Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting

Monday, May 12, 2014
11:00 am – 12:30 pm
Zia A
Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting

Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA), chair
Christopher Cabaldon (CA), vice chair

Susan Anderson (AK)
Chris Bustamante (AZ)
Committee vice chair (CA)
Joe Garcia (CO)
Sharon Hart (CNMI)
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
Tony Fernandez (ID)
Franke Wilmer (MT)
Larry Skogen (ND)
José Garcia (NM)
Vic Redding (NV)
Ryan Deckert (OR)
Robert Burns (SD)
Dave Buhler (UT)
Committee chair (WA)
Sam Krone (WY)

Agenda

Presiding: Jeanne Kohl-Welles, committee chair

Staff: Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis
      Brian Prescott, director of policy research
      Patrick Lane, senior policy analyst and project coordinator

Action Item

Approval of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee meeting minutes of November 11, 2013  5-3

Action Item

Approval of the FY 2015 workplan sections pertaining to the Policy Analysis and Research unit’s activities  5-5

Action Item

Approval of a proposed project: Streamlining Implementation of Outcomes-based Funding Models  5-10

Action Item

Approval of a proposed project: The Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments: Finding Solutions to Cross-state Challenges  5-12

Information Items:

Endorsement of APLU’s Student Achievement Measure (SAM)  5-14
Facilitating Development of a Multistate Data Exchange

New Models of Student Financial Support Concept Paper

A Second Chance at Success: Reducing the Fiscal and Social Impact of Recidivism through Inmate Education and Reentry Programs

Legislative Advisory Committee

WICHE/Center for Urban Education *Equity in Excellence*

WICHE Policy Analysis Unit Internship Program

**Other business**

**Adjournment**
ACTION ITEM
Issue Analysis and Research Committee Minutes
Monday, November 11, 2013

Committee Members Present
Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA), chair
Christopher Cabaldon (CA), vice chair
Leah Bornstein (AZ)
Loretta Martinez (CO)
Sharon Hart (CNMI)
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
Anthony (Tony) Fernandez (ID)
Ham Shirvani (ND)
Jose Garcia (NM)
Vic Redding (NV)
Ryan Deckert (OR)
Robert Burns (SD)

Committee Members Absent
Susan Anderson (AK)
Kim Gillan (MT)
Dave Buhler (UT)
Sam Krone (WY)

Staff Present
David Longanecker, president, WICHE
Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis
Laura Ewing, administrative assistant
Brian Prescott, director of policy research
Peace Bransberger, senior research analyst
Carl Krueger, project coordinator
Patrick Lane, senior policy analyst and project coordinator

Vice Chair Christopher Cabaldon (CA) chaired the meeting at the request of Chair Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA), who was ill.

Vice Chair Cabaldon convened the Issue Analysis and Research Committee meeting on November 11, 2013. Roll was called. Demarée Michelau introduced staff from the policy unit. A quorum was established.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes of May 20, 2013

Vice Chair Cabaldon pointed committee members to the agenda book and asked them to review the minutes from the committee meeting on May 20, 2013. The minutes were approved unanimously.

INFORMATION and DISCUSSION ITEMS

David Longanecker briefed the committee on the progress of WICHE’s efforts around state authorization reciprocity, W-SARA and NC-SARA. He shared that Lumina Foundation staff had suggested the additional appointment of Laura Palmer Noone, a former president of the University of Phoenix, to the steering committee for W-SARA and that he would be bringing that forward for approval by the commission in short order. Longanecker further addressed his expectations about states’ applications to participate and described a few issues that are keeping all states from joining SARA. In some cases it is law, and in most cases it is rules and regulations, and W-SARA is working to move as quickly as possible to address those barriers. The goal is to get as many states in as possible before July 1, 2014, so the states can be in full compliance with the federal requirements.

Longanecker expects that the W-SARA steering committee will recommend approval of state applications to SARA to the commission at the May 2014 meeting. In the discussion, he outlined a few states’ specific issues before they can join, including California, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Utah. He also mentioned that New Jersey (which, not being a member of any of the regional compacts, has the option to select one of its choosing) has indicated they may want to join W-SARA, but that he is encouraging it join with NEBHE due to its proximity to the NEBHE region.

