murray called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. in the Café West room of Dominion Energy's Tredegar location.

Committee members present: William Murray (chair), Victoria Harker and Henry Light. Marge Connelly participated via phone.

Council members present: Heywood Fralin, Carlyle Ramsey, Stephen Moret, and Tom Slater.

Staff members present: Peter Blake, Alan Edwards, Wendy Kang, Joe DeFilippo, Paula Robinson, Kristin Whelan and Beverly Rebar.

Invited guests present: Leanna Blevins from the New College Institute, Robin Sullenberger from the State Board of Community Colleges, Leah Walker from the Virginia Department of Education, Ellen Neufeldt from Old Dominion University, Phil Leon from Virginia Tech and Augie Wallmeyer.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Dr. Murray welcomed the group and instructed those present that the purpose of the meeting was to winnow down the long list of recommendations into a set of a dozen or fewer actionable recommendations. Mr. Blake suggested that the group concentrate on the primary, educational attainment focus. He also pointed out that many of the items on the list are already linked to other SCHEV initiatives.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion from Ms. Harker and seconded by Mr. Light the minutes from the November 14, 2018, meeting were approved.

**DISCUSSION OF BOLD-BUT-ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES**

Dr. Edwards presented a thematic list created from over 60 recommendations he received from staff, experts and council. A discussion commenced wherein participants suggested edits, questioned omissions and strategized for presenting the ideas to a wider audience.

The participants discussed what implementation of the themes will look like. It was agreed that the effort needs to be a coordinated effort that includes goal setting and monitoring. Ms. Neufeldt suggested that the Center for Social Mobility at Old Dominion University could be used as an example. Dr. Blevins suggested we leverage existing structures and pay close attention to the differing needs of urban and rural areas. Regional centers, making use of existing institutions and creating

partnerships was suggested as way to address the differing needs of students across the Commonwealth.

Ms. Walker questioned the omission of any clear articulation preK-12 quality and the role it plays in quality higher education attainment. She stressed that needs-based resourcing in preK-12 aligns closely with higher education attainment.

The group discussed the challenges posed by inconsistent state funding on the institutional planning. It was also suggested that lower income students also need buffer, emergency funds to cover the out of pocket and emergency expenses that force them off their educational path and prevent them from completing.

Messaging was another theme the group discussed at length. Ms. Walker stressed that preK-12 have little knowledge of the educational attainments initiative. The messaging needs to be consistent across SCHEV, State Department of Education and the economic and workforce organizations. Mr. Slater suggested that we need better data to illustrate the link between educational attainment and work outcomes. Mr. Slater we need to describe the wider cost and burdens on society of low attainment. These arguments could be used in funding discussions.

## **BREAK**

## **GUIDANCE TO STAFF ON STRATEGY & ARTICULATION**

Dr. Murray asked Dr. Edwards to refine the themes and add or edit based on the discussions of the day. He asked that the staff prepare a brief narrative summary and a presentation for delivery at the Council meeting on Monday, January 14 at the SCHEV offices.

## **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Dr. Murray adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

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William Murray  
Committee Chair

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Kristin Whelan  
Coordinator, Executive & Board Affairs