

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA
COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2023**

FINAL MINUTES

Mr. Ampy called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. in Conference Room A at the Library of Virginia, 800 E. Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia.

Council members present: Ken Ampy, John Broderick, Walter Curt, Jason El Khoubi, William Harvey, Jennie O'Holleran, Alvin Schexnider, Jeffery Smith and Katharine Webb.

Council members absent: Mirza Baig, Victoria Harker, Thaddeus Holloman and Cheryl Oldham.

Staff members present: Tom Allison, Alisha Bazemore, Peter Blake, Grace Covello Khattar, Ashley Crute, Joe DeFilippo, Alan Edwards, Jodi Fisler, Sandra Freeman, Wendy Kang, Tod Massa, Angela Menjivar, Monica Osei, Kirstin Pantazis, Paula Robinson, Emily Salmon, Juanita Sherman, Paul Smith, Lynn Seuffert, Kristin Whelan, Yan Zheng.

Notable Guests: Secretary of Education, Aimee Guidera and Deputy Secretary of Education, Sarah Spota; Ramona Taylor from the Office of the Attorney General; Micol Hutchison, Sheri Robertson and Holly Whistler from the Virginia Community College System; President Tim Sands of Virginia Tech; Andrew Casielo from Old Dominion University; David Burge from George Mason University; Fletcher Linder and Audrey Burnett from James Madison University; Jayleen Drury, co-chair of the SAC Senior at Norfolk State University.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Webb motioned to approve the minutes from the October 25, 2023, Council meeting, which were seconded by Dr. Harvey. The minutes were approved unanimously.

WELCOME FROM SANDRA GIOIA TREADWAY, LIBRARIAN OF VIRGINIA

Ms. Treadway, librarian of Virginia and a member of the SCHEV Library Advisory Council, welcomed the Council members to the library. Ms. Treadway shared some of the history of the library. One of the oldest state government agencies, the library was created 200 years ago this month by the General Assembly to provide resources for state government. Originally housed in the state capitol building, the library later moved to the Oliver Hill house, then to the Patrick Henry Building until the Library of Virginia building was completed in 1997. The library houses collections that date back to the Jamestown settlement and is also a leader in digitization efforts, exhibits and programs. To celebrate the 200th anniversary, the Library of Virginia Foundation created a mobile version of the library in a bus that will travel throughout the Commonwealth.

Ms. Treadway thanked Secretary Guidera and Deputy Secretary Spota for supporting the library. Mr. Blake thanked Ms. Treadway and added that SCHEV archives student transcripts and other vital records with the library.

REMARKS FROM TIM SANDS, PRESIDENT OF VIRGINIA TECH

Dr. Sands, president of Virginia Tech and current president of the Council of Presidents (COP), addressed the meeting. After providing some updates on Virginia Tech, Dr. Sands shared three priorities for Virginia higher education as identified by the COP.

The first priority is protecting free speech and academic freedoms on campus. Dr. Sands expressed his appreciation to Secretary Guidera for bringing everyone together to work on these issues and to SCHEV for convening the Constructive Dialogue Institute.

The second priority is attracting and retaining talent. Higher education is a competitive marketplace with many out-of-state schools competing for Virginia students. Despite efforts from the institutions, affordability still needs to be addressed. Virginia needs to provide opportunities through more financial aid to provide affordable pathways. Dr. Sands stressed that Virginia needs to be on the offense in order to retain talent and recruit high-achieving, out-of-state students. The competition for enrollment impacts all Virginia institutions. The COP asked that SCHEV reconsider the policy that out-of-state and fees must completely cover the cost of a student's education.

The third priority is to create "sticky" pathways through work-based learning opportunities that encourage students to stay ("stick") in the Commonwealth. A sticky pathway begins the first day a student enters campus and extends through the first day a graduate starts a job. Dr. Sands recommends building experiences into curricula so that work-based experiences do not extend the time it takes to earn a degree.

Council member El Koubi asked what the institutions need from partners in government and business. Dr. Sands suggested that we must engage employers as partners in education to serve all students and encourage companies to take a cohort of students, not just the "A" students and that state government would have a role in facilitating these partnerships.

Council member Curt expressed concerns that intellectual rules and regulations create a problem for sticky pathways.