Commissioner Burns asked about which region South Dakota would join and Longanecker indicated that South Dakota and North Dakota are trying to decide whether to go with MHEC or WICHE.
Commissioner Cabaldon asked Longanecker if W-SARA documentation includes a requirement to have a Lumina representative on the SARA steering committee. Longanecker clarified that it is not a requirement and stated that Lumina made a suggestion of someone qualified and with an interest in helping. Commissioner Cabaldon asked if the steering committee has formal authority to approve members to the committee. Longanecker responded by saying that the steering committee members recommend and the commission approves the members. Longanecker gave further clarification and reported that Lumina only plans to fund W-SARA for up to three years. The goal of the program is to be self-sufficient by that time. Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked about Washington and Longanecker reported the state is in good shape.

Prescott reported on a Lumina-funded grant to write a concept paper on state financial aid design for affordability, which will also take into account aid from federal and institutional sources. The paper is likely to be released in early spring.

Additionally, Prescott announced the release of three new reports:

- The annual update to Benchmarks, accompanied by a policy brief on regional educational attainment targets to be the source material for David’s presentation later in the meeting.
- The annual update to the Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West publication covering the 2013-14 academic year.
- A supplement to WICHE’s Knocking projections, which disaggregates the existing projections by sex and also includes projections for the nation’s 25 largest metropolitan areas.

Prescott also updated the committee on the Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange pilot, described how the pilot may offer a solution to linking education and employment records for state and institutional use, and encouraged commissioners to contact him for more information or to learn more about how additional states might join an implementation project.

Michelau announced the release of the annual update of legislative activity in the West. Broad dissemination will take place during the week of November 18, 2013.

The committee then had a discussion of how WICHE should or should not engage in certain federal policy issues, especially the President’s proposed ratings system. The discussion focused on to what extent and how WICHE should advocate a position vis-à-vis federal policy broadly or for more narrow and specific approaches such as measures of success or funding levels. Commissioner Bornstein asked whether WICHE could adopt positions and advocate for them, and as commissioners have a conversation about what concerns us. Commissioner Martinez stated that Metro State is more actively trying to have their voice heard by the federal government. Chair Kohl-Welles suggested it might be worthwhile to team up with the National Conference of State Legislatures to discuss how and on what issues to engage with federal policymakers. Commissioner Cabaldon raised a question about to what extent we want to allow the WICHE Commission to be viewed as doing collective inquiry vs. collective advocacy. We do proper research on how to present our issues and learn how to have significant influence. Commissioner Deckert reported how Oregon was able to utilize WICHE to rethink financial aid, and that by working with WICHE the state got to a resolution faster and developed a “policy playbook” for financial aid. Conversation also included a suggestion that WICHE engage more broadly with state legislators as there is some concern that legislators outside of higher education do not know what WICHE is and its role. Commissioner Burns referred to the 60th anniversary of WICHE and commented on the historical perspective of the commission. The original charter was not to be an advocacy group. Burns went on to say if we try to change this direction it could really tear the commission apart. Commissioners suggested that the question of what is the proper amount of advocacy WICHE might do may be an ongoing conversation to strike the right balance, being both sensitive to the role and mission of the organization while also having a bigger influence on federal policy matters of significance to our states.

Michelau answered questions about the College Access Challenge Grant and its current status, which is that it has slowed down due to several states not meeting federal maintenance of effort requirements. In an effort to expand the College Access Challenge Grant Network, WICHE expanded eligibility for participation to include other federal access programs and changed the name to the College Access Regional Network.

With no other business to discuss, the committee adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:10 pm.
### ACTION ITEM

**Policy Analysis and Research FY 2015 Workplan**

The Policy Analysis and Research unit offers a variety of policy and information resources to support better-informed decision making, principally at the state level. The unit is involved in a number of research projects and collaborative initiatives that focus on projections of enrollment demand; college completion; adult learners; multistate data-sharing to support educational planning and workforce development; and other critical areas. WICHE staff serve as a useful resource on a number of higher education issues, including state and federal financial aid, finance, articulation and transfer, the Common Core State Standards, and various college completion initiatives. Its publication series, including *Policy Insights* and *Western Policy Exchanges*, explore a wide range of significant policy issues. The unit also undertakes major, long-term grant-funded projects, collaborates with other regional and national organizations, and provides short-term technical assistance to members.

