

**Council of Presidents
Legislative Update Teleconference Minutes
April 5, 2019**

The call began at approximately 10:35 a.m.

Presidents (proxy) who were present on the call:

Greg Haile
Jim Henningsen (Jessica Kummerle)
Tom LoBasso
John Holdnak
Ken Atwater
Ed Massey
Stanley Sidor
Eduardo Padron (E.H. Levering)
John Grosskopf
Devin Stephenson (Jack Capra)
Ava Parker
Tim Beard
Ed Meadows
Angela Garcia-Falconetti
Georgia Lorenz (Don Payton)
Thomas Leitzel
Carol Probstfeld
Jim Murdaugh (Candice Grause)

President Parker congratulated Dr. Massey and Indian River State College as well as Dr. Padron and Miami Dade College on their recent Aspen Awards.

Allyce Heflin gave a legislative update. She shared that the House and the Senate passed their budgets off the floor earlier this week, so we are now ready for budget conference. Currently there are no budget conference allocations. There have been rumors that President Galvano said they will take their time doing the allocations and likely will not start budget conference meetings until April 22 at the earliest.

The next two weeks for the budget could move a little slower, but for the policy bills it could cause some running around and worry. The main policy bill that has caused concern for the Florida College System is HB 5501. This bill was originally traveling with the budget as the budget conforming bill, but on Wednesday was temporarily postponed. House Bill 5501 does not have a Senate companion, however there are Senate higher education bills that are moving and could tack on language from HB 5501. There are three bills in the House that could be used or already have some part of what is in HB 5501. Ms. Heflin shared that the college lobbyists are tracking those bills very closely.

Rachael Bonlarron asked Ms. Heflin to talk about the Risk Management consortium funds for the Florida College System that were put into the budget by Senator Bradley. Ms. Heflin responded by reminding the Council that both the Senate and House have been asked to bond the \$18.6 million of payout that came out of the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium over the last couple of years due to hurricane impacts. Initially this was not included in either budget; Senator Bradley did an amendment to add in that funding, however he took the funds from the PECO maintenance line item from the colleges.

Ms. Heflin shared that House Bill 189 and Senate Bill 1342 are the main dual enrollment bills. Senator Stargel is the sponsor in the Senate and Representative Zika is the sponsor in the House. Both bills were heard and amended. Last week the House bill was amended to remove the fiscal impact to the state colleges, and then this week it was amended to put the same language back in the bill and make it a little harder on the system. President Haile asked if there was any system-wide data on the headcount of dual enrollment. Ms. Heflin said there is 2017-18 data on the head count of private school and homeschool students who were dual enrolled in at least one course. The 2017-18 cost of at least one course (3 credit hours) for those populations is about \$1.3 million. The Senate Bill has been amended to lower the GPA for student eligibility from 3.0 to 2.5. Ms. Heflin shared that she has spoken with Senator Stargel's aide to see if she would be interested in a pilot program to see how the change would work with students who are seemingly not as prepared as others. Senator Stargel's office has asked for a reply of how many colleges would be interested in the pilot program. Ms. Heflin shared that she has heard from several school districts that do not support lowering the GPA. Dr. LoBasso shared that having the statute to create certain programs and waive the 3.0 GPA to a blanket 2.5 GPA might create a greater financial impact on the system.

Dr. Sidor asked if there has been any discussion about the money following the student. Ms. Heflin was not aware such discussions, but added for private and homeschool students there isn't any money to follow the student unless they are tax credit scholarship students in a private school. Dr. Beard shared that the 2.5 GPA is concerning to him as there are currently issues even with students who have a 3.0 GPA. He said it is setting some students up for failure. President Haile shared that he was an early supporter of the pilot program as it was something that the Council had previously discussed. He shared some ways that Broward College is actively working to help all students succeed. President Haile feels a pilot program would be a great idea. Any president who is interested in the idea of a dual enrollment pilot program should contact Allyce Heflin.

