

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE COUNCIL (CCC) MEETING NOTES**

**January 10, 2024 – 3:30 – 5:00 PM**

**Iowa Department of Education – Zoom**

**Council members in attendance included:**

- ❑ Cassandra Halls, CCC and State Board of Education Member (In Person)
- ❑ Cindy Dietz, CCC and State Board of Education Member (In Person)
- ❑ John Robbins, CCC and State Board of Education Member (via conf. call)
- ❑ Dr. Matt Thompson, CCC Member and Community College President, Indian Hills Community College (via conf. call)
- ❑ Moudy Nabulsi, CCC Member and Trustee, Southeastern Community College (via conf. call)
- ❑ Mary Meisterling, CCC Member and State Board of Education Member (via conf. call)

**Iowa Department of Education staff and others in attendance included:**

- ❑ Jeremy Varner, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (In Person)
- ❑ Amy Gieseke, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (In Person)
- ❑ Dennis Harden, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (In Person)
- ❑ Paula Nissen, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (In Person)
- ❑ Vlad Bassis, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (via conf. call)
- ❑ Lora Vargason Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (In Person)
- ❑ Heather Meissen, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (In Person)
- ❑ Kelly Friesleben, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness (In Person)
- ❑ Kat Callahan, Community Colleges for Iowa (In Person)
- ❑ Emily Shields, Community Colleges for Iowa (via conf. call)

**I. Call to Order and Introductions – Cassandra Halls**

- The meeting was called to order at 3:34 PM. The group welcomed new member Mary Meisterling, and gave introductions.

**II. Approval of November 14, 2023 Meeting Notes (Action Required – Attachment 1)**

**Motion:** Thompson moved to approve, seconded by Nabulsi.

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.

**III. Updates – Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness, Community Colleges for Iowa**

- Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness – Jeremy Varner
  - The Iowa legislature is in session, and Governor Reynolds laid out her priorities in her Condition of the State address.
  - Many administrative rules are in the public notice or adoption phase.
  - Iowa Department of Education (Department) is also working on the Workforce Training and Economic Development Fund (WTED) report.
  - Expanding career pathway opportunities is a top priority for the Department and the director, particularly industry-recognized credentials (IRCs).
    - The Department is releasing two new grants. The first aims to align secondary career and technical education (CTE) programs with

industry certifications. Money is only available to school districts, due to federal funding restrictions.

- The second will support school district partnerships with licensed childcare centers, to align early childhood programs with the Child Development Associate credential. This project is in collaboration with the Department's Early Childhood Bureau.
- The Department is also rolling out awards for the Career Academy Incentive Fund's (CAIF) spring cycle. Focus will be on tier two applications to upgrade/add onto existing community college (CC) facilities. Awards will be up to \$1 million.
- College and career transition counselor grant applications closed in December, and awardees will be announced soon.
- Iowa College Aid is moving to the Grimes Building.
- Community Colleges for Iowa (CC4IA)– Cat Callahan
  - Callahan discussed Governor Reynolds' Condition of the State address.
    - The Governor complimented CCs for their work, and announced they had achieved the training goals laid out in her Future Ready Iowa initiative.
    - She said there would now be a focus on Last Dollar scholarships, a tiered approach and emphasizing the top 10 most high-demand careers and programs.
  - CC4IA is monitoring developments with the Governor's proposed area education agency (AEA) changes.
  - The Governor's proposed budget would increase K-12 funding by 2.5 percent, with extra teacher pay. CCs would get 2.5 percent, but are asking for 4.5 to 4.75 percent (\$10 million) to more quickly and efficiently implement priorities.
  - The Governor didn't recommend intermediary grant funding, but did propose adding \$2 million for Manufacturing 4.0.
- **Questions/Comments:**
  - Nabulsi asked how the IRC grants could finance new CC programs. Varner said grants only go to school districts, since they are funded with specific federal dollars. IRCs and career academies will remain a Department priority.
  - Halls asked what the eligibility guidelines are for the IRC grant. Varner said the funding can only go to school districts.
  - Halls asked how charter schools factor into the IRC grant. Harden said he would look into it.
  - Nabulsi asked if criteria have been developed for the IRC grant. Varner said the program is ready to go, and expressed confidence in its success.
  - Halls asked how to ensure IRC high school curricula align with CC requirements. Varner said the aim is to create robust pathways with credentials that ladder up. Schools and community colleges can work together through regional planning partnerships, as they already do with career academies.
  - Halls asked Thompson if he'd heard anything in his region about partnerships for the IRC grant opportunity. Thompson said he expected to hear more in the spring. He had, however, received a call from the principal of a school that had

been an active CTE partner. Thompson said he had hoped the grant would be built more around career academies, but it should work okay given CCs' existing partnerships with school districts.