#### EXISTING ACTIVITIES

**ONGOING**

Continuing work supported by the general fund or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Geo-Scope</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West</strong></td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>.025 FTE</td>
<td>All WICHE members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislative Advisory Committee</strong></td>
<td>Finance, access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society, technology &amp; innovation, accountability</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>.10 FTE</td>
<td>All WICHE members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Higher Education Policy Database</strong></td>
<td>Finance, access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society, technology &amp; innovation, accountability</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>.20 FTE</td>
<td>National Conference of State Legislatures, Lumina Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Publications Clearinghouse</strong></td>
<td>Finance, access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society, technology &amp; innovation, accountability</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>.025 FTE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benchmarks</strong></td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>.025 FTE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West</strong></td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>.025 FTE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Insights</strong></td>
<td>Finance, access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society, technology &amp; innovation, accountability</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>.10 FTE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Policy Exchanges</strong></td>
<td>Finance, access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society, technology &amp; innovation, accountability</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>.05 FTE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### EXISTING ACTIVITIES

**PROJECTS & INITIATIVES**

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants or contracts. All work in this category is considered high priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Geo-Scope</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity in Excellence</td>
<td>Access &amp; success, accountability</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation, Ford Foundation (subcontract): $50,000</td>
<td>.45 FTE</td>
<td>1/2013 - 06/2014</td>
<td>Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California, Colorado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments: Finding Solutions to Cross-state Challenges</td>
<td>Access &amp; success</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>TBD ($100,000)</td>
<td>.55 FTE</td>
<td>5/2014 - 12/2014</td>
<td>SBAC, PARCC, SHEEO, and AACTE*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates</td>
<td>Access &amp; success</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>ACT, College Board: $441,000</td>
<td>.5 FTE</td>
<td>10/2010 - 6/2015</td>
<td>ACT, College Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC); Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC); State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO); American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE).

**Adult College Completion Network (www.adultcollegecompletion.org)**: WICHE manages the ACC Network, a learning network that unites organizations and agencies working to increase college degree and credential completion by adults with prior college credits.

**College Access Challenge Grant Consortium and College Access Regional (CAR) Network (www.wiche.edu/carNetwork)**: States can participate in the CACG Consortium, which involves WICHE working closely with the state to administer its federally funded formula grant program, designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education; or in the CAR Network, which is a collaborative council composed of College Access Challenge Grant administrators from each of the states.
**Equity in Excellence:** With a focus on the Denver metro area, WICHE is partnering with the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California to support the implementation of Colorado’s higher education reform agenda by aligning the state’s higher education policy measures with concrete, equity-focused actions within community colleges and four-year institutions.

**The Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments: Finding Solutions to Cross-state Challenges:** The overall goal of this project is to bring together key state leaders involved in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and assessments to discuss challenges associated with student movement across state lines and identify practical solutions.

**Knocking at the College Door** ([www.wiche.edu/knocking](http://www.wiche.edu/knocking)): With support from its traditional partners, ACT and the College Board, Policy recently released the 8th edition of these projections and is continuing to explore the feasibility of enhancements, such as producing projections for urban areas and disaggregations by sex.

**Policy and Assessment Framework for Washington’s Opportunity Scholarship Program:** In partnership with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), staff is examining Washington’s new financial aid program and offering guidance concerning how its effectiveness can be measured and how its implementation can be integrated with the state’s existing finance and financial aid policies.

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### NEW DIRECTIONS

Commissioner-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

- **= Urgency (mission critical)**
- **= low, ** = medium, *** = high
- = Opportunity (funding)
- = low, = medium, = high
- = Competence (staff/consultants)
- = low, = medium, = high

