

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA  
COUNCIL MEETING  
October 25, 2022  
DRAFT MINUTES**

Mr. Ampy called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. in the Board room at the Virginia Community College System.

Council members present: Ken Ampy, Katharine Webb, Victoria Harker, Alvin J. Schexnider, Jennie O'Holleran, John Broderick, Cheryl Oldham, Jeff Smith, Jason El Koubi, William Harvey, and Thaddeus Holloman.

Council member absent: Walter Curt

Staff members present: Tom Allison, Peter Blake, Grace Covello, Joe DeFilippo, Alan Edwards, Wendy Kang, Tod Massa, Laura Osberger, Beverly Rebar, and Yan Zheng, Paula Robinson, Lee Andes.

Notable Guests: Deputy Secretary of Education, Sarah Spota, and Ramona Taylor from the Office of the Attorney General, Alan Burns from Edge Research, Terrell Dunn from HCM Strategists and Heather McKay from the Virginia Office of Education Economics.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Harker made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 20 Council minutes, which were seconded Katharine Webb. All of the minutes were approved unanimously.

**REMARKS FROM TED RASPILLER, PRESIDENT, BRIGHTPOINT COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Dr. Raspiller president of Brightpoint Community College, welcomed Council and discussed workforce education, specifically credentialing that helps meet critical need in each area. He described various student populations Brightpoint serves. Dr. Raspiller noted that the biggest financial challenge for Brightpoint is the cost of the programs they offer, specifically nursing.

Dr. Raspiller highlighted the college's commitment to advanced manufacturing, noting that 350 students have completed G3 programming. He also highlighted a \$1.1 million dollar awarding for students through G3 (an initiative of "free" college for eligible students in high-demand programs). He thanked Jason El Koubi for the help with the pharmaceutical manufacturing program at Brightpoint and highlighted a \$53 million dollar federal grant to grow pharmaceutical manufacturing in the region.

Brightpoint also has a partnership with Petersburg offering workforce credentials on advanced manufacturing and healthcare. He said that the college is also working on a submission for a lab school with Virginia State University.

**HCM STRATEGISTS/EDGE RESEARCH "WHERE ARE THE STUDENTS?" STUDY**

Mr. Ampy welcomed Ms. Dunn and Mr. Burns to Council. They presented information from a report completed by Edge Research and HCM Strategists on *Exploring the Exodus from Higher Education*. Ms. Dunn discussed enrollment in higher education and said that enrollment at community colleges nationally has been declining. She said that the research study was designed to understand why arguments for the benefits of college are not resonating with students today. Students are concerned about their return on investment, opportunity cost, investment of money and time and investment of resources did not pay off. People are finding learning opportunities outside of higher education that are faster, cheaper and more targeted on specific jobs. The issues of mental health and racial unrest and the pandemic are real challenges for students. Navigating higher education is challenging for individuals who have not had someone go through higher education.

Mr. Burns reviewed the study design and methodology, which was a survey of 1700 members as well as some in-depth interviews of a subset of this target audience across seven states. The study found that financial barriers are significant, but addressing these burdens alone will not alleviate the other challenges students face. The report also found that individuals questioned the value of a college degree noting that other educational opportunities are impacting decision making. The report concludes with the observation that the pandemic brought about new concerns of going to college.

When the survey asked individuals on their future plan regarding college, 46% indicated they “definitely plan on going.” Of the individuals who plan “definitely” to go back to college, 37% claim they will go back in one to three years. The study also found that students felt a mix of feelings – including hopeful, uncertain and stressed – about their future. Students mostly are concerned with stability not only financially but mentally and emotionally. Regarding the value of additional education and training, individuals chose on-the-job training as the highest value out of the options presented. Half of the participants said they believe that high school taught them how to get into college but few believe it prepared them for life.

Mr. Burns reviewed key insights and implications for the field including: (1) those moving away from college is not solely one of demographics, (2) the education marketplace has fundamentally shifted, (3) the language and pathways associated with higher education do not resonate, and (4) obtaining a college degree may be “off the table” for much of this audience but they desire a guarantee that it will be worth their time and money both during school and after graduation.

