MINUTES

JOINT MEETING

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
STATE BOARD OF CAREER EDUCATION

October 11, 2011

1. CALL TO ORDER

A joint meeting of the State Board of Career Education (SBCE), the State Board of Education (SBE), and the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) was called to order by SBCE Vice Chairman John Riggs in the ballroom of the Governor's Mansion at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 11, 2011.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Vice Chairman John Riggs welcomed members of the three boards and thanked Governor Mike Beebe and his staff for the use of the facility.

Mr. Riggs said the directors or commissioners of each agency would introduce members of their respective boards. Mr. Bill Walker, director of the Department of Career Education, introduced the following members of the SBCE: Mr. John Riggs, Mr. John Yates, Ms. Lucy Ralston, Dr. Thomas Flowers, Ms. Martha Dixon, Mr. Richard Smith, and Chairman Mr. Phil Taylor, who was unable to attend.

Mr. Shane Broadway, interim director of the Department of Higher Education, introduced the following members of the HECB: Mr. David Leech, Dr. Olin Cook, Ms. Sarah Argue, Dr. Charles Allen, Dr. Bob Burns, Mr. Bob Crafton, Dr. Joe Bennett, Mr. Horace Hardwick, Dr. Calvin Johnson, Ms. Florine Milligan, Mr. David Leech, and Mr. Steve Luelf.

Dr. Tom Kimbrell, commissioner of the Department of Education, introduced the following members of the SBE: Dr. Ben Mays, Mr. Jim Cooper, Ms. Alice Mahony, Mr. Sam Ledbetter, Ms. Mireya Reith, Ms. Toyce Newton, Ms. Vicki Saviers, Ms. Brenda Gullett, and Mr. Joe Black.

3. THE HONORABLE MIKE BEEBE, GOVERNOR OF ARKANSAS

Mr. John Riggs, vice chairman of the State Board of Career Education, introduced the Honorable Mike Beebe, Governor of Arkansas, to say a few words to the three boards.

Governor Beebe stated that it was a pleasure to have the three boards present. He commended the boards for working together to improve educational opportunities for Arkansans of all ages. The governor noted that education stretches from pre-kindergarten (pre-K) through end of life and that this philosophy is reflected in the three boards meeting together. K-12 education is a priority and will be "first at the table"; nevertheless, K-12 is one part of the total education picture, noted Governor Beebe,

adding that if Arkansas does not also take care of workforce training and adult education, a whole spectrum of people will be left out. Additionally, if higher education is neglected, then Arkansas will not have that group of special people to lead the state in moving forward. All areas of education are important. "They all fit together; they are all important; they are all necessary to improve are quality of life," Governor Beebe said.

Education and economic development are the cornerstones of what changes who we are as a people, said Governor Beebe. If we get education and economic development right, we are at a better position to address everything else. They are the cornerstones upon which we base virtually everything that is good about us as a people," Governor Beebe said.

Education today has changed to the point that the jobs of tomorrow require that "second school," that economic development component that requires a different type of education or at least a greater emphasis on different types of education than in previous years, said Governor Beebe. The jobs of tomorrow will require even more emphasis in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) areas.

The exchanging of ideas among the three boards, the employees, and the managers of these agencies and the collaboration is just one step toward ensuring that we are fulfilling our obligation of moving forward in educating our people, concluded Governor Beebe.

Governor Beebe thanked the three boards for their dedication to the future of education in the state of Arkansas.

4. JOINT PRESENTATION – STEM WORKS

Mr. Rod Duckworth, interim deputy director for career and technical education, Department of Career Education, and Ms. Susan Harriman, director of policy, Department of Education, provided an update on the STEM Works initiative.

Ms. Harriman stated that STEM Works is an initiative to transform education in this state. All agencies comprising the Governor's Workforce Cabinet have worked together and provided funding for this initiative.

The first component of STEM Works will accelerate and transform secondary STEM education to better prepare high-school graduates to pursue college degrees in STEM disciplines, Ms. Harriman said. This goal will be addressed through the creation of New Tech High Schools and Relevant Education for Active Learning (REAL) Schools, an initiative of Environmental and Spatial Technology (EAST) schools.

The second component, UTeach, provides special secondary teacher training for college STEM majors, ensuring that Arkansas produces a steady stream of qualified teachers in STEM subjects Ms. Harriman said.

Ms. Harriman asked Mr. Duckworth to provide information on the career and technical education (CTE) connection to STEM Works through Project Lead the Way (PLTW).