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Geo-scope</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hitting the Ground Running:</strong> Leveraging Work-Based Learning to Improve Educational Outcomes and Meet Workforce Demands**</td>
<td>Access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society</td>
<td>** **</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
<td>1.75 FTE</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Longitudinal Data Exchange Expansion and Implementation</strong></td>
<td>Workforce &amp; society, technology &amp; innovation, accountability</td>
<td>** **</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>$1.5 million</td>
<td>2.5 FTE</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Additional Western states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Second Chance at Success:</strong> Reducing the Fiscal and Social Impact of Recidivism through Inmate Education and Reentry Programs**</td>
<td>Access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society</td>
<td>** **</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>$2.5 million</td>
<td>2 FTE</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>WICHE Mental Health Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Streamlining Implementation of Outcomes-based Funding Models</strong></td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>** **</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>$2.25 million</td>
<td>2 FTE</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>American Council on Education, NCHEMS, SHEEO, National Association of System Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Priority</td>
<td>Geo-scope</td>
<td>Funding</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving Student Soldiers of the West</td>
<td>Access &amp; success, workforce &amp; society</td>
<td>★ ★</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
<td>1.35 FTE</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Mental Health Program, U.S. Dept. of Defense, Service-members Opportunity Colleges, American Council on Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hitting the Ground Running: Leveraging Work-based Learning to Improve Educational Outcomes and Meet Workforce Demands:** The goal of this work is to help states (and perhaps metropolitan areas) facilitate the development of partnerships among institutions and businesses to ensure effective linkages between the workplace and the classroom through co-op/internship programs.

**Longitudinal Data Exchange Expansion and Implementation:** The next phase of this project will continue, enhance, and expand the work it has done in piloting a multistate longitudinal data exchange spanning K-12 education, postsecondary education, and workforce information in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Hawai’i by working toward further development of a sustainable architecture, governance, and financing plans, as well as expansion into more states and a second round of data exchange and analysis.

**A Second Chance at Success: Reducing the Fiscal and Social Impact of Recidivism through Inmate Education and Reentry Programs:** The overall goal of this project is to reduce the fiscal and social impact of recidivism on states by helping former inmates, upon release from the correctional system, be successful individually and to be productive, contributing members of society through effective, comprehensive prison education and reentry programs.

**Streamlining Implementation of Outcomes-based Funding Models:** A project designed to assist states and postsecondary institutions implement outcomes-based funding policies in ways that best ensure that the goals of those policies are achieved.

**Serving Student Soldiers of the West: Policy and Practice Solutions:** The goal of this project is to increase access to and success in higher education for military students and their families in the Western region.

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**POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS**

Work that staff is considering pursuing (and bringing to the commission for review or approval). In addition, at the end of this section, we list projects that staff previously considered pursuing but that staff now proposes to remove from the workplan.

**The Impact of Dual and Concurrent Enrollment on Student Success in Postsecondary Education:** A project that would assess the impact of enrolling in and successfully completing dual and concurrent enrollment courses while still in high school on success in postsecondary education.

**Changing Direction 2.0:** A project building off WICHE’s previous national project of the same name but addressing the new post-recession fiscal climate, which would promote the adoption of contemporary higher education finance policies that link appropriations, tuition setting, and financial aid.

**Informing Career and Technical Education and Economic Development Programs to Meet State Workforce Needs:** A potential partnership with the Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy at Sacramento State University to explore how career and technical education and economic development programs can be best organized and informed with contemporary workforce data, in order to meet state workforce needs.

**Redefining Degrees:** A potential partnership with Sacramento State University’s Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy to study and recommend more effective degree pathways, including applied degrees.
Assessing the Landscape on State Policy on Student-learning Outcomes: A project that would assist states in understanding the various efforts underway to better capture student-learning outcomes, especially with respect to the Degree Qualifications Profile and its applicability to statewide and institutional curriculum design and assessment.

Exploring Strategies for Improving the Delivery of Remedial and Developmental Education Policies and Practices: A project that would build on current emerging practices in the field to help states more effectively and efficiently target remedial education to students, particularly adult learners.

Identifying Effective College Persistence and Success Projects and Working to Bring Them to Scale: A project in which WICHE would launch a program that identifies the most effective – and cost-effective – college persistence and success projects and bring them to scale.

Addressing Workforce Needs with the Emerging Majority-Minority: A project that would build on previous work that strengthened the connections between higher education institutions and workforce-training programs in an effort to promote a more explicit focus on how state workforce needs can be met through better service to racial/ethnic minorities and other underrepresented populations.

Previously considered projects that we propose to remove from the workplan.

Race Against the Clock: Preparing to Teachers to Effectively Utilize Information from the Common Core State Standards

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Work that staff finished in FY 2014.

Facilitating Development of a Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange.

