

**MINUTES  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Virtual Meeting**

**November 17, 2021**

The meeting of the Council of Higher Education was called to order by Council Chair Dr. Jonathan Peri at 8:38 a.m. Due to public health measures being implemented across the Commonwealth to address the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the Council and members of the public participated in the meeting virtually via webinar and teleconference. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986.

**Attending:**

Council of Higher Education

James Agras	Pamela Gunter-Smith	Eva Rankin
Hon. Carol Aichele	Sarah Jordan	Hon. Curt Sonney
Reva Gandhi	Hon. Mark Longietti	Karen Farmer White
Jamie Bracey-Green	Jonathan Peri	Hon. Lindsey Williams

Master Plan for Higher Education Advisory Committee

Dr. Brenda Allen	Dr. Patrick Gallagher	Pedro Rivera
Carrie Amann	Dr. Tanya I. Garcia	Aaron Schenk
Elizabeth Bolden	Dr. Daniel Greenstein	
Nichole Duffey	Sheila Ireland	

**OPENING REMARKS**

Dr. Peri welcomed members of the Council of Higher Education (Council) and the Master Plan for Higher Education Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee). He introduced Hadass Sheffer, Special Consultant to the Deputy Secretary in the Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education, who will support the development of the Master Plan for Higher Education. He also provided an update on the status of the long-range plans that had been requested from institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania and noted that four additional plans were submitted since the time of his last report, bringing the total number of submissions to 68.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 9, 2021, meeting of the Council of Higher Education were approved on an **Agras/Gunter Smith** motion.

**PRESENTATION**

**ERASING EQUITY GAPS TO INCREASE POSTSECONDARY  
ATTAINMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA**

Each working session of the Council and the Advisory Committee is focused on one of the five strategic priorities around which a new Master Plan will be centered. Dr. Tanya I.

Garcia, Acting Deputy Secretary and Commissioner for Postsecondary and Higher Education, presented information on strategic priority #2 – Erase Equity Gaps in Postsecondary Access, Progression, and Completion by Race, Ethnicity, Income, Age, Gender, and Geography – that served as the focus of the meeting. Dr. Garcia identified three objectives for the session: 1) understand Pennsylvania’s equity gaps, 2) introduce belonging as critical to postsecondary attainment, and 3) learn about strategies to erase equity gaps from internal and external stakeholders. For reference, she reviewed the postsecondary attainment goal previously adopted by the Council. As part of her presentation, she illustrated Pennsylvania’s equity gaps by presenting data on enrollment of 18-24 years-olds in postsecondary education by race and ethnicity and data on postsecondary attainment of 25-64 year-olds by race and ethnicity.

### **PANEL DISCUSSIONS**

The Working Session included three panel discussions that each addressed “Strategies to Erase Equity Gaps in Postsecondary Access, Progression, and Completion” from different perspectives.

Panel number one reflected learning from peers in other states and national experts. Panelists were Steven Taylor, D.B.A, President of the Foundation Board at Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College, and Senior Fellow, Postsecondary Education at Charles Koch Institute + Stand Together, and Sarah Whitley, Ph.D., Assistant Vice President, Center for First-generation Student Success, NASPA (student affairs administrators in higher education). The panel was moderated by Kate Porterfield, Director of Marketing and Communications, Higher Ed Insight.

Panel number two reflected voices of Pennsylvania institutions of higher education. Panelists were Dr. Peggy Heim, Dean of Student Development, Equity and Inclusion, Lehigh-Carbon Community College; Dr. Elizabeth Meade, President, Cedar Crest College; Dr. Sue Mukherjee, Senior Vice President, Strategy & Student Success, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania; Dr. Clyde Pickett, Vice Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer, University of Pittsburgh; and Dr. Rita Tolliver-Roberts, Vice President, Academic Affairs and Provost, Peirce College. Marcus Lingenfelter, Senior Vice President of Policy & Advocacy at Cognia™, served as moderator.

Panel number three reflected voices of Pennsylvania students. Panelists were Ann Jachinowicz, a student at Holy Family University and graduate of Philadelphia Community College, and Jeremiah Torres, Jr., a student at Lehigh-Carbon Community College. The panel was moderated by Acting Deputy Secretary Garcia.

### **DISCUSSION ITEM**

Following the panel discussions, Dr. Peri provided time for open dialog and reflections by members of the Council and the Advisory Committee related to strategic priority #2 around which the working session was centered.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:18 p.m. on an **Agras/Gunter Smith** motion.

*Karen Molchanow/slj*

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Karen Molchanow  
Executive Director