- Nabulsi asked how much the Governor budgeted for CCs. Shields said she is proposing \$5.7 million, rather than the \$10 million CC4IA is requesting.
- Halls asked how the process would be changed for identifying the top 10 careers for Last Dollar scholarships. She said right now, there are more than 10 identified programs. Callahan walked through the process, which includes final approval by an IWD committee. She said whether the top 10 will be identified statewide or by region is an open question.
- Halls asked for details on the IWD committee, including its makeup. Callahan said the committee's priorities are public. Nissen said the Department's director is on the committee. Callahan said she'd look up and send the list of committee members to Halls.
- Nabulsi asked if Varner could elaborate on proposed Last Dollar scholarship changes. Varner said there was nothing to add right now, the Department was waiting for bill language and would work closely with Iowa College Aid.

**IV. Rules: Chapters 21/24, 33, 46 (Notice); Chapters 25, 27, 32, 48, 49, 80 (Approval) – Thomas Mayes, General Counsel, Laura Vargason, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness**

- Mayes was absent, so Vargason ran through the proposed Iowa Administrative Code changes.
- Chapter 21/24 – Lots of staff engagement to combine these two chapters. Includes updating APS and work-based learning (WBL) language, updating terms, additional language for competency-based instruction. Eliminated unnecessary/burdensome terms. Faculty qualifications will be incorporated between this version and the final action rules version previously discussed in November. Also vetted outside the Department by chief academic officers.
  - **Motion:** Thompson moved to approve the changes, Robbins seconded.
  - **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.
- Chapter 22 (Senior Year Plus)—This is a very technical chapter, and tweaks were mostly to remove unnecessary/burdensome language. The Department's concurrent enrollment team reviewed the changes, and they also underwent outside review.
  - **Motion:** Dietz moved to accept the changes and post notice, Nabulsi seconded.
  - **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.
- Chapter 46, CTE Rules—These rules are fairly new, and don't require much updating, mostly streamlining. Harden worked on them, and ran them by regional planning partnerships for external review. Clarifying language for CAIF funds will be added before the rules come before the CCC for final action.
  - **Motion:** Meisterling moved to accept/post notice, Robbins seconded.
  - **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.
- Chapter 25, 27, 32, 48, 49 and 80 – No major changes. Mayes had asked Vargason to relay that the rules could be run together as a single vote, as there were no public

comments received, nor substantive changes. The CCC vote would place them on the consent agenda for the State Board to adopt at its meeting tomorrow.

- **Motion:** Robbins moved to accept changes, Nabulsi seconded.

- **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

- **Questions/Comments**

- Nabulsi asked how the Chapter 21/24 changes were related to quality faculty requirements. Gieseke said currently requirements are for a master's degree and 18 credit hours for arts and sciences instructors. The Higher Learning Commission is now proposing a master's degree plus "reasonable credits," left up to the institution. For consistency, the Department would like to revert to what was initially required under Iowa Code, a master's degree plus 12 credits.

**V. Annual Condition of Iowa's Community Colleges Presentation, Academic Year 2023 –**

Jeremy Varner, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness

Vlad Bassis, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness

- Varner noted the Fall Enrollment Report includes the freshest data, and the Condition Report covers academic year 2022-23. While the data is older, it also includes more details than the Fall Enrollment Report.
- The annual report is due to the Iowa legislature on February 1. After the Department submits it, CCC members will receive a copy in the mail.
- This year's report is more streamlined, since there's been more of a shift in demand from published reports toward interactive data.
- Bassis presented information from the report. Data was comprehensive, and collected within 365 days of the academic year. Highlights from the presentation included:
  - Credit enrollment declined slightly (0.3 percent), to 117,172 students.
  - Racial/ethnic minority student numbers reached a record high, up 24.7 percent.
  - Noncredit enrollment (much of it in CTE) was up 4.1 percent.
  - Joint enrollment increased, to 52,814 students (up 5.6 percent). Awards for these students rose 32.3 percent, to 2,458.
  - Degree awards increased 5.6 percent, to 18,438. For the second time in 25 years, short-term certifications surpassed two-year degrees.
  - Success increased over last academic year, with a 42.1 percent overall graduation rate (up nearly two percent) and a 27.3 percent transfer rate (up about two percent).
  - Transfer major program enrollment went up 5.1 percent.
  - In-state tuition and fees increased an average 3.6 percent over last year, to \$213.28, placing Iowa among the higher-cost enrollment states.
- **Questions/Comments:**
  - Nabulsi asked if CCs had increased enrollment in health care programs, particularly addressing the nursing shortage. Varner said his bureau could look into it, and send the numbers to Nabulsi. He noted that nursing is a core part of CCs' CTE offerings, and is the largest CC program area. Bassis said he recalled running career cluster data, and health occupations was the largest for Iowa CC program enrollment. However, the enrollment numbers were slightly lower

than the previous year. Bassis noted there was the sharp increase in health care worker demand two years ago, which has subsequently decreased.

