

**Access and Communications Committee  
Ohio Board of Regents  
Minutes of the Meeting of July 17, 2003**

The meeting of the Access and Communications Committee was held at the General Electric Aircraft Engine Plant's Customer Technical Education Center in Springdale, Ohio. In attendance were the following:

Ohio Board of Regents members:

Edmund Adams  
Donna Alvarado  
Bruce Beeghly  
Jeanette Grasselli Brown  
Gerald Miller  
Thomas Noe  
Gilbert Reese

Ohio Board of Regents staff:

Eric Almonte	Harry Andrist
David Barber	Rod Chu
Bret Crow	Shane DeGarmo
Kris Frost	Jane Fullerton
Deborah Gavlik	Darrell Glenn
Cathy Hill	Robert Johnson
Neal McNally	Jim Nargang
Rich Petrick	Tom Rudd
Leslie Sawyer	Janet Schilk
Yavonne Stertzner	Jon Tafel
Michael Taggart	Shaun Yoder

Guests:

Tony Barnes, University of Akron  
John Buttlerwerth, Ohio Faculty Senate  
Larry Christman, AICUO  
Earl Keese, James Rhodes State College

The meeting was called to order by Regent Alvarado. Regent Alvarado began by expressing on behalf of the Regents', appreciation to General Electric for their hospitality.

## **Presentation: Introduction to General Electric Aircraft Engine (GEAE) Plants**

Dr. Mike Benzakein, General Manager of Advanced Technologies and Military Engineering for General Electric Aircraft Engines Division, presented an overview of the worldwide operations and facilities of General Electric's Aircraft Engines division. Dr. Benzakein noted that technology leadership is the key to GE's past and future success. He said that a company is easily put out of business in ten years if it doesn't keep up with global research and that, therefore GEAE can't stand still. This division of General Electric seeks engineering and university support to compete in the technology-driven arena of aircraft engines. GEAE has formed University Strategic Alliances with key universities to concentrate academic expertise on critical technology needs. Through this alliance, GEAE concentrates its academic expertise on critical technology needs with a few selected universities rather than trying to work with every university. Regent Miller asked about the number of students and the duration of their study at the facility. Dr. Benzakein replied that it varies depending on type of program but that the numbers are around 30 and 40 graduates per year. GEAE also uses recent graduates with degrees other than engineering.

## **Access High School to College Transition Report**

Director Darell Glenn briefed the committee on the status of the High School Transition Report. Dr. Glenn received positive feedback from K-12 superintendents at a meeting held on June 24, 2003. While the format of the prior report contained good information, the superintendents expressed interest in knowing how students from their districts were doing in their college careers. The challenge for the next report is to present less information and focus on the most important data. Regent Brown asked about follow up plans. Dr. Glenn reported that another meeting is scheduled for August 2003, and other stakeholders such as guidance counselors may be invited. Since guidance counselors typically share this report with students and parents, their insight will add value to the content of the report.

## **GEAR-UP Update – Leslie Sawyer**

Director Leslie Sawyer updated the committee on the Gear-Up program, which is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Education. Ohio is one of the first states awarded a five year grant and is currently in the fourth year. The programs are implemented in Cleveland and Ironton, and the University of Cincinnati is evaluating which methods of assisting low-income students are most effective to enable those students to pursue and succeed in college. Ms. Sawyer was glad to announce that the sites will be funded for a fifth year based on a successful report to the U.S. Department of Education. Regents' staff is currently working with OCAN to plan a statewide conference on September 8<sup>th</sup>

and 9<sup>th</sup>. Programs deemed most efficient will ideally be merged with OCAN to provide for a statewide access system. Regent Brown asked about best practices. While data is still being collected, the proficiency test workshop appears to be showing results and students overall are taking more rigorous classes. Chancellor Chu asked to see data on the drop out rates of these students. Ms. Sawyer reported that work in several areas needs to continue to approve access statewide: a) Scholarships, like OhioAspires; b) additional support for OCAN; and c) more rigorous coursework at the high school level. Chairman Noe suggested building support now with legislators for future scholarship needs of students currently participating in the GEAR-UP program.

## **Technology**

### **Technology Initiatives Grant Awards**

Vice Chancellor Jon Tafel briefed the committee on the Technology Initiatives Grant Awards. Dr. Tafel described the three areas recommended for funding by the statewide advisory committee; a) shared back office services; b) Third Frontier Network applications; c) the Distributed Learning Workshop. The committee approved and recommended the funding request to the full board.

## **Communications**

Assistant Director Bret Crow briefed the committee with the communications and media update. Mr. Crow is awaiting feedback prior to finalizing the communications plan. He also reported sharing regular e-mail updates sent to Regents' staff with Katherine Canada, executive director of the Commission on Higher Education and the Economy. Weekly PIO calls with the governor's communications staff will continue for the foreseeable future.

## **Governmental Relations**

Associate Vice Chancellor Gavlik briefed the committee on the July edition of *The Issue*, a newsletter produced for legislators and other agenda leaders. The most recent issue, titled "Too Many Campuses?" addresses the question of whether Ohio has too many college and university campuses. Contrary to popular belief, the number of campuses per 100,000 population in Ohio is less than the national average.

Ms. Gavlik updated the committee on two federal issues of concern: President Bush's plans for the Higher Education Act reauthorization and a column by California Congressman Howard McKeon, Chairman of the Subcommittee on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competitiveness. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that President Bush is considering demanding more accountability from the nation's institutions of higher education as part of his political strategy during the reauthorization process. Another article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

explains a possible proposed college affordability index by Congressman Howard McKeon. The goal of the Congressman's bill is to hold colleges accountable for their expenses and work towards stabilizing the cost of attending college.

Ms. Gavlik briefed the committee on current legislation in the Ohio legislature. Three bills in particular were covered; a) prohibition to post-secondary education funds for inmates; b) university student meningitis vaccinations; and c) timely coursework completion guarantee. The committee discussed possible opposition to Representative Williamowski's bill that would prevent inmates from taking any college education coursework. Chancellor Chu will continue discussions with the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Director Reggie Wilkinson. Access Committee Chairwoman Donna Alvarado suggested holding a meeting with Ohio congressmen on the Committee on Higher Education and the Workforce to discuss higher education issues.

The minutes of the June 2003 Communications Committee meeting were approved without objection.

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