Monday, November 11, 2013

11:00 am - noon
SHEPC Conference Room

Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting

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

Susan Anderson (AK)
Leah Bornstein (AZ)
Committee vice chair (CA)
Sharon Hart (CNMI)
Joe Garcia (CO)
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
J. Anthony (Tony) Fernandez (ID)
Kim Gillan (MT)
Ham Shirvani (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
Peace Bransberger, senior research analyst
Laura Ewing, administrative assistant
Carl Krueger, project coordinator
Patrick Lane, senior policy analyst and project coordinator

Action Item

Approval of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee meeting minutes of May 20, 2013 5-3

Information Items:

Staffing changes

New Models of Student Financial Support concept paper 5-6

Benchmarks: WICHE Region 2013

Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West 2012-13
Facilitating Development of a Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange

Knocking at the College Door supplement

Discussion Items:

Constructive innovation: Recapping 2013 higher education legislative activity in the West

On the horizon projects: Meeting the needs of the West

Other business

Adjournment
ACTION ITEM
Issue Analysis and Research Committee Minutes
Monday, May 20, 2013

Committee Members Present
Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA), chair
Susan Anderson (AK)
Sharon Hart (CNMI)
Kim Gillan (MT)
Ham Shirvani (ND)
José Garcia (NM)
Vic Redding (NV)
Ryan Deckert (OR)
Robert Burns (SD)
Dave Buhler (UT)

Committee Members Absent
Leah Bornstein (AZ)
Christopher Cabaldon (CA), vice chair
Joe Garcia (CO)
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
Duane Nellis (ID)
Sam Krone (WY)

Staff Present
David Longanecker, president
Demarée Michelau, director of policy analysis
Brian Prescott, director of policy research
Carl Krueger, project coordinator

Chair Kohl-Welles convened the Issue Analysis and Research Committee meeting on May 20, 2013. Roll was called. Demarée Michelau introduced staff from the Policy Analysis and Research unit. A quorum was established.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes
of November 12, 2012

Chair Kohl-Welles pointed committee members to the agenda book and asked them to review the minutes from the committee meeting on November 12, 2012. Commissioner Deckert moved TO APPROVE THE MINUTES. Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of a Second Phase of the the Multistate Data Exchange Project

Chair Kohl-Welles asked Brian Prescott to provide an overview of the action item to allow the Policy Analysis and Research unit to seek a second round of funding for WICHE’s multistate data exchange project; the second phase will be called Facilitating Further Development of a Multistate Data Exchange. Prescott informed the committee that the initial pilot phase is scheduled to wrap up in May 2014 and that he and David Longanecker are seeking permission to look for funding in time to allow the unit to continue this project without interruption. Commissioner Hart asked if all states were eligible for participation in the next phase of the project. Prescott replied that all states were eligible, although there will likely be an assessment of interested states’ readiness before extending the data exchange to them. Commissioner Anderson asked if other states have expressed interest in the project and how future work will be funded. Prescott explained that WICHE is considering various funding models at this time and that Alaska has already expressed interest, along with Colorado and New Mexico.

Commissioner Burns asked if state policymakers see the benefit of this project, and Chair Kohl-Welles responded that they are seeing positive signs in Washington, though more data and evidence need to be collected. Prescott added that nobody else in the country has a data set like that produced by the pilot phase and that WICHE is providing states with new ways of looking at and addressing workforce development, linked to educational attainment. Prescott also explained that WICHE needs to start describing the value of the work to state leaders, as well as to the federal government. The plan is to start having these sustainability and expansion discussions beginning in the summer of 2013. Project staff will be visiting states in the coming months to generate interest in the project and try to get policymakers to think beyond state borders.
Commissioner Burns motioned TO APPROVE THE ACTION. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. The continuation of the Facilitating Further Development of a Multistate Data Exchange project was approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**

**Discussion and approval of A Fighting Chance of Success Project**

Michelau explained that the goal of A Fighting Chance of Success: Increasing College Completion and Reducing Recidivism through Correctional Education and Behavioral Health is to expand and improve prison education programs in the region by developing stronger linkages between state higher education, behavioral health, and corrections systems to better prepare those who are released from prison for a productive, educated life outside of the corrections system. This project would include a partnership between the Policy unit and Mental Health Program at WICHE to execute the work and would include a competitive RFP process that would identify three states to pilot the project. Commissioner Gillan and other committee members indicated that just getting higher education, corrections, mental health, and policymakers in a state to sit down together would be a major accomplishment, and adding a fresh voice to the conversation would be a valuable contribution.

Commissioner Garcia asked what is currently known about the prison population and its receptiveness to higher education. He also asked if certain states are doing a better job than others in this area. Michelau replied that research into this topic is still lean, and hopefully WICHE can add to the body of knowledge. She noted that Baltimore is considered one of the model programs in the nation, since it attempts a seamless educational transition through a coaching model that starts in prison and continues once an inmate is released. Longanecker added that many prisoners get released before they complete their program and more often than not there is no coordination between sentencing and completion.

