

MINUTES

KANSAS TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOL COMMISSION

November 30 - December 1, 2006

Room 514-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Mr. George Fahnstock, Chairman
Dr. Robert Edleston
Dr. Jerry Farley
Mr. Joseph Glassman
Mr. James Grier III
Mr. Dick Veach
Senator Janis Lee
Mr. Reggie Robinson

Members Absent

None

Staff

Audrey Dunkel, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Michele Alishahi, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Art Griggs, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Gary Deeter, Committee Secretary

Conferees

Dale Dennis, Interim Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education
Linda Oborny, Assistant Director, State and Federal Programs, Kansas Department of Education
Diane Duffy, Vice-President for Finance and Administration, Kansas Board of Regents
Stan Ahlerich, President, Kansas, Inc.
Blake Flanders, Director, Workforce Training and Education Services, Kansas Department of Commerce
Richard Hoffman, President, Kansas Association of Technical Schools and Colleges
Sheila Frahm, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees
Dr. Edward Berger, President, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees

Dr. Richard Burke, President, Dodge City Community College
Clark Coco, representing Kansas Association of Technical Schools and Colleges
Representative Ann Mah, Kansas House of Representatives

Others Attending

See attached list.

Thursday, November 30 Morning Session

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. *The minutes for the November 21-22 Commission meeting were approved (motion by Mr. Veach, seconded by Mr. Grier).*

Dale Dennis, Interim Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education, provided an overview of technical education for K-12 (elementary and secondary public schools), explaining that the Department has 1,656 approved secondary career and technical education programs in 276 of the 300 school districts in Kansas, with \$32.8 million budgeted for career education; he noted that each student enrolled in technical education has an additional funding weight of 0.5. He commented that the programs are rigorous, that the agency has partnerships with business and industry, and that Kansas has one of the best concurrent education laws in the nation ([Attachment 1](#)).

Linda Oborny, Assistant Director, State and Federal Programs, Kansas Department of Education, outlined the career clusters, showing how 16 broad areas of technical education lead to specialized careers ([Attachment 2](#)). She said career awareness begins in 7th grade and the Department of Education uses a variety of testing instruments to help a student identify interests and abilities, allowing instructors to assist a student in building skills that coincide with his/her interests. Answering a question, she said the Perkins Act requires articulation agreements with postsecondary institutions. Mr. Dennis said students are influenced toward a postsecondary institution through articulation agreements, career-day recruitment, and parental preference. He replied that concurrent enrollment usually eliminates duplication of courses. He said there are 147,000 students enrolled in K-12, and that technical education and alternative schools help keep the dropout rate low. Ms. Oborny replied that the Kuder Interest Assessment and Work Keys are two common assessment tools. She responded that the technical education curriculum is based on national standards and customized for local needs. Mr. Dennis said total expenditures for technical education were \$79.3 million in FY 2006, most of that amount coming from local sources such as the Local Option Budget.

Diane Duffy, Vice-President for Finance and Administration, Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), provided written responses to Commission members' questions at the November 22 meeting ([Attachment 3](#)). Most questions concerned details of funding. She noted that the appropriated amount for postsecondary technical education from FY 2001 to the present has always fallen short of the Regents' budget request. She commented that community colleges account for 77 percent of the 16,450 FTE (full-time equivalent) technical students; and the technical schools and colleges account for 23 percent. She cautioned members from unwarranted conclusions about per-student funding when comparing community colleges with technical schools or colleges. She said a formula laid out in 1999 SB 345 enables the Regents to arrive at an 85 percent-of-cost figure.

Stan Ahlerich, President, Kansas, Inc., spoke regarding the economic impact of technical education on the state ([Attachment 4](#)). He stated that presently there are no valid studies identifying the ROI (Return on Investment) for technical education in Kansas, but research shows that workforce requirements are expanding and that 65 percent of newly created jobs will require a two-year degree or certification. He commented on both ends of a spectrum, saying that Kansas ranks third nationally in science and engineering graduate students, but that 11 percent of Kansas students presently do not complete high school and only 35.7 percent of the Kansas population has an associate or higher degree. Regarding ROI for technical education, he said a South Carolina study showed a return of \$12.10 for each dollar spent; a Nebraska study showed a return of 19.3 percent. He referenced [Attachment 5](#) to illustrate the wages of workers, some of whom would have received technical education.

