

NOTES

**Policy Advisory Committee/Board Invitational Meeting:
Immigration and Higher Education Study Committee
Thursday, April 3, 2008
4:00 – 5:30 p.m.**

Members present: John Adams, Cecelia Boone, Bright Dornblaser, Jennifer Godinez, Scott Halstead, Nate Lassila, Nick Leitheiser, Malcolm McLean, Scott McMahon, Dan Miller, Alberto Monserrate, Barbara VanDrasek, James Worlobah

Staff present: Bob DeBoer, Sean Kershaw, Ann Kirby McGill, Annie Levenson-Falk

Outcomes:

- Discuss process of the Immigration and Higher Education Study Committee
- Discuss the draft report to:
 - Improve clarity of report structure, language and presentation
 - Daylight political issues that could arise upon the report's release
 - Help staff and committee members understand how this report fits with previous Citizens League positions

1. Negotiate Agenda (5 minutes)

No changes

2. Present report (10 minutes)

Study Committee process:

- Two phases - findings section comes from Phase I, already approved by Board
- Phase II split into working groups (info, cost, culture, prep; status was an issue that was raised mainly in cost group, addressed later as whole committee)
- Focus groups in Phase I, Marnita's Table in Phase II to get input from broad group of people
- Committee developed list of principles and potential recommendations, met with other organizations Dec/Jan; committee came back together to finalize principles and recommendations

Most important points in the report:

- MN has a big opportunity in the education of our immigrant population (economics/workforce). Plus it's a responsibility, especially to the large refugee population we have.
- Overarching principle: higher ed should be encouraged, and a real option, for all immigrant students. That implies the other principles.

- Education is a shared responsibility – K-12 system, higher education institutions, parents, students, communities all have roles in the recommendations

Issues that were outside the scope:

- Immigration policy
- Did not look at overall education disparities, students of color in MN
 - But committee kept in mind that we didn't want to make recommendations that helped immigrant students to the detriment of other students in MN

Issues for further study:

- Data on immigrant students in MN schools
- Formal study of how immigrant students in college received info about higher ed
- Comprehensive study on federal immigration policy reform

3. Discussion (65 minutes)

- Minority report
 - Need to cite sources in the following places:
 - P. 1 paragraph 5: "The incentive has shown itself to be strong . . . further schooling"
 - P. 2 paragraph 1: "There are limited spots at public . . . primary choosing."
 - P. 2 paragraph 3: "To further dilute the limited state aid dollars available now by an additional two, five, or possible ten percent . . ."
- Report should lay out better the pros and cons of the various arguments and show why committee came to the recommendations it did
 - Reflect in the report the committee's discussion around undocumented students and other recommendations
- Some statements need to be reworded so that they pass the "Graven test" (if you put "do not" in front of any of the statements, do they appear silly?)
 - E.g. recommendation 3
- Advancement process
 - Past Citizens League study committees spent more time thinking about the political reality, and working out the details of recommendations so that they would have the greatest likelihood of being passed in MN.
 - More recent CL processes have been staged – after report published, we will convene an advancement group of committee members, other CL members to figure out how best to advance the recommendations. Staged process largely because it can be impossible to get a 12-18 month time commitment from participants now
 - Committee intentionally did not get into all of the specifics around its recommendations – left for those doing the advancement work

- Committee made recommendations it felt were implementable, but also wanted to set out a vision for education for immigrant students – the principles draw that vision; some may be unattainable, but they guide the direction we want to take
- Next steps not completely clear – put next steps in the report
- Controversial recommendations – some policy questions regarding immigration and immigrant students, especially undocumented students, are very controversial
 - Member: Though polls have shown that policy proposals like those in this report have overwhelming public support in MN and the US, it's just that those arguing against the proposals are louder than proponents
- In addition to list of who staff met with regarding the report, should have a list of people who gave testimony to committee and working groups
- Working group process
 - Member: Concern that breaking the committee into working groups means that not all committee members end up on the same page, with the same background knowledge
 - This committee started with the findings in place – all members had this background
 - Committee members
 - Working group process was helpful. Allowed committee to get a lot of work done in a relatively short period of time.
 - Interplay between the committee members who had been on the first and second phases and those new in the second phase was good – it was good to get a fresh perspective from new folks
 - Working groups knew what the other groups were doing – staff kept them coordinated
 - Only concern was making sure that we were talking to people from the right organizations, state agencies, etc. – this is the role of staff to make sure it gets done
 - Staff meeting with people from outside organizations also helped committee gain perspective – if committee was on the wrong track, if committee was missing something, etc.
- Report needs to define “higher ed”
 - Higher ed does not necessarily mean a 4-year liberal arts degree. Could mean technical training, etc.
 - Need to lay this out in the report, but not in a way that implies immigrant students should go to technical schools
 - Show that students have options to choose the type of education they want – be sensitive to how this will be perceived, especially by students
- Pull out the theme of using the resources we have; the report doesn't call for a lot more money; it often tries to make connections between the resources that already exist.

- Are out-of-state tuition policies out of date?
 - We now want to attract students to our colleges and universities, including more students from out of state
 - The committee considered a recommendation to eliminate out-of-state tuition rates, but in the end decided not to. Afraid it would hurt the hardest-to-serve students in MN by encouraging our public colleges and universities to target students from other states rather than the hardest-to-serve students in MN, which is the reason for our public university system

4. Next Steps and Evaluation (10 minutes)

Staff and committee members will make changes to the report based on today's discussion; report goes to the Board at April 14 meeting.

Evaluation: 2 – 5 (average about 3.5)

- Discussion danced around the political issues
- Needed more time
- Raised issues but didn't deal with them completely
- Would have liked more discussion about the political issues and how we can rework the language to "sell" the recommendations better