Minutes of the Education Achievement Council Meeting

February 5, 2015

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Education Achievement Council (EAC) met in the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning Board Room in Jackson, Mississippi at 11:00 a.m. on February 5, 2015.

Council Members Present:

Mr. Ed Blakeslee, Trustee, Institutions of Higher Learning
Dr. Rodney Bennett, President, University of Southern Mississippi
Dr. Jim Borsig, President, Mississippi University for Women
Ms. La Shon Brooks representing Dr. William Bynum, President, Mississippi Valley State University
Mr. Lee Bush, Board Member, Mississippi Community College Board
Dr. Eric Clark, Executive Director, Mississippi Community College Board
Dr. Ronnie Nettles, President, Copiah-Lincoln Community College
Dr. Billy Stewart, President, East Central Community College
Dr. Jesse Smith, President, Jones County Junior College
Dr. Laurie Smith, Education Policy Advisor, Office of Governor Phil Bryant
Ms. Vicki Powell representing Mr. Blake Wilson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Mississippi Economic Council
Ms. Jean Massey, Associate State Superintendent, State Department of Education representing Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent, Mississippi State Department of Education

Council Members Not Present:

Dr. Hank Bounds, Commissioner of Higher Education, Institutions of Higher Learning
Chairman Herb Frierson, Chairman, House of Representatives Appropriations Committee
Chairman Nolan Mettetal, Chairman, House of Representatives Universities and Colleges Committee
Chairman John Polk, Chairman, Senate Universities and Colleges Committee
Chairman Gray Tollison, Chairman, Senate Education Committee
Chairman Eugene Clarke, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mr. Chip Crane, Board Member, Mississippi Community College Board
Mr. Michael Jordan, Director, Division of Professional Development, MS Department of Mental Health
Ms. Robin Robinson, Trustee, Institutions of Higher Learning

Others Present:

Mr. Henry Anderson, Webmaster, Institutions of Higher Learning
Mr. Milton Anderson, President, Virginia College
Dr. Thomas Burke, Executive Assistant to the President, University of Southern Mississippi
Ms. Kim Vereniulle, Director of Proprietary Schools, MS Community College Board
I. Welcome

Dr. Jesse Smith opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

II. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Smith asked members to review the minutes from the October 23, 2014, meeting. Dr. Jim Borsig moved that the minutes be approved. Dr. Billy Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

III. Update on LifeTracks Study of Completion Rate for 2007 Entering Students

Dr. Smith gave an update on the LifeTracks Study Completion Rate for 2007 entering freshman students. The study looked at data for all students who enrolled in 2007 full-time or part time in community colleges and universities. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate actual productivity for public higher education in Mississippi. Dr. Smith noted that the final report will be presented to the Committee for approval at a later date.

Preliminary results indicate that freshmen enrollment for 2007-2008 year was approximately 29,150 for first-time, full-time students. Approximately 41.5% of students at both 4-year universities and 2-year colleges earned a degree within a 6-year period. 46.1% earned a bachelor’s degree
43% earned an associate’s degree
10% earned certificates
80.5% finished at the school where they started

IV. Student Financial Aid Study Committee Report

Ms. Jennifer Rogers, Director of State Student Financial Aid, gave an update from the EAC State Aid Study Committee on financial aid.

The committee is charged with proposing a state financial aid program that targets working adults who are likely place-bound and unable to attend college full-time.

Ms. Rogers reported that the committee looked at considerations, i.e., what barriers do adult students face; what resources currently exist; what additional resources are need, etc. Barriers included:

- Unable to meet admission requirements;
- Lack of GED;
- Lack of computer access or computer skills (for online courses or degree programs);
- Problems from prior enrollments, and
- Time and scheduling.

Other areas discussed were types of aid programs such as construction loans, where a student draws down funds as needed, the AmeriCorps program, work study or co-op type programs, and programs that provide graduated awards by degree pursued.

The Committee also requested further guidance in moving forward from the Education Achievement Council, i.e., type of student to receive aid, certificate or degree pathway, are employer needs being met; postpone for development of CBE programs (tie state needs to CBE programs such as health, construction).

