

**MINUTES**  
**STATE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**January 23, 2025**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the State Board of Higher Education (Board) was convened both in-person at 607 South Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17120, and virtually via MS Teams on Thursday, January 23, 2025. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Act. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Dr. Cynthia Shapira, Chair.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Ms. Alaina Koltash, Deputy General Counsel, Governor's Office of General Counsel, performed the roll call. A quorum of members was present as follows:

Ms. Diane Acri (Designee for Hon. Jesse Topper)  
Dr. Brenda Allen  
Dr. Ann Bieber  
Hon. Jay Costa  
Mr. Sean Eden  
Dr. Marylouise Esten  
Ms. Angela Fitterer  
Hon. Wayne Langerholc  
Dr. Kara Laskowski  
Mr. Kenneth Long

Dr. Cheryl McConnell  
Dr. Carol Momjian (Designee for Hon. Nancy Walker)  
Hon. Pedro Rivera  
Hon. Peter Schweyer  
Dr. Cynthia Shapira  
Ms. Andrea Shirk  
Mr. Kevin Washo  
Ms. Skyler Wrubleski  
Ms. Bobbie Jo Zapor

Absent: Dr. Michael Wade Smith and Mr. Michael G. Warfel

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2024, meeting was made by Mr. Kenneth Long and Ms. Diane Acri.

**VOTE:** All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

## **V. REMARKS BY THE CHAIR**

Dr. Shapira began the meeting by providing context for and introducing the invited speaker, Mr. Ben Cannon, Executive Director of the Oregon [Higher Education Coordinating Commission](#) (HECC). She noted the importance of learning more about the roles, responsibilities, activities, and composition of existing higher education coordinating boards across the U.S. to better guide the strategic-planning and decision-making process of the new Board.

## **VI. INVITED SPEAKER**

Mr. Ben Cannon provided a brief presentation on the HECC since its formation, its charge and mission, its strategic plan, and its effect on higher education in Oregon since its inception in 2013. The presentation was followed by multiple questions covering a wide variety of topics, including:

- Balance between governance and coordination;
- Partnerships with higher education institutions;
- Communications transparency with the general public;
- Types of data collection and deployment; and
- HECC's institutional and cultural continuity.

After a robust and informative conversation, Dr. Shapira thanked Mr. Cannon for his expertise and insights, noting especially the importance of building a culture of transparency and trustworthiness.

## **VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Executive Director Dr. Kate Shaw reported on other elements of Act 69 of 2024 that are taking shape:

- Dual credit: Noting that the availability of dual credit programs in secondary schools has a direct impact on college participation among students who don't ordinarily attend college, Dr. Shaw reported on the launch of the Dual Credit Innovation Grant Program. Administered by PDE, the \$14 million grant initiative will help community colleges and PASSHE institutions establish/expand dual credit offerings to partnering school entities, with an emphasis on high-need occupations and enrolling underrepresented students. The opportunity may be extended to state-related and independent institutions after the initial applications have been reviewed.
- College transfer: Act 69 of 2024 requires PASSHE institutions to accept transfer students with an associate degree from a PA community college or another PASSHE institution to a parallel baccalaureate program with full junior standing if available. Since the passage of the legislation, the Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee (TAOC), formed under 2006 legislation and comprising representatives of each PA community college and PASSHE institution, voted to implement 8 such transfer agreements, effective academic year 2026-2027. The programs are:

- Business
- Psychology
- Early Childhood Education (PK-4)
- Nursing (RN)
- Social Work
- Biology
- Computer Science
- Liberal Arts

## **VII. UPDATE ON COMMITTEES**

Dr. Shapira introduced the respective committee chairs and requested their reports.

### **Performance-Based Funding Council**

Chair: Hon. Jesse Topper

Ms. Diane Acri, on behalf of Rep. Topper, reported that the council met on January 14 and 21, 2025. The first meeting included reports from PDE and the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA). The second meeting included reports from the Pennsylvania State University and a panel from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. The next meeting is scheduled for January 30, 2025.

### **Transfer of Authority**

Chair: Dr. Ann Bieber

Dr. Bieber reported that the committee has not met since the last Board meeting, as it is awaiting new information from the Office of General Counsel for its next meeting on February 13, 2025.

### **Postsecondary Data**

Chair: Mr. Kenneth Long

Mr. Long reported that the committee met on Jan. 8 on the creation of a technical advisory group composed of members representing different sections. The next meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2025.

### **Bylaws**

Chair: Mr. Kevin Washo

Mr. Washo reported that the committee completed a review of the first of three sections of draft Bylaws, focused on Board purpose and membership. The committee will continue to meet to review additional sections of the draft Bylaws before the Board's February 20, 2025, meeting.

## **VIII. STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION**

Dr. Shapira, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, reported that the Strategic Planning Committee and staff have been working diligently to meet the September 1, 2025, due date set by Act 69 of 2024 and are scheduling six regional hearings across the commonwealth. Key elements of include:

- Substantial public feedback through regional public hearings, smaller informal meetings and a broader survey ;
- Input from key stakeholder groups: employers, students, faculty, unions, local officials, K-12 leaders, and legislators not serving on the Board;

- A final public hearing in Harrisburg covering a full draft of the plan, soliciting feedback in accordance with the legislation.

The next Board meeting will be focused on reviewing draft goals for the plan. With no further business, Dr. Shapira adjourned the meeting.

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING: February 21, 2025**