Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting

Monday, November 10, 2014
10:45 am – Noon
Culinary Demo Theater, Room 208
Monday, November 10, 2014

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)
Vic Redding (NV)
José Garcia (NM)
Larry Skogen (ND)
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 manager
Carl Krueger, project coordinator
Patrick Lane, project manager

Action Item

Approval of the May 12, 2014, Issue Analysis and Research Committee meeting minutes 5-3

Information Items:

WICHE’s Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange

Benchmarks: WICHE region 2014

Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West 2014-15

Postsecondary Transition Issues Across State Lines
Affordability and Student Success: Recapping 2014 Higher Education Legislative Activity in the West

WICHE/Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL) Study on Prior Learning Assessment

Possible IBM Partnership on Economic and Workforce Development Strategies

Staffing Changes

Discussion Item:

Results of the Survey of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee Regarding the WICHE Workplan

Other business

Adjournment
Chair Kohl-Welles (WA) convened the Issue Analysis and Research Committee meeting on May 12, 2014. Commissioner Kohl-Welles introduced Glenn Walters from New Mexico, who attended as a guest. Demarée Michelau called roll, and a quorum was established. Michelau, Brian Prescott, and Patrick Lane introduced themselves as the unit staff present.

**ACTION ITEM**
Approval of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes of November 11, 2013

Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked committee members to review the minutes from the November 11, 2013 meeting. One typographical error was noted. Vice Chair Cabaldon (CA) moved to approve the minutes with the error corrected. Commissioner Fernandez (ID) seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**
Approval of the FY 2015 Workplan Sections Pertaining to the Policy Analysis and Research Unit’s Activities

Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked committee members to review the workplan for FY 2015. Michelau identified changes and additions to the workplan and described changes coming to the College Access Challenge Grant Consortium and Network. She said that additional federal funding for states is not anticipated. WICHE expects to work with four states through the remainder of the grant, which will end in August 2015. Michelau also described changes to WICHE program in which the CACG Network evolved into the College Access Regional (CAR) Network, which expanded eligibility to include other large-scale, federally-funded statewide college access programs, such as GEAR UP.

Commissioner Garcia (CO) noted that Colorado could not meet federal maintenance-of-effort (MOE) requirements in the federal College Access Challenge Grant, so it lost that funding. He asked about the eligibility requirements for GEAR UP programs to join the CAR Network. Michelau and Lane explained some of the difficulties at the federal level in using GEAR UP funds to participate. Commissioner Buhler (UT) asked what is happening to money that is allocated but not used by states due to MOE. Michelau explained that the money is returned to the treasury and not reallocated. Commissioner Garcia asked further about the benefits of joining the CAR Network. Michelau explained that the Network hosts two face-to-face meetings per year, acts as a liaison with the federal government, provides expertise and publications to states, and facilitates the development of collaborative relationships between state programs.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles recognized Prescott, who provided a brief update on the *Knocking at the College Door* report and the more recent report on projections of high school graduation in large metropolitan areas. He said that despite...
the fact the main report was released two years ago, this information is still in demand by policymakers and others, but funding is ending soon. Staff will be exploring additional avenues for additional revenue from the two main organizations (ACT and the College Board) that have provided resources previously. He noted that there are competing versions of the high school projections, but WICHE has a product that is different from others in several important ways and has been a long-term WICHE tradition that brings high recognition to the organization. Commissioner Wilmer (MT) asked about the inclusion of tribal colleges in the high school graduate projections. Prescott explained that it is difficult to include rural areas because the surveys used are too small to provide reliable data. Prescott invited committee members to suggest new directions for the Knocking surveys, such as income levels or perhaps a more focused effort on American Indian/Alaska Natives. Commissioner Wilmer asked more about the data needed to carry out projections for American Indians/Alaska Natives and said that there are significant data from the reservations. Prescott explained WICHE may have to make adjustments to the projections methodology or presentation of the results, but would likely be doable.

Prescott also noted that there was a sudden opportunity with Lumina Foundation late in 2013 to write a state financial aid concept paper and that this project, titled, “New Models of Student Financial Support Concept Paper” should have been listed in “Existing Activities” since it is still active, having entered a no-cost extension phase. Pursuing this funding opportunity was approved by the executive committee. This work has been completed, and the remaining funds will be devoted to hosting a meeting with state financial aid representatives most likely to occur in Boulder in September.