- Nabulsi asked how the Department could share this with the Iowa legislature, and highlight the good work CCs are doing. Halls said that's an ongoing question.
- Halls asked for confirmation that the report is due February 1. Varner confirmed. He said it would include data, but wouldn't have a lot of the narrative elements seen in previous years. He also noted the Department provides data to CC4IA upon request, and drafts one-pagers as needed. Nissen said the Department often uses report data for proclamations and resolutions for the CC Day on the Hill.
- Nabulsi suggested adding an executive letter with highlights, to ensure legislators see key information. Varner agreed that the Department should continue using the report for different policymaker-focused documents. Bassis said this year's report includes a one-page executive summary.
- Nabulsi said he had used the information in the fall report to highlight what his college was doing in its community, and suggested building more on that.
- Halls commended the bureau for all the information it collects on a regular basis, the work that goes into that and the quality of its reports.

**VI. WTED, Paula Nissen, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness**

- Nissen presented on WTED and its components. Highlights included:
  - WTED is the main source of funding for many CC programs (credit and noncredit), and can finance initiatives including: career academies, CTE, entrepreneurship education and small business assistance and targeted industry general training.
  - Per Iowa Code, 70 percent of those funds must be used on targeted industry clusters. Last year, CCs used 91.3 percent of available funds on those targets.
  - Most WTED expenditures were devoted to CTE, at nearly \$9.4 million. Much of that was in the advanced manufacturing career cluster.
  - Faculty salaries were the largest expense category, at more than \$9.9 million.
  - Almost 45,000 students participated in WTED-funded programs, and almost 39,000 were completers.
  - WTED supported more than 3,800 businesses.
  - In Fiscal Year 2024, CCs plan to spend 90.6 percent of WTED funding on targeted clusters, with the most going to advanced manufacturing, at nearly \$5.8 million.
  - CCs will devote most WTED monies to CTE in FY24, at nearly \$8.9 million.
- **Questions/Comments:**
  - Nabulsi asked how much money was in the WTED fund. Nissen said the fund was \$15.1 million, with \$100,000 kept at the Department, and \$15 million distributed to CCs according to a formula.
  - Halls asked about the average size of a WTED-funded business. Nissen said the vast majority are very small (less than 25 employees), but she could provide more detailed information later.

- Thompson discussed how helpful WTED is for offsetting the costs of establishing new programs and career academies.
- Robbins asked why community colleges don't use their own funds to implement these programs. Nissen said because they were already spending available funds on existing programs. Thompson said this funding source is vital to CCs, and they use it to focus on supporting career academies, training and small businesses, rather than covering a lot of administrative costs.
- Halls suggested adding to the WTED report how many small and mid-sized businesses are positively affected by the fund. Nissen said she would look into the data and get that information to Halls.
- Nabulsi asked how WTED funds are allocated to CCs. Varner said the state uses a formula to distribute the monies to the CCs.
  - **Motion:** Thompson moved to send the 2023 WTED Progress Report and 2024 plan for the WTED to the State Board for approval, Meisterling seconded.
  - **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

**VII. For the Good of the Order – Cassandra Halls**

- Thompson noted the Governor had not included intermediary funds in her budget. Last year, the program moved to IWD. He expressed concern that it is no longer part of the budget. Halls said some businesses and chambers of commerce were looking at creating an intermediary network independently, to parallel with high schools. Some of that funding was allocated through IWD as well.
- Robbins asked why all CCs listed "Analysts and Outcomes Expansion Deduction" in their budgets. Varner said last spring, the Department talked with the CC presidents about utilizing some WTED funds to support education outcomes-related initiatives. There have been requests for non-state-mandated products and analyses for which the Department didn't have resources.
- Bassis returned to Nabulsi's previous question about health science program enrollment. He said enrollment decreased by 1.6 percent. The health science career cluster still has by far the greatest enrollment.
- Robbins asked if there was any pre-filed legislation by CCs for the 2024 Iowa legislative session. Varner said pre-filed bills were primarily technical corrections. The Department has been engaged on some bills, but he doesn't expect huge implications for CCs.
- Done and adjourned 4:58 p.m.
- Next meeting: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 – Grimes Building, 400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50319