Dr. Jesse Smith: There are many barriers to obtaining a college degree. There needs to be a strong understanding of affordability of students’ abilities to pay. This goes back to supply of education and demand. Universities and colleges need to fine-tune policies and figure out a way to better align their programs and policies with the needs and realities of their students. Needs should be identified.

Dr. Borsig: Colleges and universities should pinpoint where the demand is. There is a sizable gap between the percentage of students who plan to graduate and those who actually do. This suggests that the services that colleges believe are needed may not be helping retain and graduate students. Colleges may need to re-evaluate the services offered.
Dr. Boyce: The Council needs to look at instrumental programs for adults—programs that take
the fear factor out of non-traditional students returning to school and how cost-effective the
programs are.

Dr. Boyce: The Council should request a report from Lifetracks to determine how many hours
students have before completion and to determine what group of students to target for degree
completion. This could be done through a scalable pilot program. Colleges and universities play
a critical role in meeting the demands of different educational credential pathways. There must
be value in showing those who gain educational credentials beyond high school are significantly
better off than those who do not.

Dr. Tom Burke: The barrier to completion may be due to factors other than financial. The fear
factors that inhibit students from completion should be better managed by institutions.

Recommendation:
1. Take a look at developing aid for non-traditional group
2. Request a report from Lifetracks. Dr. Boyce was asked to design scope of request.
3. Propose a program for working adults made up of two-year, public, private, business
community
4. Establish a committee to study non-financial aid barriers for non-traditional students.

Dr. Jesse Smith asked members to let him know if council members want to participate on
committee for best practices across the country. Focus on specific workforce.

(Copy of PowerPoint report attached)

V. Proprietary Schools and Colleges Registration

Dr. Ronnie Nettles gave a report on the Commission on Proprietary Schools and Colleges
Registration meeting, which he attended on December 18, 2014, on behalf of the EAC.

At the CPSCR meeting, Dr. Nettles presented the mission and goals of the Educational
Achievement Council, specifically the goal of having 60 percent of the state’s population, within
the 25-64 year age group, earn a certificate of value or degree by the year 2025.

Dr. Nettles explained that to get an accurate and complete picture of Mississippi’s success in
achieving this goal, the cooperation of proprietary schools would be needed. He expressed to the
group that he did not have the specific details of what that reporting would require at the time of
his presentation to the Commission.

Dr. Nettles visit was well received by the Commission members. Furthermore, during the public
comments time, a number of the proprietary college and school representatives present expressed
their appreciation and their desire to be more engaged with the EAC and its efforts.
Recommendation from Dr. Nettles:

- EAC consider recommending changes in next year’s legislation to include the appointment of a representative from the proprietary schools and colleges to the EAC. Further recommend that a member be added from the private college association.

Milton Anderson, president of Virginia College, addressed the EAC and provided an update on Virginia College’s programs. He reported on the success of students continuing their education at Mississippi Public Universities. He agreed with the need for technical schools to be a part of the EAC team, which could contribute valuable ideas to help move the state’s higher education system forward.

Dr. Eric Clark commented that the Mississippi Community College Board has strengthened its relationship with the proprietary schools, which has created more oversight and more collaboration.

Motion was made by Dr. Clark to ask the 2016 Legislature to add two new members to the EAC: one representing the proprietary schools and one representing independent colleges. Motion was seconded by Dr. Borsig. Motion carried.

The EAC Council members agreed that, until legislation is passed authorizing representation of the proprietary schools and independent colleges on the EAC council, the schools may participate as ex-officio members, with no voting rights.

Mr. Anderson from Virginia College recommended that the EAC send a letter to the Mississippi Proprietary School Association and Mississippi Association of Independent Schools explaining the purpose and goals of the Education Achievement Council.

Motion to send letter to the Mississippi Proprietary School Association and Mississippi Association of Independent Schools explaining the purpose and goals of the Education Achievement Council was made by Mr. Lee Bush and seconded by Mr. Blakeslee. Motion carried.