Commissioner Cabaldon commented on the workplan generally, noting that while the organization is sometimes constrained by the directions of grant funding, the commissioners want to continue to have some input and provide guidance during the process of developing the workplan. He said, for instance, that it is still not clear how a project moves from “potential future projects” to “new directions.” He suggested a mechanism for commissioners to provide more feedback about the potential to move projects from the planning to “actual” stage. He suggested trying to get a broad sense of which projects or activities are the highest priorities in particular states in future development of the workplan. Commissioner Kohl-Welles suggested that it may be useful to conduct a conference call between meetings to focus more on the workplan. Commissioner Fernandez asked whether the committee has provided ideas for projects in the past. Prescott said that projects have developed from commissioners’ ideas in the past. As an example, Michelau explained that the project, “Race Against the Clock: Preparing to Teachers to Effectively Utilize Information from the Common Core State Standards” has dropped off of the “new directions” section and will not be pursued by staff due to redundancy. A similar project is being carried out by another organization. Commissioner Bustamante (AZ) asked whether there has been a survey of commissioners to understand their priorities to inform the workplan. Commissioner Cabaldon suggested this might be an effective way to gather feedback. Prescott suggested that he and Michelau can work with the committee chair and vice chair to explore this further. Commissioner Kohl-Welles said that committee members could give her and the vice chair additional feedback on the issue.

Reflecting on a previous discussion during the Committee of the Whole about how states can make better use of WICHE as a resource, Commissioner Deckert (OR) suggested there could be budget devoted to strategic outreach and communication with the states to have some sort of rollout for the workplan and help inform constituents that WICHE is available as a resource. Commissioner Anderson (AK) said that this feedback could help focus WICHE’s broad mission onto concrete activities.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles raised a question about the Adult College Completion Network and stated that this is a growing area of concern in many states. Michelau explained that staff are seeking a no-cost extension, and WICHE is well-positioned in the area nationally and is planning to pursue additional funding once the grant is expended.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked about the Opportunity Scholarship project, noting that it is a public-private partnership, and wanted to know more about WICHE’s involvement. Prescott explained that WICHE is working through NCHEMS and is now trying to get the necessary data from the state to carry out the project. Commissioner Kohl-Welles said that this program has raised significant concerns in the state legislature and would like to be kept apprised of future developments. Commissioner Fernandez asked if the appropriation for the scholarship is open-ended. Commissioner Kohl-Welles said that it is not open-ended. Commissioner Fernandez said that Idaho is considering a similar program. Commissioner Garcia said that Colorado is also considering a similar program.

Commissioner Skogen (ND) asked about the status of common core in other states. Commissioner Kohl-Welles said that this would be covered shortly under “New Business”.

Commissioner Bustamante said that the project “The Impact of Dual and Concurrent Enrollment on Student Success in Postsecondary Education” is a high-promise/high-value potential project, and he strongly supports this work. Commissioner Anderson noted that many issues have come up with financial aid surrounding dual and concurrent
enrollment and might be an issue worth incorporating in this work. Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked how many states have dual and concurrent enrollment. Michelau said that virtually all states have policy related to dual or concurrent enrollment.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked for a motion for Prescott’s amendment to the workplan on Lumina-funded project to develop a concept paper on student financial aid. Commissioner Redding (NV) moved to approve the addition to the workplan and to approve the workplan as amended. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**

**Approval of a Proposed Project: Streamlining Implementation of Outcomes-based Funding Models**

Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked committee members to consider approval for the project, “Streamlining Implementation of Outcomes-based Funding Models.” Prescott explained that 33 states are implementing or thinking about outcomes based funding and that this project would work to bring together institutional leaders and state policymakers to improve implementation of such programs. Prescott said that sometimes intentions of institutions are not fully examined, using Colorado as an example. Commissioner Garcia explained some of the details surrounding the state’s College Opportunity Fund program. Prescott continued explaining that WICHE could bring together institutional leaders and state policymakers to discuss funding formulas and ensure they are truly transformative. This would focus on implementation as well as policy development. Commissioner Garcia said this work would be helpful for all states pursuing outcomes-based funding.

Commissioner Deckert asked how many states are pursuing outcomes based funding. Prescott said it is a majority. Commissioner Cabaldon said he is generally supportive, but not sure that this is an intrinsically Western issue, and that funding models are all different, so it could be difficult to develop actionable project activities. He recognized the importance, but said this would not be high on California’s priorities.

Concerning a specific item in the proposed project about convening state research directors, Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked whether WICHE consults with legislatively-funded research entities like the Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Prescott said there have been some communications with such groups, and collaboration and contacts with those groups is sought as projects and activities align. Prescott said that the specific item in the proposed project grew from feedback that there are not smaller meetings with western research directors from SHEEO offices.

Commissioner Buhler moved to approve the project. Commissioner Skogen (ND) seconded. The motion was adopted unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM**

**Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve WICHE’s Endorsement of Higher Ed for Higher Standards**

Commissioner Kohl-Welles recognized David Longanecker to discuss the call to endorse higher standards in postsecondary education. Longanecker said that national higher education organizations have issued a call for organizations like WICHE to endorse higher standards in the K-12 system, with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) being one example. He recommended that the committee approve the endorsement and said that WICHE is pursuing additional work on the CCSS.

Commissioner Garcia said that Colorado has been supportive of the CCSS as have most higher education institutions in the state. Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked Longanecker to provide political context about the CCSS. Longanecker said that some conservative organizations have raised the profile of debate about the CCSS, which has led to some states (not in the WICHE region) to “unadopt” them. Commissioner Kohl-Welles said that the political context could become even more important with the upcoming elections. Commissioner Buhler said that even as a relatively conservative state, Utah has been supportive. He said that some say this is the nationalization of public education and that it may not be tactically wise to sign on to a national effort. He said that national voices are not as helpful as the local voices in his state.

