

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

**Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
1200 East Anderson Lane, Austin, Texas
Board Room (Room 1.170)
April 24, 2012
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

Council Members Present: Guy Bailey, Phil Diebel, Harold Hahn (Vice-Chair), Fred Heldenfels IV (Chair), Brenda Hellyer, Jodie Jiles, Charles R. Matthews, Elaine Mendoza, Ray Messer, Whit Riter, Beth Robertson, Pamela Willeford, and Roberto Zárate

Invited Speakers in agenda order: Andreas Schleicher (via video conference), Larry Faulkner, and George Grainger

THECB Staff Presenters: Susan Brown and Lee Holcombe

10:00 a.m. Welcome and Brief Summary of January Meeting

- Fred W. Heldenfels IV, Chair of the Council

Heldenfels called the meeting to order and gave an overview of what would be covered. He wants the Council as a whole to arrive at a consensus on the metrics that have been proposed before the October 24 Council meeting, so that the recommendations may be passed on to Coordinating Board at their meeting the next day and then to the Legislature prior to the 83rd Texas Legislative session. Heldenfels gave an introduction for Schleicher and welcomed him to the meeting (virtually).

10:10 a.m. International Benchmarking with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

- Andreas Schleicher, Deputy Director for Education and Special Advisor on Education Policy to OECD's Secretary-General
- Members of the Council

Andreas Schleicher outlined his presentation as examining the pace of change in higher education as compared to different countries across the world within a very short period of history. The chart included factors in regards to the different countries and cost of funding for a higher education institution. The chart also gave insight as to how, over the course of several years, the US has become more expensive compared to other countries that have had more output of graduates. Although every country represented has been moving forward since the begin date, there are several who have been moving much faster than others. There has also been a changing global talent pool.

Schleicher also mentioned the quality of education which is much harder to measure. This data was analyzed using the principal Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) comparisons of countries who participated in the program from 1998-2009. On this scale, the US is an average performer in reading and below average performer in mathematics. Within the US, there are regional variables. The northeast and Midwest are average performers, whereas the west and south do not perform as well. Also urban and suburban schools within the US have great differences among them.

Schleicher spoke about equity, and how in some countries the social economic stature can affect the scale. Within the 2009 diagram, it showed 20% of performance variation was based on money spent per student. Regarding GDP per capita, the US is one of the highest shares of how its money is spent. Korea is the best example of how the incoming money is spent on prioritizing the quality of teachers over the size of classes. Korea also spent the most money when it comes to education, yet its classroom sizes are the largest.

From the year 2000 to 2009, the cost of higher education increased by 40%. While the expense rose, there was an even break among the countries with regards to quality. The best improving countries shown on the chart were Chile, Germany, Hungary, Korea, Poland, and Portugal.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

Schleicher went on to address the stigma that it has been said that the US cannot perform well based on its severely diverse education system, which he said is largely not true when examined closely. The US is average across the OECD countries in terms of social diversity; there are a lot of countries more diverse. The pace of change in the industrialized world of education is very different across countries. Every country is moving forward, but some countries are moving more forward than others. Quality and equity in education are not opposing or contradicting policy choices, but there are actually a fair number of countries that are very good at combining high levels of quality and a fair distribution of learning opportunities. Outcomes have much less to do with the volume of resources than is often thought.

Schleicher Q&A

Diebel asked about the mentioning in the presentation of Hungary, Poland, and Portugal—countries that have moved forward and improved their learning outcomes very rapidly which was more of a result from policies and practices and not resources. He asked Schleicher to briefly describe what those policies and practices were.

- Schleicher answered that the policies and practices vary quite a bit. There is a high value placed on education—high expectations and support systems. There also has to be adequate preparation in high school and an abundance of teacher quality. In comparison to the high functioning countries, the US has more autonomy and accountability of school systems.

Messer asked if he had conducted any studies as to why and where the resources go when they move from classroom to administration, particularly within the US.