New Models of Student Financial Support Concept Paper.
ACTION ITEM

Proposed Project
Streamlining Implementation of Outcomes-based Funding Models

Summary
WICHE’s Policy Analysis and Research unit proposes to seek funding to assist states and postsecondary institutions implement outcomes-based funding policies in ways that best ensure that the goals of those policies are achieved.

Relationship to WICHE Mission
By directing state funding to institutions based on how well they help students achieve defined outcomes, such as graduation, rather than simply based on enrollments, outcomes-based funding policies provide powerful incentives to institutions to more intentionally meet specific state needs around college completion, productivity, and, ultimately, educational attainment. Facilitating dialogue among states and institutions is part of the core of what WICHE’s Policy Analysis and Research unit seeks to do. This project falls most directly under the Finance theme of the workplan, but also incorporates elements of the Access and Success and Accountability themes.

Background
Higher education has entered an era in which outcomes-based funding policies are spreading rapidly among states in part because they are seen as an avenue to the higher educational attainment levels required for global economic competitiveness and a way to spark improvements in institutional productivity. Currently, 16 states are implementing outcomes-based funding programs in at least one postsecondary sector, nine states are developing their own policies, and active interest exists in eight other states. The theory of action behind such programs is certainly promising: higher education institutions will adjust their policies and practices to better fulfill state policy expectations for more student success because:

1. Institutions will respond to the monetary incentives to improve performance as defined by the outcome metrics,
2. Institutions will perceive the state’s expressed goals for higher education more clearly,
3. Institutions will become better aware of their own performance with respect to those goals, and
4. Institutions will be motivated to achieve out of traditional status-seeking and competitive habits.

Yet whether the promise of outcomes-based funding can be fully realized will come down to whether these theories of action are powerful enough to overcome barriers and unintended consequences, and institutional decision-making will factor in heavily in that result. State policies that do not work as intended due in part to wayward implementations are far from uncommon. And, unlike traditional enrollment-based funding models, improving student success and productivity requires the engagement of the entire institution from the president and his or her cabinet to the faculty to the student support staff. With the success or failure of outcomes-based funding models hinging partly on how institutions come to understand the state’s goals, make changes in response to the incentives embedded in the model, and grow to support the policy as an appropriate and effective mechanism for financial support, this project aims to address gaps in awareness that may exist between state and institutional actors.

Project Description
WICHE proposes a three-year project focused on five major activities:

1. **Research**: WICHE will conduct research on the supply-side impacts of outcomes-based funding models. Such research will involve a literature review of how recipients of subsidies have adjusted when those subsidies have been linked to performance measures, both in higher education and other industries. It will also involve such quantitative evidence as can be gathered to understand the extent to which institutions have reallocated expenditures in the wake of outcomes-based funding. Finally, this component will also involve a significant qualitative study of institutional leaders and key stakeholder groups about the ways in which their efforts have adjusted.

2. **State technical assistance**: WICHE will initiate a competitive RFP process to identify three to four states in the West to receive targeted technical assistance on aligning institutional behaviors with the goals of newly adopted state outcomes-based funding models (or those still under consideration). States will be expected to assemble
joint state/institutional teams, with institutional representation from the major functional areas listed above. State teams will also be expected to be representative of all sectors within higher education, though states will be encouraged to target efforts on a select group of institutions at first, with plans to share lessons more broadly at an appropriate time. States selected for technical assistance will receive a subcontract and funding to offset their costs and ensure better participation. WICHE plans to capture the experiences of selected states through a publication of case studies.

3. **Advisory board**: WICHE will assemble an advisory board of leaders from across higher education with representation from other research organizations, national associations, institutions, and SHEEO agencies. The board will also include representation from state legislatures.

4. **Convenings**: WICHE will host a major convening once each year of the grant to address issues of alignment between state policy and institutional policy and practice. This convening will provide an opportunity for cross-state lessons to be shared and common challenges to be addressed. It will also be a premier event for better understanding of how outcomes-based funding models can be implemented in ways that best ensure their success. Invitations will include members of the teams from states receiving technical assistance, but they will not be limited to that. Proceedings of each convening will be disseminated widely.