Commissioner Garcia also noted that more liberal voices are becoming concerned as well, particularly with respect to the assessments. Commissioner Cabaldon said there may be a WICHE angle to this work; California is considering using CCSS assessments as tools for admissions and placement, and if students from other states that have not implemented the standards come to California, they will not have taken the tests, which raises a large issue.

*Note: This item was not initially included in the meeting agenda.
Commissioner Wilmer asked if the action is for WICHE to sign this or for individual committee members to sign. She suggested a potential addendum, emphasizing their importance in developing innovation, creativity, and critical thinking. Longanecker said that two years ago the commission decided staff would not make endorsements on behalf of the commission, so that is why staff is bringing it to the committee. He said WICHE would not be able to edit the language in the Call to Action. He proposed four options, however: 1) WICHE could not endorse the principles; 2) WICHE could endorse them as is; 3) WICHE could endorse them with an additional statement; or 4) WICHE could not endorse the principles but offer WICHE’s own statement.

Commissioner Wilmer said some of the counter arguments are impacting the debate around education according to people she regularly speaks with. Commissioner Deckert said that the business community must engage in the debate and that the Western nature of WICHE could add an important voice to the debate. Commissioner Redding also noted that programs such as the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) would be affected if not all states adopt the standards. Commissioner Anderson said there are difficulties between school districts in her state that have adopted the CCSS and the rest of the state which has not. Commissioner Garcia said that mobility is one reason to accept this because of the mobility that is inherent in the Western states.

Longanecker said WICHE’s statement could reference the specific Western-related issues inherent in the issue.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked the committee for guidance on making a recommendation to the Committee of the Whole. Commissioner Garcia motioned to recommend to the Committee of the Whole to endorse the principles and make an additional statement specific to the Western-related issues involved. Commissioner Fernandez seconded. Commissioner Deckert suggested using language for the statement that would be accessible to all rather than the higher education policy community.

The motion was approved with one member voting against.

**ACTION ITEM**

**Approval of a Proposed Project: The Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Assessments: Finding Solutions to Cross-state Challenges**

Michelau described a proposed project related to the CCSS and asked for committee members’ approval. She said that the project would lead to one meeting bringing together K-12 and higher education leaders in each state and could lead to a bigger project. She also said that some Midwestern states could be invited as well. Commissioner Cabaldon moved for approval. Commissioner Deckert seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles moved to the remaining agenda items. Prescott described staff’s work on potential implementation funding from the Gates Foundation for the project, “Longitudinal Data Exchange Expansion and Implementation,” which would facilitate the further development of a multistate data exchange. He said one of the key milestones in a potential project would be to bring additional states into the exchange. He said there will be criteria to join the exchange, mainly relating to a state’s capacity and political climate around data sharing, but that he would be conducting outreach to see which states might be interested in joining.

Longanecker described staff’s efforts to secure funding for the project, “A Second Chance at Success: Reducing the Fiscal and Social Impact of Recidivism through Inmate Education and Reentry Programs,” suggesting that there are possible funders for the work.

Michelau said the LAC will meet in Phoenix on September 9-10, 2014. She said that she will work with committee members to fill vacancies. Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked whether substitutes would be allowed if LAC members are not able to attend, which could be a concern with the November elections. Staff said that this has not been done in the past and is not part of the budget.

Michelau described the project, “Equity in Excellence,” which is a policy audit of institutions in the Denver metropolitan area on equity issues. She said the project is wrapping up and that the report will be released soon. Longanecker said that once the project is complete, partner organizations may seek funding to carry this out in other states.

Michelau said the unit has hired a new intern who will start next week.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles adjourned the meeting.
In response to feedback from members of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee indicating that they would like to have more input and provide guidance during the development of the WICHE workplan, specifically with respect to content, staff has developed a short survey. The purpose of this survey is three-fold: to help staff prioritize activities as we make progress in FY 2015; to assist staff as we develop the FY 2016 workplan; and finally, to inform the committee’s discussion at the November 2014 Committee meeting. As a reminder, the WICHE workplan, which is approved by the WICHE Commission each year in May, outlines the priorities and guides the work of the compact. For reference, the FY 2015 workplan can be found at [http://wiche.edu/info/publications/workplan2015.pdf](http://wiche.edu/info/publications/workplan2015.pdf). The survey consists of four questions and should take no more than five minutes to complete, but we ask that you complete it before **Friday, October 10, 2014**.

**1. Name the 3-5 most important or pressing higher education priorities in your state.**
2. To what extent does the FY 2015 WICHE Workplan match the needs and concerns of your state?

3. How can WICHE better align its workplan with your state's needs?

2. Contact Information
# 2014 Survey of the WICHE Issue Analysis and Research Committee

## 1. Contact Information (optional)

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey. We appreciate your valuable feedback.