Dr. Blake Flanders, Director, Workforce Training and Education Services, Kansas Department of Commerce, announced a study jointly commissioned by the Department, the Workforce Network of Kansas, KBOR, and Kansas, Inc. entitled *Aligning Postsecondary Education and Training to Meet the Needs of the Business Community* ([Attachment 6](#)). He said that through an Request for Proposal, a firm (Corporation for a Skilled Workforce) was selected to conduct the study. He commented that the study would identify critical industry sectors and key regions; report on innovative and effective programs and practices; and assess current postsecondary education and training systems, programs, and projects. He stated that the completed study would be available by May 15, 2007.

Dr. Flanders then reported on the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which provides \$25 million to the Commerce Department in three areas: adults, dislocated workers, and youth ([Attachment 7](#)). Governed by federal guidelines, the Act provides services to workforce centers, and, like the Perkins grants, allows the agency to retain 15 percent of funds, the remaining 85 percent being sent to local centers; he further noted that 1,700 adults and nearly 800 dislocated workers received WIA-funded services in FY 2006. Answering a question, Dr. Flanders said WIA was an unreliable vehicle for funding except for supplementing student tuition.

Afternoon Session

Richard Hoffman, President, Kansas Association of Technical Schools and Colleges, commented on technical education waiting lists, saying that several circumstances can create waiting lists: popular programs, budget cuts that reduce program offerings, effective recruitment, the difficulty of obtaining instructors for high-demand courses, or over-booking a course ([Attachment 8](#)).

Sheila Frahm, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees, acknowledged waiting lists occur for high-demand courses or when instructors are not available for certain courses, noting that students often can take general education courses while waiting for certain technical courses to open ([Attachment 9](#)). She reviewed relevant issues of concern raised by the Commission.

Dr. Edward Berger, President, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees, added further comments regarding waiting lists, observing that outside limitations impinge on the availability of courses, such as lack of clinical sites or the costs for certain equipment. Answering questions, Dr. Berger said expanded demand for certain programs is met by providing night and weekend classes, usually funding an additional teacher through tuition or industry support or both. Members suggested

that a centralized clearinghouse for resources, referencing such things as the availability of courses statewide and a list of workforce assets, would be valuable.

Dr. Reggie Robinson, President, Kansas Board of Regents, provided Attachment 10 to address the issue of waiting lists.

Members began discussing a preliminary draft of the Commission's report to the 2007 Legislature (Attachment 11). After learning that the report follows a prescribed format, members suggested a preface expressing how the Commission interpreted the legislative mandate. A consensus formed that, after gathering a wide range of information regarding technical education, the Commission envisioned a more extensive mission than the original charge. Members offered various suggestions regarding a mission statement and expatiated on the need for a more consistent statewide governance system, several members observing that, facing the complexities of their mission, they needed more information before making final recommendations. Most members agreed that a more adequate and equitable funding mechanism was needed.

The meeting was recessed at 4:39 p.m.

Friday, December 1 Morning Session

Dr. Richard Burke, President, Dodge City Community College, reviewed the findings of a study that formed his doctoral dissertation, *Workforce Education and Training in Southwest Kansas*, which evaluated the perceptions of CEOs of businesses and industries, professional services, and governmental agencies regarding general and technical education (Attachment 12). He documented his data through the ACT (American College Testing) Work Keys, an instrument for assessing the need for technical training. He noted the economic turbulence of the period 1996-2006, the limits of the labor pool, and the demographic shifts in the region, concluding that the region needs more skilled workers, needs to develop Hispanic workforce leadership, and that postsecondary institutions in the region should do more to make businesses aware of educational opportunities for employees.

