

DRAFT MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE REALIGNMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Wednesday, August 31, 2016

2:30 p.m.

Room B, MAC

Little Rock, Arkansas

The Legislative Task Force to Study the Realignment of Higher Education met on Wednesday, August 31, 2016, in the Multi-Agency Complex (MAC), Room B, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Members in Attendance: Senator Jane English, Co-Chair; Representative Mark Lowery, Co-Chair; Senators Ronald Caldwell and John Cooper. Representatives Bruce Cozart, Mark McElroy, Micah Neal, and Dan Sullivan.

Other Legislators present: Senators Jonathan Dismang, Joyce Elliot, and Jon Woods; Representatives John Baine, Bob Ballinger, Justin Boyd, David Branscum, Mary Broadaway, Anthony Davis, Jim Dotson, Charlotte Douglas, R. Trevor Drown, Jon Eubanks, Kenneth Ferguson, David Fielding, Charlene Fite, Vivian Flowers, Justin Gonzales, Michael John Gray, Justin Harris, Ken Henderson, David Hillman, Grant Hodges, Ron McNair, David Meeks, Betty Overbey, John Payton, Mathew Pitsch, Marcus Richmond, Laurie Rushing, Sue Scott, Matthew Shepherd, James Sorvillo, Nelda Speaks, James Sturch, and David Whitaker.

Representative Lowery called the meeting to order.

Consideration to approve Minutes of February 24, 2016 [EXHIBIT B]

Representative Cozart made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Representative McElroy. Without objection, the minutes were approved by the Task Force.

Presentation by Dr. Margaret Ellibee, President, Pulaski Technical College

Dr. Margaret Ellibee was recognized and gave an overview of the Pulaski Technical College and University of Arkansas System merger. She stated that the college currently has an enrollment of about 6,700 students. The merger is scheduled to be completed by February 2, 2017.

Issues Discussed:

- No elimination of staff positions
- Increased health care benefits for staff
- Local control
- Program expansion
- Unintended consequences
- Articulation agreements

Presentation by Dr. Steve Cole, Chancellor, Cossatot Community College- University of Arkansas

Dr. Steve Cole was recognized to discuss the 2001 Cossatot Community College merger with the University of Arkansas system. Mr. Cole stated that there has been a 67% increase of students since the merger.

Issues Discussed:

- Local control
- System benefits
- Budget merger
- Four sales taxes passed in support of college

Presentation by Dr. Debra West, Chancellor, Arkansas State University- Mid South

Dr. Debra West was recognized, she spoke to her perspective as a first time chancellor of former community college. She stated that the UA system merger was initiated by the board with the intent to find balance during the transition of leadership.

Issues Discussed:

- Policies, Procedures, Foundation
- Brand recognition
- Legal services
- Funding challenges
- No elimination of staff positions
- Cost associated with merger
- Overall efficiency for students

Other Business

Representative Lowery announced the next meeting of the Task Force will be Wednesday, September 14th at 2:30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m.