### **RECEIPT OF REPORT FROM AGENCY DIRECTOR**

Enrollment news: Staff recently released early enrollment estimates for public and private colleges and universities and prepared a brief report on the preliminary numbers. Overall enrollment at public institutions is down 0.4% from last year and 4.3% from 2019. First-time-in-college enrollment, however, is up 5.2% from last year, a promising “leading indicator.” Also last month, the Virginia Department of Education released a report on college-going by recent high school graduates. The report tracks the number of students who enroll in any postsecondary education program within 16 months of high school graduation. In 2020, 57,082 (65%) of recent high school graduates were enrolled in a public or private four-year or two-year institution. This percentage is down from 72% in 2010. Staff is pursuing two opportunities to gain addition insight into enrollment – or lack

thereof – in higher education. We are preparing for focus group meetings with high schools in three Virginia school localities. We also are working with the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development to include questions on an upcoming survey of young adults about their college decision-making.

ACICS recognition terminated: On August 19, 2022, the U.S. Department of Education announced that it had denied the appeal of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools to retain its recognition as an accreditor. This decision means, unless ACICS-accredited institutions become accredited by another recognized accreditor within 18 months, these institutions will lose their eligibility for federal financial aid programs, including guaranteed student loans and Pell Grants. During this period, these institutions will remain eligible for federal financial aid programs, but with the proviso that they cannot take new students. Currently, four institutions operating in Virginia that are currently accredited by ACICS. Three of these institutions – California University of Management and Science, Fairfax University of America and University of North America – are certified by SCHEV.

Stratford University closure: Stratford University, which has campuses in both Woodbridge and Alexandria, also had been accredited by ACICS. In accordance with §23.1- 219(D) of the Code of Virginia, private institutions are no longer required to be certified by SCHEV if and when they have maintained their main campus continuously in the Commonwealth for at least 20 years and are accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Such schools, including Stratford University, have full institutional autonomy and no formal legal relationship with SCHEV. Stratford announced on September 23 the cessation of its operations in Virginia, effective October 9, 2022. More than 900 students in the Commonwealth will be impacted by this closure. SCHEV staff members have offered guidance to Stratford administrators and seek to assist students in any way the agency is able. A notice has been placed on the SCHEV website to advise Stratford students of resources available to them, including contact information for other institutions that have expressed a willingness to take Stratford students as transfers. The notice is available here: <https://ppe.schev.edu/closed-schools>

Board of visitors orientation program planning: The 2022 new board member educational program, which is required by law, occurred October 18-19 in Richmond. More than 50 recent new board appointees attended. Governor Youngkin spoke at the beginning of the program. Thanks to the many Council members who participated in the planning and implementation of this year's orientation.

Meeting regarding the Tech Talent Investment Program: In late September, the “designated reviewers” for the Tech Talent Investment Program (TTIP), which include the Education and Finance secretaries, Department of Planning and Budget director, the staff directors for the legislative money-committees, president of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the SCHEV director, held their first FY 2023 meeting to discuss institutions’ degree awards and whether/how the quantity and quality of those awards compare to that which each institution agreed in its Memorandum of Understanding with the state.

Mental health workforce pilot grants: Earlier this month, staff received 10 proposals from public institutions for grants from an FY 2023-appropriated, SCHEV-administered, Virginia Healthcare Foundation-collaborated pilot project intended to address both the

immediate mental-health needs of students and the long-term behavioral health workforce-development needs of institutions. Up to six institutions will be awarded grants of up to \$100,000 each in FY 2023 and FY 2024 to support (salary and benefits) a graduate of a Master of Social Work or Master of Counseling program as they seek licensure. Each awarded institution will hire, train and supervise the LCSW/LPC candidate until licensed. Staff anticipates making the award announcements on or before November 7.

Pell initiative: The 2022 Act of Assembly, Chapter 2, Item 142 M, directs SCHEV to partner with a national consultant as it works with institutions having below average enrollment of Pell-eligible students. The budget provides \$250,000 in the first year for the administration of this initiative and \$25 million in the second year to fund institutional proposals to improve either recruitment or retention of Pell-eligible and low-income students. In September, after posting a Request for Proposal to secure a private consultant, SCHEV received five responses. A committee is reviewing these proposals with a goal to secure a consultant by late October. The consultant will then begin work on the four deliverables detailed in the RFP, which ultimately will guide the allocation of second-year funds to improve the overall institutional success rate of Pell students.

