

Student Access & Success Coordinating Council of Ohio
Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2007
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

I. Welcome and Introductions – Reginald Wilkinson and Jon Tafel

Reginald Wilkinson brought the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. and called for introductions. Jon Tafel made special mention of the long service of Richard Ross in the capacity of Superintendent and acknowledged his vision for Ohio. Mr. Ross is retiring and will serve in the State of Ohio and adjacent states in another capacity.

Dr. Wilkinson mentioned the various changes and occurrences that have happened since the last meeting. He highlighted the successes of the Ohio College Access and Success Conference, which had great attendance, great workshops, and great networking. He thanked everyone at the SASCCO meeting who attended and presented, and gave a special thanks to the Ohio Board of Regents and the Ohio Department of Education for their partnership. He praised a roundtable in which he participated that involved a very meaningful discussion regarding how access impacts workforce issues and how to better integrate adults in the workforce. Dr. Wilkinson feels that the education continuum should not just be P-16, but rather P-W, which encompasses pre-school through the workforce and shows the importance of learning for the workforce. The global mission of access to better position Ohio in the global economy should be to have well-educated, successful participants in the modern workforce as well as successful students.

Dr. Wilkinson mentioned that the goal of the current SASCCO meeting was to be more interactive and therefore, members should note that the decision was made not to fill the meeting agenda with speakers to allow more time for discussion among the members.

II. Ohio Can Go to College Initiative – Reginald Wilkinson

Reginald Wilkinson began the discussion by informing the group that the General Assembly appropriated \$8.5 million to the Ohio Board of Regents for the Ohio College Access Network to, in essence, leverage \$100 million dollars to increase college access in the state of Ohio. While the funds generated will not be new money, the leveraged dollars will involve higher education, the corporate world, foundations, the access arena, and other community organizations, but there are not presumptions at this point as to whom the money will go. More than likely, the funds will be disbursed in the form of challenge grants. There are a great deal of possibilities about how the dollars can be leveraged to produce the needed match, including the idea of developing 529 plans. The main targets for this campaign include higher education, the corporate world, foundations, access organizations, and other groups (e.g., faith-based groups, community organizations, etc.). The major force behind this initiative will be challenge grants, where OCAN will provide only a certain amount of funding based on what the organization can raise in return. The corporate community

might use the funds to leverage the further education of their employees to strengthen their workforce.

O CAN will be the primary agent for this initiative, but this is not really an O CAN initiative. O CAN is not looking to increase their budget, other than to cover the administrative costs of a development director. O CAN is counting on working with other partners such as GEAR UP Ohio, TRiO, Ohio College Tech Prep, and other college access organizations. The O CAN staff person who is hired to be the Development Director will write the plan and determine action steps to leverage the \$100 million. The Chancellor already has hired a person at the Ohio Board of Regents, Dr. Rosemary Herple, who will be the liaison to O CAN for this project. Reginald Wilkinson mentioned that the O CAN staff will be shifted around a bit to accommodate the entry of the new staff member whose primary focus will be this project and the broadening of responsibilities for the remainder of the staff. The majority of the \$100 million ideally will be used as last dollar scholarship grants for students, because much of college access centers around financial issues. This will align with the Governor's goal of increasing college enrollment by 230,000 people over the next 10 years, but Dr. Wilkinson feels that there should be a success component. College enrollment should not be the only success measure. A plan is needed for retention, success, and graduation. Internships and shadowing (e.g., early college) programs might make sense to leverage the dollars as well. O CAN wants to ensure that there is a focus on preparation in relation to this project (P-16 involvement, certification, dual-enrollment opportunities).

Major planning will take place over the next six months. There will be a large marketing kick-off event that will begin in January 2008, where different people will serve as chairs or co-chairs who can help get the word out about the project. O CAN plans to use the expertise of the local O CAN sites, GEAR UP Ohio lighthouse programs, TRiO programs, and others. Their involvement is critical in the success of this project. Some of the local O CAN sites have been identified to participate in the initial planning session.

Discussion

The question was asked whether or not O CAN can help identify the total dollars that already are in the pipeline for access within the State of Ohio? Dr. Wilkinson answered that that is a question for which we do not have the answer at this time, but said it is a great question. He had a conversation with Rick Stoff and the Ohio Business Roundtable where this question also was raised. While it is not known how many dollars for college access are available for the students of Ohio, we can measure the number of students entering college and how close the State of Ohio is to the Governor's 230,000 goal.

