

**State of Indiana
Commission for Higher Education**

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Commission for Higher Education met in regular session starting at 1:00 p.m. virtually via Microsoft Teams videoconferencing, with Beverley Pitts presiding.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Members Present: Mike Alley, Dennis Bland, Anne Bowen, Jon Costas, Trent Engbers, Jud Fisher, Chris LaMothe, Pepper Mulherin, Chris Murphy, Dan Peterson, Beverley Pitts, and John Popp

Members Absent: Al Hubbard

CHAIR'S REPORT

As you know, we had to change our original plans of being on Ivy Tech Community College central campus today. We certainly miss the opportunity to see the campus and interact with your great staff. Even though we cannot be on campus today, I would like to invite President Ellspermann and Chancellor Stacy Atkinson with Hamilton County to say a few words.

President Ellspermann and Chancellor Atkinson offered their remarks.

Thank you, President and Chancellor, for joining us and for your welcoming comments. I want to remind everyone of two upcoming Commission events:

- The State of Education and the Workforce will air tonight at 7:30 p.m. ET on WFYI. Please be sure to tune in!
- The H. Kent Weldon Conference for Higher Education will be held virtually on Friday, April 9. The conference will focus on how higher education is a force for innovation and economic transformation, particularly with recent economic challenges. Please visit the Commission's website to register.

Last month, Dr. Trent Engbers hosted the Faculty Leadership Conference on adult learners. We had two great keynote sessions and breakouts on various topics.

Dr. Trent Engbers provided a summary of the event.

I want to share that the application for the faculty position is now available on the Commission's website. Indiana faculty interested in serving on the Commission can submit their application materials by April 16 to be considered.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Lubbers began her report by stating, tonight at 7:30 pm, public television stations in Indiana will broadcast the “State of Higher Education and the Workforce.” Usually, this would be the time slot for the State of Higher Education address, but we pitched to WFYI that we highlight the collaboration and alignment between PK-12, higher education and workforce. The show has an introduction and closing with Governor Holcomb. The remainder of the time is a discussion between Secretary of Education Katie Jenner, Commissioner of Workforce Development Fred Payne and me on behalf of CHE. We focus on the future: the future of learning; the future of work; and the future of Indiana. This will not be a substitute format in future years as higher education will continue to be a focus of an annual presentation.

With the General Assembly in the second half of the session, we are doubling down on our efforts to advocate for our legislative agenda, including our budget requests. Alexa will provide a comparison of the budget packages as they impact higher education later in the meeting. Increasingly, it's important that we prove the value proposition of higher education to policymakers and consumers – students and families. We will do this in our presentation with specific data that shows the financial benefits to students and the state for higher levels of education. There is a growing concern that I want to mention today and that we'll provide more information about when we release our College Readiness Report in the coming weeks. As you may recall, we've been seeing our college going rates decline in recent years – from 65% to our most current report at 61%. We're still working to confirm the final number, but it is pretty clear that the college going number is going to fall below 60%. There are, of course, multiple reasons why but it doesn't change the fact that higher levels of education are linked to greater economic mobility. Since the latest year in the report is 2019, this dip doesn't factor in the COVID impact. It's going to be important to analyze these numbers to find out where we're losing ground and scale strategies to help. If we pass the FAFSA requirement, that is one step that could help.

We're working with State Personnel and our associate commissioners to address back to work policies. At this point, we're hoping to bring the staff back on a staggered basis by early April – with the exception of those who have an underlying health issue and haven't been vaccinated yet. As our chair indicated in her remarks, we're hopeful that our May Commission Meeting can be in person.

As I mentioned last month, I'm highlighting a story at each meeting to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Commission. I'm excited to share the story of Esther Bray today – especially since March is National Women's History Month. Esther Bray was an original member of the Commission, having been appointed in July 1971. She continued to serve until June 1992 which meant that she served in this capacity for 21 years. According to a resolution that recognized her, she “faithfully attended and in Commission meetings totaling – at a conservative estimate – 420 days.” Mrs. Bray served as secretary of the Commission and “dedicated countless hours outside of formal meetings in reviewing and editing commission minutes, always helping the staff meet agenda deadlines.” In receiving the resolution, Mrs. Bray said “she appreciated the kind words that had been offered and

that serving on the commission has been a wonderful experience, and she hoped she had contributed to the state’s higher education.” No doubt she did.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY, 2021 COMMISSION MEETING

R-21-2.1 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the Minutes of the February, 2021 regular meeting. (Motion – Popp, second – Murphy, unanimously approved)

II. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Legislative Update

The legislation and program implementation team discussed outcomes of the first half of the legislative session, bills that survived, and what is to come during the second half of session.

B. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey

Shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic upended Americans’ lives, the U.S. Census Bureau, in collaboration with other federal agencies, created the Household Pulse Survey. The survey takes stock of how the pandemic has affected areas like employment, housing, healthcare, and education.

One year into the pandemic, the survey results shed light onto the educational and employment struggles that Hoosiers have faced, how their postsecondary plans have changed, and where Indiana might go from here.

C. State Financial Aid Overview

As part of its enabling statute, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education is responsible for the administration of Indiana’s state financial aid programs. Each year the Commission awards over \$350 million in financial aid across 18 programs to more than 70,000 Hoosier students. The Commission staff will provide an overview of the 19-20 administration of Indiana’s state financial aid programs.

D. Outreach Team Overview

The Commission has a team of 12 outreach professionals, comprised of four central-office staff and eight regionally-based coordinators who live and work in the communities they serve. With a dual emphasis on K-12 postsecondary preparation and college and career transitions, the Outreach Team supports students as they transition through the education pipeline, working in K-12 schools and college campuses and collaborating with community partners to boost student success.

The Commission will hear directly from members of the Commission’s Outreach Team with an overview of their work, their response to the pandemic, and upcoming opportunities to engage students and stakeholders.

E. Academic Degree Programs for Expedited Action

1. Bachelor of Science in Health Education and Promotion to be offered by Purdue University Global
2. Master of Music Therapy to be offered by Purdue University Fort Wayne
3. Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice to be offered by Purdue University Fort Wayne
4. Bachelor of Science in French to be offered by Indiana University East, Northwest, South Bend and Southeast
5. Bachelor of Science in German to be offered by Indiana University East, South Bend and Southeast
6. Bachelor of Science in Spanish to be offered by Indiana University East, IUPUI, Kokomo, Northwest, South Bend and Southeast

R-21-2.2 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the following academic degree programs, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – LaMothe, second – Engbers, unanimously approved)

F. Capital Projects for Expedited Action

1. Ivy Tech Community College – Muncie Campus Fisher Building Rebuild

R-21-2.3 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approves the following capital projects, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Murphy, second – Fisher, unanimously approved)

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Academic Degree Programs Awaiting Action
- B. Academic Degree Actions Taken by Staff
- C. Media Coverage

**IV. OLD BUSINESS
NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 P.M.

Beverley Pitts, Chair

Jud Fisher, Secretary