Mr. Duckworth stated that the connection to project-based Instruction and the Arkansas STEM efforts began in 2010 under the leadership of John Davidson, who recently retired as deputy director for career and technical education.

CTE provided Cross County and Lincoln school districts the initial planning funds to allow the districts to explore the project-based instructional approach, said Mr. Duckworth. The Workforce Cabinet visited New Tech High near Austin, Texas, to view a project-based high school to see if this model could be duplicated in Arkansas, he said.

Mr. Duckworth stated that CTE decided to implement Project Lead the Way (PLTW), which consists of programs such as engineering or biomedical sciences. PLTW programs engage, encourage, and educate students of diverse backgrounds, including students whose experience in the sciences and math has been less comprehensive or who might find themselves uninterested in traditional STEM subjects. The goal is to help students become college- and career-ready, Mr. Duckworth said.

Mr. Duckworth stated that another reason for the emphasis on PLTW is that PLTW offers customizable programs for each school and provides professional development for teachers. He added that middle-school students interested in STEM fields can participate in Gateway to Technology programs.

A Project Lead the Way program costs approximately $100,000 to implement. Mr. Duckworth stated that school districts interested in PLTW can apply for one-time New Program Start-up funding by October 1. This funding covers 85 percent of the cost to start the program. Once programs are approved, schools than can direct a portion of their Perkins funding to assist with program equipment cost that is considered above and beyond the minimum program equipment.

Mr. Duckworth informed the three boards that a survey of PLTW seniors at the end of their senior year finds that 92 percent intend to pursue a four-year degree or higher; 51 percent intend to pursue a graduate degree; and 70 percent intend to study engineering, technology, or computer science.

Mr. Duckworth asked Dr. Gail McClure, vice president for sponsored projects, Arkansas Science and Technology Authority, to discuss the UTeach portion of the STEM Works initiative.

Dr. McClure stated that UTeach is a very unique model pre-service training program designed to provide more STEM teachers. UTeach requires a unique partnership between the colleges of math, science, and education on a university campus.

Several grants for planning and development of UTeach projects have been received, including a $35,000 grant from AT & T Foundation, a $35,000 grant from Molex, Inc., and a $15,000 grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, said Dr. McClure. The Department of Higher Education provided $137,000 in funding.

A request for proposal (RFP) for UTeach planning grants sent to colleges and universities, said Dr. McClure, and five campuses responded. The five campuses received planning grants of approximately $40,000 each, which will be used to pay for the time of teachers in the colleges of math, science, and education who will collaborate in the planning, Dr. McClure said, adding that the five colleges have set timelines for completing their planning proposals. Support from the Workforce Cabinet and the Department of Higher Education is needed to fund the program, she said.

5. AGENCY UPDATES ON INITIATIVES

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND PARCC

Dr. Tom Kimbrell, commissioner, Department of Education, stated that the Department of Education is working to communicate information about the Common Core State Standards. The Common Core State Standards initiative is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and other experts to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare students for college and the workforce said Dr. Kimbrell.

These standards define the knowledge and skills students should master in their K-12 years so they will graduate from high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in the workforce, Dr. Kimbrell said. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world and stress conceptual understanding and application. They are internationally benchmarked to guarantee that students are competitive in the emerging global marketplace, said Dr. Kimbrell.

Currently, each state has its own set of standards, so what students are expected to learn varies from state to state, said Dr. Kimbrell. The new standards articulate the same expectations for all students and ensure all are receiving a high-quality education consistently, no matter where they live. Dr. Kimbrell announced that the State Board of Education is one of the lead states in developing common science standards. He concluded his presentation on the standards with a video.

Dr. Kimbrell stated, along with 24 other states, Arkansas is a member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which has formed to create a next-generation assessment system to provide more services and supports to students and teachers than are currently available. The common assessment is a natural continuation of the work already underway in Arkansas and builds on the current assessment system. By partnering with other states, Arkansas will be able to leverage resources, share expertise and produce a system that will meet the needs and expectations of Arkansas students and teachers, he said.

The new assessment system will be in place in the 2014-2015 school year, said Dr. Kimbrell. Until then, the Department of Education will continue using the benchmark and end-of-course exams to assess students in mathematics, English language arts, and science. In Arkansas, the implementation of the new standards, including training for teachers, is ongoing. Our goal is to be ready when the new assessments arrive in 2014-2015, he said.

ARKANSAS WORKS UPDATE

Mr. Bill Walker, director of Department of Career Education, asked Ms. Sonja McMurray, associate director of Arkansas Works, to provide the three boards with updates and accomplishments of the Arkansas Works initiative.

