

DRAFT MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE REALIGNMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Wednesday, September 14, 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, September 14, 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; Senator Ronald Caldwell.

Other Legislators present: Senators Linda Collins-Smith, Joyce Elliot, and Jon Woods; Representatives Charles Armstrong, John Baine, Scott Baltz, Jana Della Rosa, R. Trevor Drown, David Fielding, Michelle Gray, Ken Henderson, Grant Hodges, Monte Hodges, Reginald Murdock, James Ratliff, Laurie Rushing, James Sturch, and DeAnn Vaught.

Representative Lowery called the meeting to order.

Consideration to approve Minutes of August 31, 2016 [EXHIBIT B]

Senator Caldwell made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Representative Lowery. Without objection, the minutes were approved by the Task Force.

Presentation by Dr. James Shemwell, President, Arkansas Northeastern College [See Exhibit C for full report]

Dr. James Shemwell presented a PowerPoint entitled, "Examining the Performance of Independent Colleges in Arkansas". According to Dr. Shemwell, the objective of his presentation was to "demonstrate evidence that Arkansas' independent community colleges operate the most efficiently and produce high-employed, high-earning graduates."

Issues Discussed:

- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Core Expense Ratio
- IPEDS Faculty to Administrator Salary Expense Ratio
- Cost Saving Efficiencies
- Presumed advantages vs. remaining independent
- Projections of efficiency effects

Presentation by Dr. John Hogan, President, National Park College [See Exhibit D for a listing of University Program Collaborations]

Issues Discussed:

- Local level of investment a key factor in success
- Agreements with all 4 year colleges in Arkansas
- Student success
- Arkansas Higher Education Consortium
- Arkansas Independent Colleges (AIC)
- Merger Structure

EXHIBIT B

Presentation by Dr. Evelyn Jorgenson, President, Northwest Arkansas Community College and Mr. Dan Shewmaker, Chairman, Board of Trustees

Dr. Evelyn Jorgenson and Mr. Dan Shewmaker came forward to present statements in support of remaining an independent college.

Issues Discussed:

- Largest community college in the state of Arkansas
- Local financial support, tuition, and fees makes up over 75% of entire budget
- Locally elected Board of Trustees
- Value of student relationships
- No tuition increase in four years
- Over 90% of NWAC graduates remain in the immediate area and support local industries
- Return on investment to society through state income of \$9.60 for every \$1 spent on the college

Presentation by Dr. Eric Turner, President, Black River Technical College

Issues Discussed:

- Articulation agreements
- Academic programming
- Concurrent credit collaborations
- Flexibility of independent status
- Law enforcement training academy

Presentation by Dr. Barbara Jones, President, South Arkansas Community College and Mr. Steve Cousins, Director of Board of Trustees, South Arkansas Community College

Dr. Barbara Jones gave an overview of the history of South Arkansas Community College and presented statements in support of remaining an independent college.

Issues Discussed:

- Arkansas Community College Organization (ACC)
- Grant collaboration
- Workforce Programs
- Southwest Arkansas Community College Consortium (SWAC)

Presentation by Dr. Richard Dawe, President, Ozarka College [See Exhibit H for full report]

Dr. Richard Dawe presented a statement in support of Ozarka College remaining independent due to the strength of programs, financial health, and strong support of the community.

Issues Discussed:

- Local, Governor Appointed Board of Trustees
- Regional Support
- College Brand
- Articulation Agreements
- Financial Health

Representative Lowery announced the next meeting will be held Wednesday, September 28th at 2:30 p.m. for the 4-year independent college presidents to provide testimony.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.