- Schleicher answered that within the US, most of the money is spent outside of administration, which the process of tracking the problem is more of a “fine grain”.

Heldenfels wanted to know more information regarding the logistics of the PISA test and how students are selected.

- Schleicher said the OECD collects the data from random samples—random samples of schools and then random samples of students within the schools. The emphasis is not on how schools get students to participate but rather that the samples are good representatives.

Robertson wanted to know more information about the PISA test, how they monitor the tests given, and how reliable the tests are.

- Schleicher said monitoring is the expensive part of PISA testing. Personnel from schools are not used as monitors for testing. The tests are monitored by external test administrators. Within 10% of the cases, unannounced case inspectors were present. If discrepancies are found, then those countries are entirely excluded.

Mendoza inquired about any categorical areas that would point to why US costs were rising so rapidly yet the output is not as productive as the other countries.

- Schleicher answered that the biggest cost has been the reduction in class sizes within the last 15 years; teacher salaries were relatively low, but teachers were in large numbers in the US compared to other countries. In the US, teachers have little time for things (e.g., professional development) other than teaching. The best performing education systems (e.g., Asia) devote resources to teacher quality.

Riter asked if there has been any correlation between those students who’ve tested the PISA and their competencies upon entering the workforce.

- Schleicher explained that measuring the competencies in the workforce requires using longitudinal survey components. PISA focuses on competencies—applying knowledge and being able to use it. There is no data for this in the US because he only has cross-sectional survey data.

Willeford wanted information on the investment in teachers and if there were any differences in teacher preparation, recruitment, and training.

- Schleicher said it is very hard to relate teacher preparation to the outcomes which were observed because the links were quite complex. The investment is up front with teacher education and includes a high proportion of clinical time. The most successful countries invest significant resources in mentoring.

Heldenfels mentioned that the Council is focused on benchmarks for postsecondary achievement and would like to know which countries are the best for comparison to the US. He also asked if the same countries that performed the best in public education are the same countries that performed the best in postsecondary education.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

- Schleicher said that higher education is a more rapidly changing field than public education. Simple benchmarks like graduation are not good benchmarks. The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) is a very interesting effort—testing generic skills in the workforce and tying them back to education. The links between the skills of people and their formal education is a lot weaker than one might think; skill distribution is very wide.

Heldenfels asked whether or not Texas could use the PISA to test 15 year-olds and whether that be feasible in cooperating with the OECD.

- Schleicher said that several other states within the US, including Florida and Massachusetts, are already using the PISA test which does not merely measure performance but also embeds the contextual information. The value comes from understanding why some systems do better than others.

10:50 a.m. Council Discussion Regarding January Recommendations

- Susan Brown, Assistant Commissioner, Planning and Accountability
- Members of the Council

Susan Brown's presentation focused on comparisons of Texas to OECD countries, using OECD data, in order to help the Council decide which countries to benchmark with Texas. (Slide 1) Brown borrowed a slide from Hunt's January presentation with Aims McGuinness, which shows Texas to be, in the 55-64 age group, actually ahead of most of the other countries in the educational level. Brown: One of the sad parts about this is, as you go toward the younger age group, Texas actually slopes the wrong direction. And you'll notice most of the other countries, the younger population is actually more educated, but in Texas and in the US, the younger population is less educated. That's really one of the reasons we're here. (Slide 2) So what we've done is we've selected a few countries from the OECD to look at and compare and these are the factors we used for those comparisons (tertiary attainment, population, population growth rate, GDP per capita, GDP growth rate, unemployment rate).

(Slide 3) Brown showed an OECD hexagonal chart with the six factors of comparison mentioned above (tertiary attainment, population, population growth rate, GDP per capita, GDP growth rate, unemployment rate), one point for each factor of comparison. She first showed Texas represented on the chart, and then Slide 4 showed Chile represented on top of the Texas chart, in order to visually see the comparisons. Brown mentioned that Schleicher talked about how fast Chile is improving in their growth. In comparison to Texas, their domestic product is not as high on a per capita basis, and their unemployment rate is a little higher, but generally they're growing rapidly.