Clark Coco, President, North Central Kansas Technical College, and representing the technical colleges, amending a proposal from a previous (November 21-22) Commission meeting, explained that the technical colleges had modified the original Kansas Career and Technical Education System. Instead of a statewide agency under the Department of Commerce, the technical colleges now propose a stand-alone career/technical department equal to the Kansas Department of Education and the Kansas Board of Regents (Attachment 13). Instead of a state board consisting of representatives from five regional boards, the nine-member board would be created by Gubernatorial appointments. All technical funds would flow through the Department with five weighted levels of funding. He provided details regarding the state board, the role of the CEO, and the role of the local college presidents, stating that the sole mission of the proposed system would be workforce development, coordinating technical education in all postsecondary institutions. Answering questions, Mr. Coco said the regional boards from the original proposal were dropped to eliminate one layer of administration. He replied that the Department would coordinate technical education in community colleges and that funds would be allocated for technical education for each institution. Answering another question, Mr. Robinson said the KBOR is the governing board for universities and the coordinating entity for all other postsecondary institutions.

Dr. Edward Berger, on behalf of the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees, proposed a different statewide technical system under the KBOR, recommending that the six technical colleges and the four technical schools be affiliated with community colleges or universities and that all technical schools be merged with community colleges or universities (Attachment 14). The proposal recommends that all technical programs and classes be funded at the same level regardless of the sector and that new state revenue be provided to adequately fund technical education. Such a system, he said, will provide better articulation, will promote uniformity in courses and accreditation, will more effectively meet business and industry demands, and will broaden student skills and marketability. Answering questions, Dr. Berger said the proposed system would provide more money, more coordination, and more accountability. Some members expressed a need for differential funding. To another question, Mr. Robinson replied that technical education mission drift is a concern of the KBOR. A member noted that technical institutions residing in a county with a university have found the university resistant to any merger. Members expressed various opinions regarding the issues, commenting that a central information clearinghouse is needed, that business and industry should be the starting point for technical education, that a more equitable funding mechanism must be developed, and that building maintenance is neglected in most funding formulas.

Dr. Flanders provided Attachment 15 as the Department of Commerce response to a previously proposed centralized statewide system for technical education under Commerce (November 21-22), a response which favorably viewed a statewide system as one possible means to achieve coordination of technical education. Answering questions, Dr. Flanders said the KBOR has the authority to mandate a standardized curriculum, but has not done so. He cautioned against requiring funding from business and industry, a strategy which could cause a business to move to another state.

Members discussed time constraints in developing a thorough report to the Legislature on January 1. Staff distributed Attachment 16, the proviso which brought the Commission into existence; staff interpreted the proviso to say that the Commission's charter does not expire until June 30, 2007, allowing the Commission to make a preliminary report on January 1 and a final report before June 30.

Dr. Farley, referring to the previous proposal that creates a new technical education governance structure, commented that 1999 SB 345 set a direction for technical education to move toward a unified system; he recommended that the Commission not bifurcate the system again. He offered Attachment 17 as his thoughts about the mission, funding, and governance of technical education, noting that the present system allows local control while moving toward coordination of funding and curriculum. He recommended that technical schools merge with a two- or four-year college or university and that a business/industry advisory board be created.

Representative Ann Mah, at the invitation of the Chairman, testified that technical education is a critical issue for Kansas, that the present technical education system is not functioning adequately, and that a separate state technical agency is needed to give a unified vision, an integrated curriculum, and adequate funding; she cited Oklahoma and Georgia as models for technical education.

Dr. Robinson offered comments and recommendations regarding the Commission's report to the Legislature, suggesting that the Commission's sequence of events be placed in an appendix (Attachment 18). Noting the need for a seamless structure and centralization for technical education,

he acknowledged the three proposals brought forward as attempts to close the gaps. He then voiced areas of concern:

- The need to keep policy clarity and structural coherence within the educational system;
- The danger of importing another state's model and superimposing it on Kansas;
- The lack of nimbleness if policy decisions must go through both local and state boards;
- The cognitive dissonance created if a statewide technical college system is instituted when 80 percent of technical education comes through the community colleges;
- The fact that it is often tempting to create a new agency rather than do the hard work of finessing an existing structure.