DISCUSSION OF THE ONLINE VIRGINIA NETWORK (OVN)

Drs. Burge, Whistler, Casiello and Linder addressed the Council to provide an overview and update for the Online Virginia Network (OVN). The General Assembly established the OVN to expand access to online degrees and credential programs.

Dr. Whistler outlined the goals of the OVN, which was created to serve non-traditional students by offering a central location for students to locate courses from partner institutions. The OVN also wants to be a hosting resource for students to complete coursework through their website.

Dr. Whistler discussed the relationship between OVN and transfer. The portal offers several solutions that make transfer easier. The portal is useful to non-traditional students who may have multiple outside responsibilities and less time to attend classes in person. Students can submit their courses online and quickly find the class they need.

Dr. Harvey asked about the collective online enrollment. He stressed the importance of knowing how many students the OVN serves strictly because it is online. Mr. Curt asked about the budget and the deliverables and wanted to know how many graduates the OVN has and how it compares to Liberty and Regent University.

DISCUSSION OF THE 2023 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

Wendy Kang and Grace Covello Khattar briefly discussed the Governor's introduced budget. Member amendments are due Friday, January 13. More information about the budget will be available on Monday, January 16. Ms. Covello Khattar highlighted some of the higher education related bills. She provided the Council with a list of the bills and a list of important dates for the General Assembly session.

RECEIPT OF REPORT FROM AGENCY DIRECTOR

Op-Six/TTIP meeting: On November 2, SCHEV staff convened a joint meeting of Op-Six (Secretary of Education, Secretary of Finance, money committee staff directors, Department of Planning and Budget director, SCHEV director) and the Tech Talent Investment Program reviewers (Op-Six plus the CEO of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership). The first half of the meeting focused on TTIP and was led by Pam Harder from VEDP. In the second half, attendees received updates on central-account funds, institutions' six-year plans and enrollment. At a subsequent meeting on October 1, the group reviewed central-account funds. As a result of discussions at these meetings, the Department of Planning and Budget released funds that had been appropriated in support of certain education and training programs.

Mental health workforce pilot grants: In November, in consultation with the Virginia Health Care Foundation, SCHEV awarded Higher Education Mental Health Workforce Pilot Grants to six universities: Christopher Newport, George Mason, James Madison, Longwood, Radford and Virginia Tech. The General Assembly appropriated \$500,000 annually for the next two years to support the pilot program. Each grant award will underwrite the salary and benefits of an onsite licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) or licensed professional counselor (LPC) candidate for two years. The hosting universities will hire, train and supervise the LCSW/LPC candidates to work at on-campus mental health care facilities until licensed. The awarded institutions are currently in the process of hiring and on-boarding the candidates.

Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership: As part of the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP), SCHEV awarded a \$250,000 grant to the University of Virginia's College at Wise to lead a regional effort that will increase the number of high-quality paid internships and other work-based learning opportunities for students in Southwest Virginia. UVa-Wise will use the funds to connect employers to students and to ensure the readiness of employers, students and higher-ed institutions to increase significantly the number of high-quality paid internships and other work-based

learning opportunities in the region. In addition to regional higher-ed institutions, UVA-Wise's partners will include the Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, the Southwest Virginia Society for Human Resources Management and the United Way of Southwest Virginia.

Foster-care single point of contact: The 2022 Acts of Appropriation (Item 144 S.) tasks SCHEV to “examine the feasibility of having a point of contact at each public institution of higher education for students who have been involved in the foster care system.” A single point of contact (SPOC) is an individual designated by an institution to support students in need, connecting students to resources and services on- and off-campus. SCHEV’s report concludes that it is feasible to have SPOCs at public institutions in Virginia, as it would help streamline existing efforts to support these students and help them navigate systems of academic, physical and emotional support, financial aid and other on- and off-campus resources. Implementing a SPOC initiative would require funding, coordination and support from various stakeholders, including state government, colleges and universities and community-based organizations.

JLARC reports: The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission released three reports that are relevant to SCHEV’s work: [student financial aid](#), [Virginia529 actuarial surplus](#) and [dual enrollment](#). Staff will follow activities in the General Assembly to see if any related budget or legislative items ensue.