Commissioner Burns noted this would target a very small number of inmates. Longanecker responded that this project would target two components of the prison population: those who have literacy issues but are not “extremely deficient,” and those who have the capacity to move into career and technical education with little preparation. In an effort to offset some of the concern expressed with the term “college completion” when describing this work, Postsecondary Education and Vocational Education Completion was offered as an alternative project title by the group. Staff will consider appropriate changes to the title and targets.

Chair Kohl-Welles motioned TO SUPPORT THE PROJECT. Commissioner Burns seconded the motion. The project was approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**

**Discussion and Approval of Fostering Successful Cooperative Education and Internship Programs**

Prescott cited the need for more alignment among state internship programs and explained that this project, whose full title is Fostering Successful Cooperative Education and Internship Programs to Improve Education Outcomes and Meet Workforce Demands, will be aimed at fostering a fertile climate for co-op/internship programs, with an emphasis on providing students with financial aid to simultaneously help align their educational preparation with state workforce demands. The project will likely have components that include: researching existing models; evaluating how state policy can facilitate or hinder the development of such programs, especially related to existing financial aid policies like cooperative work/study; and convening stakeholders. Longanecker further clarified the scope of work by explaining that a major goal is the development of relationships with employers while students are still in school, thereby keeping students in the state once they graduate and bolstering workforce development efforts. Commissioner Burns referenced existing research regarding best practices in this area and asked WICHE to incorporate that into its work on this project. Prescott responded that WICHE plans on building off of existing research models and will also proactively seek out the input of the employers, who will have to be significant partners in the effort.

Chair Kohl-Welles wondered if the focus will be on paid or unpaid internships. Longanecker replied that the project will focus its attention on paid internships, noting that when remuneration is involved, institutions, students, and future employers take the work more seriously. Commissioner Deckert stressed the importance of getting employer buy-in.
Commissioner Burns motioned TO SUPPORT THE PROJECT. Commissioner Deckert seconded the motion. The project was approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEM
Discussion and Approval of the FY 2014 Workplan Sections Pertaining to the Policy Analysis and Research Unit’s Activities

Michelau asked if any members had questions about the workplan. Longanecker provided more background on the Common Core State Standards project and how WICHE is still seeking opportunities in this area, despite an unexpected setback for a project the unit was pursuing with the J. A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation. Helping to prepare preservice as well as in-service teachers to teach to the Common Core State Standards and bringing higher education to the table as a partner may still be niches WICHE can work to fill in the region.

Prescott pointed out that those interested in more details can find all five action items in the appropriate tab in the agenda book.

Commissioner Burns motioned TO SUPPORT THE UNIT’S WORKPLAN. Commissioner Deckert seconded the motion. The FY2014 workplan sections for the Policy Analysis and Research unit were approved unanimously.

Information and Discussion Items

Chair Kohl-Welles asked staff to provide informational updates about unit activities. Michelau gave members a status update about the Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC), noting that filling vacancies on the LAC is progressing and the next meeting has been scheduled for September 4-5, 2013, in Las Vegas. Michelau also gave an update regarding the WICHE/Center for Urban Equity in Excellence project. She explained that initial research is complete, and the work is now ready to move into the analysis phase. Prescott and Michelau informed the committee that the unit has hired two new interns for the summer to support various projects and activities, including Knocking at the College Door and the State Higher Education Policy Database.

Chair Kohl-Welles adjourned the meeting.
INFORMATION ITEM
New Models of Student Financial Support Concept Paper

The Executive Committee approved the following action item at its September 9 teleconference call.

ACTION ITEM
New Models of Student Financial Support Concept Paper

WICHE proposes to prepare a paper pursuant to Lumina Foundation’s request for proposals for concept papers on new models of student financial support. The paper will offer policy recommendations for state financial aid systems that support student access, success, and affordability.

Relationship to WICHE Mission
This project directly supports WICHE’s mission “to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West” by developing a paper that will become part of a foundation-sponsored conversation about new models of financial aid. The project capitalizes on WICHE’s growing expertise in this area and offers its staff the opportunity to engage other thought leaders nationally through the conversations Lumina will facilitate as part of the project.

Background
Recognizing how precarious the fiscal future of many higher education institutions is, Lumina Foundation issued an RFP for invited entities to submit brief proposals to write a concept paper that addresses how financial barriers get in the way of students’ ability to access higher education and to find success there. In response, WICHE wrote a brief proposal draft and was recently notified that Lumina had selected us to write one of the papers on the topic of “encouraging state policy for affordability.”

Program Description
Our paper will offer policy recommendations that are consistent with several key principles: they are affordable, predictable, transparent, and provide incentives for completion. It will also address how partnerships in support of students among the federal government, states, and institutions can be most effective.

Staff and Fiscal Impact
WICHE is seeking $80,000 from Lumina Foundation over six months to complete the project. These funds will be sufficient to cover staff time for Brian Prescott, David Longanecker, and Peace Bransberger, as well as more modest contributions from administrative and communications staff.

Action Requested
Approval to expend funds to be provided by Lumina Foundation to produce the concept paper.