Another question was raised as to whether there was a group to which these dollars would be targeted. The primary targets are the needy, low-income, first-generation population, adult learners, returning workers, and other non-traditional students, located in urban and Appalachian areas of the state. Richard Ross mentioned that the students that have taken the GED and those students for whom the traditional high school just did not "fit", comprise an untapped population for enrollment in and completion of postsecondary

education because some of these students are as capable if not more so than students who graduate from high school. Low-wealth school districts across the state and places where there is an untapped wealth of potential to reach the 230,000 students needed. Gary Johnson said that it is important to change the culture of how the kids in schools think, and it is going to take the collaboration of all the entities (business community, education, college access programs, government, etc.) to achieve this. The legislature should be engaged in the implementation of this initiative. This initiative will need help from all constituencies across the state to leverage not only financial support, but to enlist the support of high-powered community leaders. Key partners such as the Ohio Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA), Ohio Association of Education Opportunity Program Personnel (OAEOPP), Ohio Association of College Admission Counseling (OACAC), and Ohio Appalachian Center for Higher Education (OACHE) must be utilized during this process.

Jon Tafel mentioned that the dollars for this initiative are additional to what already is available to the State of Ohio. Reggie emphasized that the leveraged funds cannot be OBR dollars or existing OCAN dollars and must be new money. Gary Johnson likened it to having a business plan where the program must outline what they are going to do with the money, sources, and resources from which the dollars potentially can be leveraged. While OCAN may not be able to go to a program with \$10,000 and expect them to leverage \$100,000, they might be able to go to an organization and say “double it” or to an organization with a greater capacity and want to see three or four times as much. OCAN surveyed its member groups, prior to taking on this initiative to see what the members thought about the potential support available in their areas.

Sidney Childs asked if there was a plan and a finalized date for the roll-out of this initiative and the release of an RFP. Reggie responded that the project probably will be implemented in phases and the funding released in accompanying phases. The money does not have to be raised in the biennium it is given. If an organization pledges \$200,000, but can only give \$50,000 a year then that funding schedule will be included in the plan. Mr. Childs mentioned that there are plans in place for TRiO, Talent Search, Upward Bound, and GEAR UP Ohio programs to show that their students are entering and matriculating through college. He suggested that this should be a plan that is in place for this OCAN project as well.

Tally Hart mentioned that she really could see using a portion of this effort to target adult learners and use their Pell Grants as match. Gary Johnson asked if there was a way to reach down to students at an earlier age to begin saving for college, which Jon Tafel mentioned could be part of the money that is raised. Jacqueline Williams from the Ohio Tuition Trust Authority mentioned that there is going to be a need to examine where an organization like hers would fit into this puzzle. Reggie mentioned that there needs to be a financial literacy piece that is added to the discussion to ensure that students are able to be retained in college. Many people usually get their first ideas about financial literacy after getting their first professional job, which can range from payroll deductions that are offered employees to other services. Setting aside funds is not a priority,

and the way to reach most parents about saving and the value it has to the aspiration of the student is through the workplace.

Colleen Grady would definitely like to see preparation as a component and an emphasis of the project. There should be a single overarching goal with which all project objectives should be tied. The overarching goal should determine the performance measures and processes as that for distributing the funds.

III. Center for Student Transition & Success – Tally Hart

Jon Tafel introduced Tally Hart, Senior Advisor for Economic Access at the Ohio State University, who outlined the concept for the Center for Student Transition and Success. OBR released an RFP for this type of work and OSU was awarded the grant for the Center, with Tally Hart being the lead person with participation from OSU, UC, Case Western Reserve University, and Sinclair Community College. The Center for Student Transition and Success would like to identify the best way to research the different transition points to determine what works for students who are on the pathway to college. The group has been looking at research, success measures, best practices, etc. By reviewing the success measures there are several areas of opportunity that can be addressed. Increased numbers of low-income, first-generation, underrepresented minority, and adult students will be needed to achieve the Governor's 230,000 goal, because these probably are the groups with the greatest disconnect. One idea is to study successful models such as the one in Florida where P-12 and P-16 data was studied and the databases were unified so that the information was more meaningful. Policymakers must begin looking beyond good programs and start considering strategies that actually are moving the needle toward the goal of enrolling the 230,000 in college. They must identify methodologies to structurally measure whether students are being better prepared academically for college and families are better prepared financially.