Ms. McMurray stated that Arkansas Works is a three-component system, (1) college and career coaches, (2) online internet tool (powered by Kuder®), (3) ACT enrichment and

remediation program.

Ms. McMurray stated that the online college and career-planning component (powered by Kuder®) has two parts, Navigator and Journey. Navigator is for middle- and high-school students and Journey is for students in postsecondary education.

Ms. McMurray stated that there are currently 40 college and career coaches, including three new coaches in three Little Rock High schools labeled "dropout factories." Coaches are located at 13 two-year colleges and one adult education resource center. Coaches serve 57 school districts in the 21 poorest counties and Little Rock said Ms. McMurray.

Ms. McMurray stated that Arkansas Works had achieved the following successes: increased high school graduation rate of two percent, increased completion of Smart Core by two percent, and increased college-going rate of two percent.

From October 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011, the career coaches contacted and provided services to 85 percent of their student population and of those, 100 percent of the seniors received information and/or assistance with college admissions and financial aid applications said Ms. McMurray.

Ms. McMurray stated that the Summer ACT Academy demonstrated the following successes after only one summer session with 24 hours of instruction: ACT scores (first-time freshman fall 2010) increased from 19.6 to 19.86; remediation rate decreased from 68.49 percent to 63.58 percent; and the number of students taking the ACT exam increased from 2009 to 2010 by 1,971. Students from Arkansas Works counties, who comprise less than 20 percent of the state's student population, accounted for 47 percent of the increase, she added.

Future concerns and challenges for the Arkansas Works initiative are permanent funding, increasing demand for career coaches outside of the 21 counties and three Little Rock high schools, the loss of college and career coaches, the passage of the career coach legislation, and the limited time to show improvement concluded Ms. McMurray.

SECONDARY CAREER CENTERS

Mr. Bill Walker, director of Department of Career Education, asked Ms. Sandra Porter, associate director for workforce training, to provide the three boards an update on the secondary career centers.

Ms. Porter stated that the mission of the secondary career centers is to provide equal access to all Arkansas students to career and technical programs and to efficiently deliver industry-driven, high-cost programs in a rigorous manner that gives students multiple career options for job entry or further education.

Ms. Porter stated that there are 24 career centers; 16 of those centers are located on two-year college campuses. There are 36 different programs of study currently offered. A total of 4,925 students have earned 31,484 college credit hours, representing a tuition value of $2.1 million. Additionally, students earned 565 certifications earned in the 2010-2011 school year, said Ms. Porter.

Currently, 173 high schools send students to career centers; however, 68 high schools do not have access to a secondary area technical career center, stated Ms. Porter.

students enrolled in technical center programs. An additional eight new centers would be required to provide all high schools access to career centers, Ms. Porter said.

Ms. Porter stated that career center funding is $20.1 million. Vocational center aid is distributed by the Department of Career Education based on each center's pro-rated share of the total FTE ($10,623,877.88). Training fees are paid by the sending schools to centers, which is reimbursed to the sending schools ($9,512,505.12).

Ms. Porter stated that in the past three legislative sessions, the Department of Career Education has requested additional funding in the amount of $27,289,500 for the first year of the biennium and $29,163,800 for the second year of the biennium but has not received executive recommendation for this request.

Ms. Porter stated that the Department of Career Education has enacted a rule change relating to funding that will be implemented in the 2012-2013 school year. Under the new rule, for centers where the percentage of students from one high school is over 60 percent, the eligible FTE count for center funding and pass-through funding to the high schools will be limited to the first 60 percent, with the local school contributing from local funds for the remaining FTE count over 60 percent.

REMEDIATION

Mr. Shane Broadway, interim director of the Department of Higher Education, asked Ms. Amy Baldwin to provide remediation information to the three boards.

Ms. Baldwin stated that Arkansas has a Complete College America Grant for $1 million. The grant period is 18 months. Three of the goals are transforming remediation, reducing time to degree, and restructuring delivery of some courses through technology. Nine colleges and universities (five four-year schools and four two-year schools) are participating and will consider math redesign, English and reading redesign, prior learning assessment, and career and technical education acceleration.

6. CLOSING REMARKS AND ANNOUCEMENTS

Mr. Walker thanked all three boards for attending the meeting and for the continued work that is ahead.

Mr. Walker announced that lunch would be served at 12:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Riggs adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., Ex-Officio Secretary
State Board of Career Education

Phil Taylor, Chairman
State Board of Career Education