Members made various comments regarding the patchwork nature of the state's technical education delivery system. Senator Lee recommended Attachment 19 (a task force report to the Legislature on Medicaid reform) as a pattern for the Commission in reporting to the Legislature.

Afternoon Session

Members used the afternoon session to make recommendations for a preliminary report to the Legislature on January 1, 2007.

A motion was made to require all postsecondary institutions receiving postsecondary aid to move toward postsecondary governance, with the understanding that this will not prevent these institutions from providing technical education to secondary students (motion, Dr. Edleston; second, Mr. Grier). A member said the motion would not conflict with the State Board of Education. The motion passed.

A motion was made to recommend substantial additional funding in FY 2008 and FY 2009 for postsecondary technical education, as recommended by the Legislative Educational Planning Committee (LEPC). This funding formula will include equitable standards for postsecondary technical education in the State of Kansas. This includes reviewing the funding formula for technical education, standardization of programs as well as addressing the clock hour/credit hour issue. The funding formula also will allow for program/enrollment growth with enhancement of funds in a timely fashion.

In addition, the Commission shall present its recommendation for the funding formula, program standardization, and the clock hour/credit hour conversion no later than 45 days from the presentation of this report on January 1, 2007 (motion, Mr. Glassman; second, Senator Lee). The motion passed.

A motion was made to strongly consider an Independent Board of Control for governance of technical education in the State of Kansas (motion, Mr. Glassman; second, Mr. Grier). During discussion, the question was raised whether a constitutional amendment would be necessary for the motion to go forward; staff provided Attachment 20 in response. Some members expressed concern that the motion was premature. The motion passed.

An addendum to the above motion was included as follows: *That the Commission shall present its recommendation on the form of governance for technical education in the State of Kansas no later than 45 days from the presentation of this report on January 1, 2007.* The addendum passed.

A motion was made by Dr. Farley to strongly consider a coordinating board for technical education in the State of Kansas. The motion died for lack of a second.

A motion was made that the commission strongly consider the continuation of coordination through the Board of Regents, which would include independent technical colleges (motion, Dr. Farley; second, Mr. Glassman). The motion failed.

A motion was made that the Commission strongly consider the continuation of coordination through the Board of Regents, which would include merger or affiliation of technical colleges and schools with community colleges and universities (motion, Dr. Farley; second, Mr. Grier). The motion failed.

A motion was made that the Commission strongly consider other forms of governance for technical education in the State of Kansas, in addition to the previous motion regarding an independent governing board for technical education (motion, Dr. Farley; second, Mr. Grier). The motion passed.

The Chairman opened discussion on a mission statement. A motion was made by Mr. Grier that the mission of career and technical education in the State of Kansas is to provide a skilled workforce to meet the needs of business and industry that will enable businesses to expand, retrain, and be recruited to Kansas. The motion died for lack of a second.

A motion was made to accept the points of Dr. Farley's mission statement, that the State of Kansas should:

- Provide opportunities for students to attain their educational goals;
- Provide an educated workforce to meet the demands of the Kansas economy;
- Be responsive to the education and training needs of business and industry;
- Provide quality technical training, customized industry training, and continuing education;
- Provide a totally integrated educational opportunity for students who matriculate from high school through certificate, associate, and baccalaureate programs.

The motion passed unanimously.

Referencing his earlier comments (Attachment 17, pages 2-3), Dr. Farley said an effective and equitable budgeting model needs to be developed. Members discussed various problems associated with funding mechanisms.

Members discussed available information regarding governance. The Chairman requested staff to outline for technical education stakeholders how different options of governance structure would appear. A member requested staff to research how other states handle technical education, specifically Wisconsin, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Ohio. Another member requested the information include funding sources and whether boards are advisory or authoritative.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:39 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 3, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., and Thursday, January 4, 2007, at 10:00 a.m.

Prepared by Gary Deeter
Edited by Audrey Dunkel

Approved by Commission on:

January 26, 2007
(Date)