Access and outreach activities: SCHEV staff, in cooperation with school divisions and other partners, has been involved in many activities designed to smooth the path between secondary and postsecondary education:

- Virginia College Application Week is from October 24-28. High school seniors at approximately 100 high-need schools will have time and support during the school day to complete college applications. Forty colleges and universities will offer support and waive application fees during the week.
- From October 26-27, Hampton City Public Schools, Ford Next Generation Learning Center, SCHEV and GEAR UP Virginia will host a study visit at the Academies of Hampton. School divisions across Virginia will send teams to learn more about the career academy model that transformed Hampton high schools into personalized learning communities that prepare their students for college and career success. We are grateful to Council member Jeffrey Smith, superintendent in Hampton, for his support of these initiatives.
- As of October 1, eight school divisions across Virginia are now participating in a FAFSA completion pilot program. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid – or FAFSA - is used by institutions to determine a student's financial need and the amount and type of aid for which they are eligible. During the 2022-23 academic year, SCHEV will share (in a highly secure way) student-level FAFSA completion data with high school staff so that these staff members can better direct FAFSA assistance efforts. The goal is to provide school staff with more data to ensure that students complete their FAFSA, which is one of several key steps to going to college.

Student Advisory Committee: The 2022-23 Student Advisory Committee, which consists of students from public four-year and two-year institutions and select private institutions, held its first meeting (virtually) on September 30 and its second meeting (in-person) on October 21. At the first meeting, students were asked to say one thing they would like changed about their institution. Although each student had a different idea, staff summarized those ideas into the following categories:

- Campus safety and increased Title IX effectiveness
- Increased funding for institutions overall

- More financial aid and Pell access
- Mental health access
- Increased diversity of faculty and staff
- Better quality or quantity of advisors for students
- More student engagement and involvement in their local communities
- Support groups for returning students and single parents
- Classes in financial literacy and life skills

SNAP: During the 2022 Session the General Assembly passed legislation (HB 582) requiring public institutions to inform students of their potential eligibility for SNAP benefits. Formerly known as food stamps, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federally funded monthly benefit available to individuals and households meeting predetermined asset and income criteria. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, temporarily expanded limitations to SNAP eligibility access, opening possibilities for college students enrolled in higher education at least half-time. Staff members from SCHEV and the Department of Social Services are collaborating to provide a webinar that will cover resources and tools to better assist institutions in helping students navigate the possibilities of SNAP. SCHEV also has drafted emails and flyers as examples of outreach efforts for institutions to model.

Meeting with Strada President Stephen Moret: Secretary Guidera and Council member Cheryl Oldham and I recently met with Strada Education Network President Dr. Stephen Moret about potential partnership opportunities. Dr. Moret is the former president of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and, as such, was an ex officio member of Council.

Agency Risk Management and Internal Control Standards: SCHEV recently completed this annual process. The process includes documenting the agency's assessment of internal control strengths, weaknesses and risks related to financial transactions, compliance with the financial reporting requirements, laws and regulations, and stewardship over the Commonwealth's assets. Finance and budget manager Ellie Boyd led the team effort.

New staff: Kirstin Pantazis is the new Associate for Academic Affairs. Her duties include evaluating proposals for academic program actions and organizational changes. Kirstin was the transfer coach at Brightpoint Community College and an academic advisor at Reynolds Community College. She currently teaches sociology as an adjunct faculty member at Reynolds Community College. She has degrees from Old Dominion University and Arizona State University and is completing a doctoral degree at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Staff meeting: In September, the agency held its fourth all-staff meeting of the year. The agenda included reflections from two staff members, updates on activities from the different units and a summary of a staff survey. The year's fifth and final all-staff meeting is scheduled for December.

Out and about: I participated in the annual retreat of the Virginia 529 board; Virginia Chamber events on early childhood education and workforce and education; a symposium on the new Stravitz-Sanyal Institute for Liver Disease and Metabolic Health

at Virginia Commonwealth University; and an exhibit of the history of Virginia higher education at the Library of Virginia.

### **ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STUDY ON STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Dr. Edwards summarized staff's months-long review of student issues and support services, which culminated in the forthcoming report, "What Matters Most: Critical Student Issues Impacting Their Higher Education Experience, Persistence and Completion." Council members discussed the report and reviewed the recommendations. On a motion by Dr. Schexnider and seconded by Ms. Harker, Council unanimously approved the following resolution:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia approves the recommendations as discussed and agreed upon on October 25, 2022, for inclusion in the forthcoming report, "What Matters Most: Critical Student Issues Impacting their Higher Education Experience, Persistence and Completion;" and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education directs agency staff to submit the report to state leaders and policy makers upon its completion and release.