Dr. Smith thanked Mr. Anderson and Dr. Nettles for their reports.

VI. Adoption of Community College Report Cards

Dr. Clark reported that the Community College Report Cards are in draft form pending approval by the Mississippi Community College Board in April. Once the Report Cards are validated and approved by the Board, they will be presented at the next meeting of the EAC.

Dr. Borsig reported the IHL Report Cards have been approved and adopted.

VII. Update on Legislation Regarding Reciprocity Agreements for Distance Education
Dr. Boyce reported that Chairman Mettetal and Chairman Polk support HB 951/Senate Bill 2453, which authorize the Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation to administer interstate reciprocity agreements that will allow approved institutions of higher learning and registered proprietary schools to offer postsecondary distance education for related purposes. Schools are not mandated to join. Dr. Boyce thanked Chairman Mettetal and Polk for their support.

Copies of HB 951 and SB 2453 are attached.

**VIII. 2015 Meeting Dates**

- April 23
- August 27
- October 22

The next meeting of the Education Achievement Council will be held on Thursday, April 23, at 11:00 a.m., in the IHL Board Room.

**IX. Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.
State Aid Study Committee Update

Education Achievement Council
February 5, 2015

Propose a state financial aid program that targets working adults who are likely place-bound and unable to attend college full-time.
### Considerations

- What barriers do adult students face?
- What resources currently exist?
- What additional resources are needed?
- What type of financial aid would be most beneficial?
- What should the eligibility requirements look like?
- How much would the ideal financial aid program cost?
- Is the anticipated cost sustainable, and where would the money come from?
- Is a scalable pilot project possible?

### Barriers

- Enrollment starts and stops
- Time and scheduling
- Unable to meet admission requirements; GED
- Lack of computer access or computer skills
- Problems from prior enrollment:
  - Federal loans in default
  - SAP problems
  - Balance owed to school; no transcripts
  - Maxed out Pell and loan eligibility
- Cost
### Types of Aid Programs Discussed

- “Construction loan” type grant
- AmeriCorps type program
- Graduated awards by degree type
- Work-study or Co-op type program
- Competency-based education aid program

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### Guidance Requested

- Type of student to receive aid?
- Require major, certificate or degree pathway?
- Mississippi employer needs to be met?
- Postpone for development of CBE programs?
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www.mississippi.edu-financialaid

Questions
Jennifer Rogers
jrogers@mississippi.edu
MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

By: Representative Mettetal

To: Universities and Colleges; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 951

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-101-241, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO ALLOW THE COMMISSION ON COLLEGE ACCREDITATION TO ENTER INTO INTERSTATE RECIPROCITY AGREEMENTS THAT ALLOW AUTHORIZED DEGREE-GRANTING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN MISSISSIPPI TO OFFER POSTSECONDARY DISTANCE EDUCATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. Section 37-101-241, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-101-241. (1) There is hereby created the Commission on College Accreditation. Said commission shall be composed of the Executive Director of the Mississippi Community College Board, the Commissioner of Higher Education, or their designees, and three (3) additional members, one (1) of whom shall be selected by the foregoing two (2) members and who shall represent the private colleges within the state, and two (2) of whom shall be selected by the Mississippi Association of Colleges. The latter three (3) members shall each serve for a term of three (3) years.

(2) The commission shall meet and organize by electing from among its membership a chairman, a vice chairman and a secretary.
The commission shall keep full and complete minutes and records of all its proceedings and actions.

(3) The commission shall have the power and authority, and it shall be its duty, to prepare an approved list of community, junior and senior colleges and universities or other entities which offer one or more postsecondary academic degrees and are domiciled, incorporated or otherwise located in the State of Mississippi. Postsecondary academic degrees include, but are not limited to, associate, bachelor, masters and doctorate degrees. The commission shall adopt standards which are in keeping with the best educational practices in accreditation and receive reports from the institutions seeking to be placed on the approved list.

(4) The above-described community, junior and senior colleges and universities or other entities must be approved annually by the commission in order to grant diplomas of graduation, degrees or offer instruction.