Staff departures: I don’t always recognize staff who have taken new positions, but Beverly Rebar, Senior Associate for Academic and Legislative Affairs, and Wendy Kang, Director of Finance Policy and Innovation have been especially valuable long-time team members who are departing at a critical time (the start of the legislative session!). They contributed in visible and not-so-visible ways in their years of service at SCHEV. Beverly has moved to the staff of the Middle States Commission, a regional accrediting agency. Wendy is moving to the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee staff. We wish them the best!

New staff: We welcome Alisha Bazemore as the Assistant Director for Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives, and Ashley Crute as Associate for Innovative Work-Based Learning Initiatives. They complement current staff work to support the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership, SCHEV’s internship initiative. Alisha joins us from Norfolk State University. Ashley most recently worked at Longwood University. They both have relevant experience in student career services.

Other staff activities: Congratulations to Associate Director of Equity and Engagement, Paula Robinson, on completing the year-long Minority Political Leadership Institute program. We hosted a lunch for all new staff – nearly 20 of them – who had been hired since March 2020. We held our end-of-year celebration of service awards luncheon in December. Thanks to Council members Ken Ampy and Katharine Webb, who attended and brought greetings from Council.

Out and about: On October 27 and 28, I attended the General Assembly’s “Education Summit” in Roanoke, where I moderated a panel on connecting postsecondary goals with funding. Agency staff attended the retreats of the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee. I attended a reception (along with former Council chair Gil Minor) in Norfolk at which another former Council chair,

Gil Bland, received the [Darden Award](#) for community leadership. While in Norfolk, I met with Norfolk State University President Javaune Adams-Gaston. The board of Virginia529, on which I sit, met in both November and December. I attended the Education Commission of the States Winter Commissioners meeting in San Diego.

DISCUSSION OF ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN 2023 AND BEYOND

Mr. Blake opened the discussion by promising to provide more details and some considerations for Council at the March meeting.

Virginia has been operating in an environment where enrollments have grown steadily. Over the next 15-20 years, however, enrollments by high school graduates will be slower or show no growth due to lower birth rates nationwide. We will need to cast a wider net for students.

Virginia also has a particularly strong labor market, and it may seem like a greater opportunity to take a job straight out of high school. In 2017, 72% of graduates went on to some college; that number dropped to 65% now.

Other factors impacting enrollment rates include increased competition from out-of-state institutions offering deep discounts and alternate pathways to education. Many young people believe that some YouTube content is equivalent to college coursework. The lower public funding and increasing tuition and fees are not sustainable.

Undergraduate in-state enrollments at Virginia's public four-year institutions last year were the lowest in 20 years at 137,000 students, but we have made up with increases in out-of-state of 10% and graduate students. Community college enrollment is lower because of the robust labor market. Northern states, where Virginia has historically recruited, are experiencing a larger decrease in high school graduates than Virginia.

Legislative considerations –

The General Assembly will look at several bills that could impact enrollment. The following are some items the Council should consider:

- Eliminate the full-cost requirement for out-of-state students.
- Seek to offer in-state tuition to Appalachia region students as Radford University is doing.
- Offer a fully online e-rate for in-state and out-of-state students.
- Extend the state set caps on enrollment for out-of-state students at UVA and W&M.
- Increase TAG award to boost enrollment at the private institutions.
- Targeted financial aid.
- Right size some of the institutions through cuts and partnerships with other institution.

It is a unique time because of fewer people but greater demand. The situation creates a perfect opportunity for policy consideration for the Council.

Mr. Ampy asked Mr. Curt and Ms. Webb to work with staff to concentrate on this effort and report back to the Council in March.

Ms. Webb asked Secretary Guidera about creating a special task force to explore enrollment. Secretary Guidera stated her desire to continue looking at the data and stressed that we must be strategic and thoughtful about addressing these issues. She stated that we need to be able to explain why having a vibrant education system matters. Ms. Webb suggested that they look at retention along with enrollment. Mr. Ampy suggested that they concentrate on the enrollment issue for now.

Secretary Guidera emphasized that the net “migration out” issue is very important to the Governor, and he will highlight this in his State of the Commonwealth address. We need to ensure that we define success as preparing Virginia to be productive members of Virginia’s economy. Dr. Garvey thanked the Secretary for her time.