### **ACTIONS ON BYLAWS CHANGES AND POLICY FOR ALL-VIRTUAL MEETINGS**

Ms. Rebar informed Council's consideration of an action on: (1) proposed changes to its Bylaws (regarding remote participation in meetings); and (2) a separate policy governing all-virtual meetings. Staff's proposed amendments to the bylaws provide more-detailed procedures for Council to grant permission to an individual member to participate in a meeting remotely. Reasons for remote participation include the following: personal matters; a member's medical condition or disability; the need to provide medical care for a family member; and the member's principal residence being 60 miles or more from the meeting location (this reason had been available only to regional public bodies prior to September 1).

On motion by Dr. Smith and seconded by Dr. Schexnider, the Council approved the following resolutions:

#### **Resolution 1:**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, pursuant to the SCHEV Bylaws, Section Eight, following presentation in writing and discussion at its meeting on September 20, 2022, and following a three-quarters vote of the total Council membership, adopts the amended version of the SCHEV Bylaws dated October 25, 2022.

#### **Resolution 2:**

**BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia adopts the “SCHEV Policies for All Virtual Meetings and Electronic Meetings Conducted During State of Emergency Declarations.”**

**Staff is hereby directed to distribute both the amended bylaws and the new policy to Council members and to post the documents on the SCHEV website.**

## **REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEES**

### *Report from Academic Affairs Committee*

The committee discussed three agenda topics with action on one including: (1) action on proposed organizational changes at public institutions, (2) discussion of the state authorization reciprocity agreement (SARA), and (3) receipt of report of staff liaison to the academic affairs committee. The committee unanimously approved the action item on proposed organizational changes at public institutions. Three institutions had proposed organizational changes including George Mason University, Virginia Tech, and Old Dominion. With recommendation for Old Dominion University staff the committee has decided to hold off on reviewing the organizational changes request. The request from George Mason University and Virginia Tech were approved by the committee.

The actions regarding proposed organizational changes at public institutions including George Mason University and Virginia Tech were passed by the full council.

### *Report from the Resources & Planning Committee*

The committee discussed four agenda topics with action on two items including: (1) action on budget and policy recommendations for FY 2024, (2) action on institutional performance standards, (3) a discussion of themes from the six-year plans, and (4) the full-cost requirement for nonresident students. The committee unanimously approved both action on items on budget and policy recommendations and institutional performance standards.

The actions regarding budget and policy recommendations for FY24 and institutional performance standards were passed unanimously by Council.

## **RESOLUTION FOR DONALD FINLEY, RETIRING PRESIDENT OF THE VIRGINIA BUSINESS HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL (VBHEC)**

Mr. Blake introduced Don Finley highlighting his service to VBHEC from 1997 until 2022, working with over 50 college presidents, chancellors and superintendents of Virginia’s public institutions of higher education. He also advances Virginia higher education over the last 25 years through the Restructuring Act, the Top Jobs Act, the Workforce Credential Grant program, and the Tech Talent investment program. The Council for Virginia expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation to Donald J. “Don” Finley for his distinguished service and commitment and extends to him best wishes for continued success in all future endeavors.

Katie Webb made a motion to approve the resolution, and Dr. Harvey seconded the motion. The Council approved the resolution unanimously.

**RESOLUTION FOR ROBERT LAMBETH, RETIRING PRESIDENT COUNCIL OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES IN VIRGINIA (CICV)**

Mr. Blake recognized Robert Lambeth highlighting his service to the Commonwealth including working with over 100 presidents of Virginia private, nonprofit colleges and universities, promoting institutional collaboration, collective marketing, government relations and other topics and innovations. Mr. Lambeth is a champion of CICV institutions leading creation of a self-insured health insurance program for member institutions, the nation's first multi-employer retirement plan for independent, nonprofit colleges and universities. The Council expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation to Robert B. Lambeth, Jr. for his distinguished service and commitment, and extends to him best wishes for continued success in all future endeavors.

Katie Webb made a motion to approve the resolution, and Dr. Harvey seconded the motion. The Council approved the resolution unanimously.

**RECEIPT OF ITEMS DELEGATED TO STAFF**

Mr. Blake confirmed no new items delegated to staff

**OLD BUSINESS**

No old business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business.

**RECEIPT OF PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m with a motion by Dr. Harvey, seconded by Dr. Schexnider.

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Ken Ampy  
Council Chair

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Grace Covello



SCHEV Staff