Dr. Holdnak made the Council aware that career certificate dual enrollment courses only require a 2.0 GPA. Dr. LoBasso made it clear that Daytona State College would be open to change that would allow such ability to develop a special program with the school district if needed. President Parker stated that the dual enrollment initiative seems to be important to both House and Senate leadership and will move forward. Ms. Heflin replied that due to how it is described by Representative Zika and Senator Stargel it seems to be a big priority. Their words used included, "removing barriers", "students having the opportunity", "ensuring that all students, regardless of where they are taking courses are served in the same way." The House perception is that colleges are putting up barriers for private school and homeschool students to take dual enrollment courses and the intent of the bill is to remove those barriers. Ms. Heflin advised the Council to be cautious on taking a position. President Parker made it clear that she was not suggesting taking a position; she just wanted everyone to be aware of what was going on with the

bill. Dr. Falconetti shared that she will be following up with Ms. Heflin on this issue as she has received an inquiry from Senator Stargel's office about her perspective on this issue. Dr. Beard shared that he has shared with Representative Zika that "we support education to the highest degree, but we need the funding to carry out his request." Ms. Bonlarron shared that in the meeting when Representative Zika presented his amendment, he did state that it would be a cost to the colleges of \$5-7 billion. On top of that, there is a provision that was placed into HB 7071 for public schools being able to utilize their buses in order to transport students to colleges for career education programs. Ms. Bonlarron will provide a summary in her weekly legislative update.

President Parker asked Ms. Heflin if there were any other budget or policy that need to be discussed. Ms. Heflin replied that there are four big policy bills that are related to higher education, they are primarily focused on Universities, but they could be a vehicle used to tack on policies to state colleges. Ms. Heflin shared that there is a lot of focus on the House as that is where most of the policy items are coming from. Ms. Bonlarron shared that while it seemed that HB 381 had been killed, which would allow for school districts to offer Associates of Science Degrees in nursing, there is a chance that it will come back in the Senate. Since there was no Senate companion to HB 381, it does not have to be heard by a committee prior to being amended onto a bill in the Senate. However there could be a point of order called if it moves into a Senate bill without having been heard by a committee first.

Dr. Meadows suggested that the Council work with a favorable legislator to file a bill that states that any Technical Center that feels the need to meet workforce needs and offer Associate Degrees would be placed under and a part of the Florida College System and merged into a college in the district. He shared that strategy would send a clear message that if they feel compelled to compete for dollars, degrees and students, that there should be only one segment of higher education doing that and therefore they would be absorbed into the Florida College System. Dr. Holdnak agreed and has had conversations with legislators on the matter. Dr. LoBasso shared that there needs to be a conversation about what the Technical Centers are trying to do with adding the Associate Degrees. Dr. Meadows stated that the Council needs to have a long range goal with an amendment to make it known that the Florida College System is not going to stand by and let this happen. Dr. Falconetti agreed and asked what would be the best way to stall or stop this. Ms. Helfin replied that it is rumored the amendment will be added to a Senate Bill, but currently there is nothing to proactively block or counter amend. As previously mentioned since the bill does not have a Senate companion, it could be added to a Senate bill. Once it passes the Senate and passes to the House, then the Council could find someone in the House to make a point of order based on Senate rules. Dr. Probstfeld asked if the Council should prepare language that in the event the bill is amended, then the Council is ready with language to counter amend. Ms. Heflin agreed that language should be prepared, but it will depend on which bill this will be added to and whether this is a leadership priority bill. President Parker asked the lobbyists to prepare language that could be used when needed and also to give an update on this item at next week's meeting.

President Parker asked Ms. Helfin for an idea of what next week would look like in the legislature. Ms. Helfin shared that on Tuesday the House Education Committee would be meeting. The agenda has not yet been posted. On Thursday from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. there will be an appropriations Committee meeting. Presidents should have a chance to meet with Senate delegation members on Wednesday and Thursday. As far as House delegations Wednesday and Thursday mornings may be best.

President Parker shared that she is still working on the form that discusses fund balances.

President Haile asked about the language in the House Bill that would require colleges to have 7% in their reserve balance, if there was less than that, colleges would have to find a way to make it up. Ms. Heflin replied that bill was temporarily postponed on the floor.

Mr. Brawer shared that the meeting next week in Tallahassee would be at the TCC Capitol Center on Thursday, April 11. Presidents Professional Development will begin at 2:30 p.m. and the Business meeting will begin at 4:00 p.m.

Karen Moore shared that over 100 college stories have been shared recently. The Moore Agency is geofencing the Capital with digital media. She has received calls for additional copies of the TaxWatch report. Presidents were encouraged to contact Karen Moore or Michael Brawer if they need additional copies.

President Parker adjourned the call at 11:40 a.m.