Ms. Hart asked for ideas from SASCCO members on how to move forward and identify evaluation measures. She also would like to have a yearly scorecard that she can use to report to the SASCCO group the effect the work proposed here is having on the student population. She would like for the group to share with her the types of information they want collected to ensure that the Center is providing a tool that will benefit the efforts of the programs and organizations represented on SASCCO. Her email address is available on the SASCCO member roster. The idea is to have a central location/virtual center as a place where the group and researchers can go to gain more information, current data, current research underway/contemplated, etc. The Center will provide a central location/website to house all this type of information (i.e., research projects underway as well as current data). In this way the Center can link researchers and others to the needs of the State of Ohio and leverage not only financial resources, but ideas as well. The Center will provide information that will enable benchmarking and hence, problem-solving with regard to helping prepare students for greater success.

Discussion

Rayford Harper, mentioned that often students are taught to the test instead of being taught how to think and think early. Reggie Wilkinson added that educators and college access professionals want to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and abstract reasoning and that nothing would be a greater measure of success in addition to passing the OGT, ACT, and graduating from high school. Educators must begin to teach students how to think. There may be 2/3 of the students in the State of Ohio who are taking the ACT. However, there are 30 schools around the state where no student at all took the test. Jon Tafel mentioned that the students who are not taking the test are the ones that typically are from low-income and first-generation families and not thinking about going to college. Colleen Grady mentioned that the core curriculum piece will be available for all schools next year, as well as on the school "report card". The state board also has added the value-added component to the scorecard which allows more meaning to the data. A great deal of marketing research is about perception. People who are below a certain level of income feel they can get full assistance, not realizing that it primarily may be loans. There is clear aspiration by students of all financial backgrounds, but not a link to preparation and behavior. Some people need a personal touch to make that transition.

IV. Plan to Move OhioCAP to OCAN – Jon Tafel

Jon Tafel informed the group about the launch of the OhioCAP and the plans to release an RFP (working with Columbus State) to make the portal more interactive and take the site to the next level with a person that will coordinate the portal efforts. The Portal should be used as an advising tool that allows students, parents, and advisors to help show students how to go to college. The idea behind transitioning the Portal to OCAN to utilize the organization's statewide network. The best advising is face-to-face, but the Portal can help augment this with virtual advising which can be migrated to more of an OCAN responsibility and still have SASCCO play a role in providing leadership and direction. As more students and families are reached through the KnowHow2Go Campaign, they will need specific information about how to prepare for and go to college. The Portal can provide that information. The Portal and the Ohio Board of Regent's College Access Hotline will be major mechanisms for providing information to those students, families, and educators reached through the campaign. There should be some interoperability between the sites so as not to confuse users. OCAN has had conversations about possibly providing a gap analysis of the different web services that are available.

Discussion

Phil Binkley described the Individual Academic and Career Plan (IACP) designed to help students from elementary school to high school develop their own individualized academic and career plans. The individual learning plans allow students to map out their futures. A student and their parents or teachers can work together on a plan for the child to follow. As they continue into the electronic site, the plan allows them to see what it really means to be in their chosen career field, i.e., what the curriculum is, what is required on the job,

how long they may have to go to school, etc. Dr. Wilkinson mentioned that there possibly could be a demonstration of this at a future meeting.

V. Future of Role SASCCO – Jon Tafel

Jon Tafel introduced the discussion about the future of SASCCO. He posed the question, “Looking toward the future, what are the kinds of areas that SASCCO would want to address?” Past successes include the student portal, the college access hotline, the GEAR UP Ohio grant, success measures, and marketing/community outreach, but what are the goals and what should SASCCO’s role be for the future? He then divided the group into three smaller breakout groups for discussions. The groups were given the attached list of questions to frame their talks. Also attached are discussion points from each of the three groups in response to the discussion questions, along with the major themes that were drawn from the responses.

VI. Other Business

Kimberly Gormley of OCAN gave an overview of the interactive map available on the KnowHow2Go and OCAN websites. The map allows people to click on each county and see the college access programs available (GEAR UP, TRiO, OCAN, College Tech Prep, etc.), higher education institutions, and other services/resources around the state. In the future, the map will allow each of the schools and programs to go online themselves to update their offerings and information. The content will be reviewed before it is loaded live. The two- and four-year schools have the information that was available to the state and the goal is to have all updated information by the next school year.

VII. Adjournment

Jon Tafel thanked the group for their continued work and Reginald Wilkinson adjourned the meeting at 12:55 p.m. The next SASCCO meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 8, 2008.