5. **State research staff outreach**: WICHE will annually convene the chief policy research staff member from each of its member states to address issues related to outcomes-based funding models, as well as other matters of pertinence. In particular, this convening will seek to empower these individuals to employ their data more effectively to inform public policies and to work more effectively with the institutional research community in ways that go beyond typical compliance activities. This meeting will respond to an expressed need for the development of a network for individuals with common areas of responsibility related to data systems, policy research, and specifically to the creation, use, and monitoring of institutional performance indicators. It will fill a growing gap at a time when the National Center for Education Statistics seems to be backing away from an annual gathering of state IPEDS coordinators, a sizeable portion of which was an opportunity for those individuals to share concepts, collaboratively problem-solve, and develop or enhance skills.

**Staff and Fiscal Impact**

We anticipate seeking $2.25 million for this three-year project. This would include support for up to 2.75 FTE annually, including two additional new hires.

**Action Requested**

Approval to seek funds to support WICHE’s leadership of this project.

**Notes:**

ACTION ITEM

Proposed Project

The Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments: Finding Solutions to Cross-state Challenges

Summary

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English/language arts and mathematics seek to better prepare students across the nation for college and careers. The adoption of the CCSS by most states was unprecedented, but challenges remain. Increasingly students attend colleges and universities in states other than where they graduated from high school, and questions loom about how the standards and assessment results will be viewed, accepted, and used as students move among states. The goal of “The Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments: Finding Solutions to Cross-State Challenges” is to facilitate discussion and resolution of challenges associated with student movement across state lines by bringing together key state leaders. Expected outcomes for this meeting are that state leaders will have: (1) gained an increased awareness of issues that may emerge as students cross state lines throughout their educational pathways; (2) forged relationships with people in other states to assist with the ongoing implementation of the CCSS and assessments in the region; (3) identified action strategies for preempting some of the obstacles related to student movement across state lines for states, postsecondary institutions, districts, schools, and most importantly, students, as the CCSS and assessments are implemented; and (4) determined whether an ongoing conversation (perhaps through a network) would be valuable. The project consists of two key activities – a Western regional meeting and a publication of meeting proceedings that will be disseminated broadly.

Relationship to WICHE Mission

Facilitating dialogue among WICHE members is a primary function of WICHE’s Policy Analysis and Research unit. As such, this project will assist members in identifying cross-state challenges that could negatively impact students as the CCSS and assessments are implemented in the region. The purpose of this work is to find solutions that will lead to greater efficiency and better student outcomes.

Background

Created through an initiative led by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers – with input from researchers, policymakers, teachers, and the general public – the CCSS in English/language arts and mathematics align college and work expectations through rigorous content and the application of knowledge via the demonstration of higher order skills. In September 2010, the U.S. Department of Education awarded large grants to two consortia of states – the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) – to develop K-12 assessments to measure student progress toward the CCSS. While the adoption of the CCSS by all but a few states was an unprecedented achievement in U.S. education, implementation of the standards remains in process and many challenges remain for the new standards to accomplish their intended objective of providing a clear and consistent framework to prepare young people for college and the workforce. One such challenge relates to student movement across state lines. Increasingly students attend colleges and universities in states other than where they graduated from high school, and questions loom about how the new standards and assessment results will be viewed, accepted, and used as students move between states.

Project Description

The goal of “The Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments: Finding Solutions to Cross-State Challenges” is to facilitate discussion and resolution of challenges associated with student movement across state lines by bringing together key state leaders. Expected outcomes for this meeting are that state leaders will have:

1. Gained an increased awareness of issues related to the CCSS and assessments that may emerge as students cross state lines to enroll in postsecondary institutions;
2. Forged relationships with colleagues in other states to assist with the ongoing implementation of the CCSS and assessments in the region and consider the possibility of forming a network among states that would focus on these issues;
3. Identified action strategies for preempting some of the obstacles related to student movement across state lines for states, postsecondary institutions, districts, schools, and most importantly, students, as the CCSS and assessments are implemented; and
4. Determined whether an ongoing conversation (perhaps through a network) would be valuable.

The timing of this project is critical as full implementation of the assessments will be launched in the 2014-15 academic year. With an increasingly mobile student population, state leaders must anticipate the challenges they will face now so they can identify solutions. Absent a forum for a productive discussion of these issues, the region will miss an important opportunity at the expense of students.

