

**Access and Communications Committee
Ohio Board of Regents
Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, November 10, 2005**

The November meeting of the Access and Communications Committee of the Ohio Board of Regents was held at the headquarters of the Parker Hannifin Corporation in Mayfield Heights, Ohio. In attendance were the following:

Committee Members:

Donna M. Alvarado, Committee Chair
Jeanette Brown, Vice Chair
Anthony Houston

Other Board members in attendance:

Edmund Adams
Bruce Beeghly
Jim Tuschman
Walter Reiling, Jr.
Jerry Tatar

The meeting was called to order by Regent Alvarado and the minutes of the October 2005 Committee were approved with one correction suggested by Regent Alvarado.

Major items for discussion:

I. Report from TRIAD on higher education market research findings

Representatives from TRIAD Group gave a presentation on the results of interviews with focus groups that consisted of adult Ohioans who had not completed college. This work was a recommendation of the SASCO marketing consultation to do comprehensive market research on how to increase college participation, focusing on the adult population as the target audience.

Seven focus groups were interviewed. All types of areas of Ohio were represented, from urban, rural and suburban. Some groups were 19-24 years of age and others were 25 to 40. Results were relatively uniform across these groups.

Findings:

- These adults understand the value of higher education and wish that they had more. But they need to be shown that there is a pathway for them to succeed in college.
- In high school and middle school, they felt that they were not prepared for work or college. They also received no advice on how they could go to college.
- They didn't go to college because of a variety of factors that included financial problems, weariness of school, marriage and family, and uncertainty about how college would pay off for them.

- The college dropouts among this group said that they left school because they couldn't balance job, family and school responsibilities. They were also not sure about the value of some of the classes that they were taking.
- They thought that high schools now should do a better job of helping all kids who need advice, not just the college bound ones. Kids need more time with counselors, more information on what they might be good at in college, and career assessment.
- They said that colleges need to lower the cost of attending college. They need to have a greater presence in high schools. They need to help parents understand the value of higher education.
- If these adults were to go to college now, they would need flexible schedules, relevant courses, people like themselves in their classes, and financial assistance. They need help balancing home, family, college and their jobs.

The Regents all agreed that this was very useful information that provides more insight into the needs and perceptions of this critical group of adult Ohioans.

TRIAD will continue its work with follow-up surveys of Ohio adults and their higher education needs. Other groups that the Regents work with will make efforts to use these findings to improve higher education services to adult Ohioans:

1. SASCCO will continue its marketing program development efforts
2. The new "P-16" council, the Partnership for Continued Learning, will work on improving the transition from high school to college
3. The Governor's Workforce Policy Board will work to improve career counseling opportunities.
4. A group chaired by Steve Kopp, which is charged with developing ways that Ohio can improve accountability and student success, can also use these results in its work.

II. Lumina Foundation National summit: College Costs: Making Opportunity Affordable

Deborah Gavlik, Associate Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations and Finance reported on the recent Lumina Foundation national summit on controlling college costs.

Brit Kirwan (former OSU president and current chancellor of the University of Maryland) was one of the presenters. He noted that for many years, college costs have risen faster than inflation, and that this is not sustainable. His institution had implemented a variety of cost reduction strategies, which included:

- Increasing faculty teaching loads by 10%
- Requiring that students take 12 hours of coursework through nontraditional delivery methods

- Limiting degree requirements to 120 semester credit hours
- Energy cost reductions.

Other promising cost reduction strategies discussed included increasing outsourcing efforts far beyond the traditional bookstore and food service operations to include admissions, financial aid, information technology, and human resources.

Course redesign efforts led by the National Center for Academic Transformation also show promise to reduce costs while increasing quality. The idea is the focus on the 25 courses that make up half of community college and 25% of university course enrollments. There are a variety of ways to use technology to improve student success and reduce costs in these large enrollment courses.

Our own Ohio Learning Network is heavily involved with the Center for Academic Transformation on these kinds of initiatives.

The meeting was adjourned by Regent Alvarado.