DISCUSSION OF VIRGINIA TALENT + OPPORTUNITY PARTNERSHIP (V-TOP)

Dr. Alan Edwards, SCHEV’s strategic planning and policy studies director, introduced Dr. Alisha Bazemore, who is working as the V-TOP director. She gave a quick overview of the V-TOP program, which was created to provide internship program grants to institutions and internship readiness programs for institutions, students and employers.

V-TOP’s first phase addressed readiness. The program launched readiness modules to assist students in preparing to join the workforce as an intern. The program secured a proclamation from the Governor on July 28, naming the day Virginia Intern Day. V-TOP formed six multidisciplinary workgroups, and created employer modules to train prospective employers on the administration of internship programs. VTOP also procured a staffing agency for small businesses and awarded vision grants to institutions and regional collaboratives.

The work continues in 2023 with grants awarded to additional institutions and collaboratives. A grant to help institutions transform federal work study into internships will be awarded in 2023. V-TOP also plans to complete the data governance work with the Council of Presidents workgroup and to develop a work-study toolkit for institutions.

Mr. Curt brought up some of the challenges facing employers in rural parts of Virginia and suggested that institutions open dorms for the summer to house students. Ms. Bazemore added that V-TOP is also considering creating a ride-share program for longer commutes. Mr. Curt stated that addressing these challenges is a way to broaden the regions where this program is available.

DISCUSSION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN: PATHWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

Ms. Salmon, SCHEV’s Senior Associate for Strategic Planning and Policy Studies updated the Council on the statewide strategic plan.

Ms. Salmon concentrated her discussion on the five measures established by Council in 2021- attainment, enrollment, awards, borrowing and wages. She described closing the gaps in each of the measures and the progress relative to the three goals that higher education in Virginia be equitable, transformative and affordable.

Of the five measures, Virginia falls below the overall attainment objective. The increase of .9 percentage points is below the 1.2 points needed to meet the 70% by 2030 attainment goal.

Ms. Salmon then summarized the SCHEV activities from the past 12 months that support the goals of Pathways to Opportunity.

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEES

Report from Academic Affairs Committee

The committee discussed the state of transfer in Virginia.

The actions items voted on by the committee and moved to the full Council where they were unanimously approved include the following:

1. Action at a public degree program at Christopher Newport University.
2. Action on guidelines on awarding of credit for military education, training and experience.
3. Action on a proposed framework for Transfer Associate degree programs at Virginia's community colleges.

An additional action item about organizational change at Old Dominion University was approved 8-0-1 with Council member Broderick abstaining from the vote.

Report from the Resources & Planning Committee

The committee discussed three topics, including the Governor's introduced budget amendments, the low-income/Pell enrollment and completion initiative, and the 2022 degrees and certificates awarded. The committee also received a report on the status of the full-cost requirement for out-of-state students.

RECEIPT OF ITEMS DELEGATED TO STAFF

Mr. Blake confirmed no new items were delegated to staff.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Curt stated that this fall he met with 20 of the Virginia college presidents who expressed a concern that it is taking a long time for new programs addressing a need in the business community to make it through the program approval process. Mr. Ampy commented that there have been recent updates to the program approval process. Dr.

Schexnider expressed concern about Council members meeting with college presidents and suggested that Council finds a more efficient way to receive concerns of institutional leadership.

Dr. DeFilippo provided a summary of the approval process and timeline. He assured Council that the typical new program decisions are made within a few weeks of submission. Occasionally, SCHEV will give a program an adverse decision because it is poorly documented, and the proposal is returned to the institution. The institution is then given three months to modify the proposal. If not modified in three months, SCHEV sends a letter stating that the program is no longer under active review, and the process begins again when the institution reapplies with a new proposal. Mr. Curt emphasized that the presidents are our customers, and this is their impression thus, it is something that SCHEV should address.

Dr. DeFilippo described another process where the employability and duplication measures of a new program are easily recognized. These programs can be forwarded through the approval process without comment from other institutions and with the approval of staff. The programs are placed in the agenda book as approved. This option is underutilized by the institutions. Program development is too often done based on resources on campus and faculty desires rather than what is needed by the Commonwealth.

RECEIPT OF PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. with a motion by Dr. Schexnider, seconded by Dr. Smith.

Ken Ampy
Council Chair

Kristin Whelan
SCHEV Staff