To preempt some of the challenges that states, institutions, districts, schools, and students, will likely face as the CCSS and assessments are implemented in the region, this project will consist of two main activities:

1. **Western Regional Meeting.** WICHE will convene a meeting of K-12 and higher education leads from the WICHE states and territories (and additional states as deemed appropriate) regardless of which assessment, if any, the states adopted. In late summer of 2014, participants will engage in a productive, facilitated discussion about anticipated challenges resulting from students moving across state lines in a new and developing environment that includes common K-12 academic standards and potentially several different assessments. Possible broad topics that will be addressed include reporting information on student transcripts, college admissions, placement into credit-bearing courses, 12th grade conditions and other requirements, and the role and preparation of teachers. Examples of general questions that are likely to be tackled during the meeting include:

   - How will a PARCC state, for instance, determine placement into credit-bearing courses if a student has taken the SBAC assessment (or vice versa), ACT, or an alternative assessment?
   - Within each SBAC state, students may be required to satisfactorily complete grade 12 English and/or mathematics courses to retain exemption from developmental coursework. How will this translate to other states if a student chooses to go to a state that does not have those same requirements? How will this requirement apply to students coming from states that do not use the SBAC assessment and enroll in an SBAC state?
   - How do states, institutions, and the assessment consortia ensure that students receive accurate and consistent information about higher education?
   - How do states, institutions, and the assessment consortia effectively reach out to special populations in the region (e.g., Native American, rural, and/or low-income students)?

   WICHE will form a steering committee to help design an efficient agenda that will achieve the project goal and desired outcomes. The steering committee will be composed of WICHE staff, designees from SBAC and PARCC, and additional state representatives.

2. **Publication of Meeting Proceedings.** WICHE will prepare and broadly disseminate a post-meeting report so that participants as well as those who are not able to participate in the meeting can benefit from the discussions and potential solutions identified.

Partners in this project may include the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO).

**Staff and Fiscal Impact**
The timeline for this project will be from May 15 through December 31, 2014, and the proposed budget is $100,000 with an anticipated staff impact of .50 FTE. The total budget will cover staff time to plan and convene the meeting, cover travel expenses, as well as draft, publish, and disseminate the publication of meeting proceedings.

**Action Requested**
Approval to seek funds to support WICHE’s leadership of this project.
INFORMATION ITEM
Endorsement of APLU’s Student Achievement Measure (SAM)

The Executive Committee approved the following action item on its February teleconference call.

ACTION ITEM
Endorsement of APLU’s Student Achievement Measure (SAM)

With the commission’s permission, WICHE would publicly endorse the Student Achievement Measure (SAM) being developed by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU).

Relationship to WICHE Mission
The SAM project is an attempt to create an alternative to the federal graduation rate. As such, WICHE’s endorsement of the effort fits snugly within the accountability section of our workplan, and the project is also aligned with existing efforts WICHE has been deeply involved in, including the multistate data exchange project and other data-related activities.

Background
Periodically, WICHE is asked to publicly support a project or initiative being undertaken by another organization. Typically, WICHE would be one of many organizations in the public policy space to offer such an endorsement, and WICHE’s reputation as a credible and influential organization is seen as helping enhance the project’s legitimacy or reach.

From the SAM project website (www.studentachievementmeasure.org):

“SAM tracks student movement across postsecondary institutions to provide a more complete picture of undergraduate student progress and completion within the higher education system. [It] is an alternative to the federal graduation rate, which is limited to tracking the completion of first-time, full-time students at one institution.

SAM provides an improved way to report student progress and graduation by including a greater proportion of an institution’s undergraduate students as well as tracking students who enroll in multiple higher education institutions. Usual measures of student progress and completion, including government-led efforts, usually underreport student achievement because they do not account for an increasingly mobile student population.”

SAM is being developed under leadership from APLU, but it is a joint initiative of six higher education presidential associations, including the: American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), American Council on Education (ACE), Association of American Universities (AAU), Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU). Member institutions of these organizations voluntarily submit data on student cohorts, which will be matched by the National Student Clearinghouse to build student progress metrics for two models:

1. A bachelor’s degree model that will report outcomes for full-time, first-time degree-seeking students and for transfer-in students.
2. An associate’s and certificate program model that will report outcomes for full-time, first-time students and for part-time, first-time students.

Reported data for both models will include information on graduates, still enrolled, and transferred.

Program Description
Not applicable.

Staff and Fiscal Impact
None.

Action Requested
Approval to be named as an organization that has officially endorsed the SAM project.