(5) The commission shall petition the chancery court of the county in which a person or agent offers one or more postsecondary academic degrees subject to the provisions of this chapter or advertises for the offering of such degrees without having first obtained approval by the commission, for an order enjoining such offering or advertising. The court may grant such injunctive relief upon a showing that the respondent named in the petition is offering or advertising one or more postsecondary academic degrees without having obtained prior approval of the commission. The
Attorney General or the district attorney of the district, including the county in which such action is brought, shall, upon request of the commission, represent the commission in bringing any such action.

(6) The provisions of subsection (5) shall not apply to community, junior and senior colleges and universities with the main campus in Mississippi that were chartered, authorized or approved by the commission prior to July 1, 1988.

(7) The provisions of this section shall not apply to the proprietary schools and colleges subject to regulation under Section 75-60-1 et seq.

(8) The Commission on College Accreditation may promulgate rules and regulations and establish appropriate fees for the implementation of this section.

(9) The commission shall have the power and authority, and it shall be its duty, to execute site visits when deemed necessary by the commission. The members of the commission and commission-appointed evaluation teams shall receive reasonable traveling expenses and other authorized expenses incurred in the performance of commission duties, together with other expenses of the operation of the commission. The members of the Commission on College Accreditation shall serve without salary compensation but shall receive a per diem and mileage as authorized by law including time of going to and returning from site visits of said commission, together with actual travel and hotel expenses.
incident to the site visits of the commission, and in the
discharge of duties prescribed by the commission.

(10) (a) The commission may enter into interstate
reciprocity agreements that allow authorized, accredited
degree-granting institutions of higher education, whose legal
domicile is in Mississippi, to offer postsecondary distance
education. The commission shall administer such agreements and
shall approve or disapprove participation in such agreements by
accredited degree-granting institutions of higher education
domiciled in Mississippi. Participation in such agreements shall
be voluntary. The commission may establish fees to be paid by
participating institutions to cover direct and indirect
administrative costs incurred by the commission. The commission
may serve as the state point of contact for reciprocity
agreement-related questions, complaints and other communications
and/or enter into agreements with other state agencies regarding
state responsibilities related to reciprocity agreements. The
commission may also form committees to assist in establishing
policies and processes.

(b) Nothing in this subsection (10) shall be construed
to prohibit state authorized degree-granting institutions of
higher education domiciled in Mississippi that do not participate
in any interstate reciprocity agreement entered into by the
commission from offering postsecondary distance education.
SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after July 1, 2015.
To: Universities and Colleges

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2015

By: Senator(s) Polk

SENATE BILL NO. 2453

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE COMMISSION ON COLLEGE ACCREDITATION TO ADMINISTER INTERSTATE RECIPROCITY AGREEMENTS THAT WILL ALLOW APPROVED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND REGISTERED PROPRIETARY SCHOOLS TO OFFER POSTSECONDARY DISTANCE EDUCATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. The following shall be codified as Section 37-101-243, Mississippi Code of 1972:

37-101-243. (1) For the purposes of this section, these words are defined as follows:

(a) "Commission" means the Commission on College Accreditation created under Section 37-101-241; and

(b) "Institution" means and includes institutions of higher learning approved under Section 37-101-241 and proprietary schools and other entities subject to regulation under Section 75-60-1 et seq.

(2) The commission may enter into and administer interstate reciprocity agreements that allow institutions to offer postsecondary distance education. The commission is further

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authorized to carry out the following duties as related to interstate reciprocity agreements:

(a) Approve or disapprove participation in these agreements by institutions;

(b) Establish fees to be paid by participating institutions to cover the commission's direct and indirect administrative costs;

(c) Serve as the state point of contact for questions, complaints and other communications;

(d) Enter into agreements with other state agencies regarding state responsibilities; and

(e) Form committees to assist in establishing policies and procedures.

(3) The commission shall not:

(a) Require institutions to participate in interstate reciprocity agreements; or

(b) Prohibit institutions that do not participate in these agreements from offering postsecondary distance education.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2015.