Jiles asked for help in understanding the hexagonal chart. Brown went back to the Slide 3 (with Texas only) and explained that this is a chart where you start by putting everything on a similar scale. All six factors of comparison are scaled to determine the shape of the represented country/state, and all of the countries are put on the same scale; the multipliers are such that the rates would be a 1 and the population would be 25 million. You scale up or down to get them all on the same axis so that you're able to make a comparison and it really is not so much the scale, it's how we compare to the other countries.

Gardner asked Brown, for example, with the unemployment rate, the point being where it is on the hexagon, what would be the difference if the point reached out to the next lower level (in the spider-web graph). Would that mean that the unemployment rate is lower or higher? Brown explained that the unemployment rate would be higher and the chart is a one-year look; if you're further out on the spider web, your rate is higher. So again, looking at Slide 4 with Texas and Chile, the unemployment rate for Chile is a little bit higher, but their growth in their domestic product is actually going up. Heldenfels asked for clarification on the term tertiary as represented in the hexagonal chart. Brown explained that it meant higher education attainment, and as indicated in the chart, the US higher education attainment is slightly higher than Chile's as a percentage of their 25-64 year-old population.

Gardner said that one reason Brown was doing this presentation was because the Council talked at the previous meeting about which countries would be best for comparison to Texas, and so her presentation is focused on helping the Council select countries to which they would be interested in paying special attention. Heldenfels commented that was one of the questions that they didn't get to ask Schleicher was that, in his opinion, which countries would be the most appropriate benchmarks for Texas.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

Zárate asked Brown if Chile has a community college system or anything equivalent to technical schools. Brown said they do have technical schools and this does include the associate degrees and certificates, and it's something that the Council is going to get to at the end of the discussion and also more in the next meeting.

Slide 5 showed Germany on top of Texas in the hexagon chart. Their population goes way out on the chart however their growth rate for their population is very low. Slide 6 showed Canada, slide 7 showed Australia; Brown used these countries because their shape looked closest to Texas. Slide 8 showed the UK, where again, the population is high, but the growth rate of that population is not. Their growth in their domestic product is slow also. Slide 9 showed the US on top of Texas; the US population goes off the chart.

Slide 10, titled *In Order to Close the Degree Gap by 2030 Texas Must...*, was also borrowed from the Hunt/McGuinness January 2012 presentation to the Council. The chart showed a gap of 4.1 million. Brown explained that the chart goes out to 2030 and talks about maintaining the growth that Texas has had and Texas is growing in higher education attainment. So the population is going up, and then there's in-migration which is very important because when bringing people into the state, it kind of depends on what people—they can either raise your educational attainment level or they can actually lower it. So it's about why they move to the state, how they're attracted, and who comes in. Slide 10 represents the shortfall that Texas would have (4.1 million).

Heldenfels asked Brown if the gap of 4.1 million higher education attainments in Slide 10 included certificates. Brown said that it does include certificates (not just associate's and above). Matthews asked if the rate of higher education attainment of in-migration people from other countries is relatively small. Brown said she looked but couldn't find educational attainment data for in-migration broken out by people from another country versus people from another state, and so that answer is difficult to determine. Matthews asked if that number affected the bottom line of the chart. Brown said that the chart represented the growth Texas currently has and so it could affect it. Matthews asked what she thought it would be...relatively small? Brown said she thinks it would be relatively small (in-migration from other countries). Matthews asked if that is engineers recruited from other countries. Brown said engineers would be more likely to come from other states.

Slide 11 showed the state-to-state migration numbers for 2008-2010, and shows that many people have been moving from California to Texas. Heldenfels asked if it was net in-migration. Brown said this slide is strictly migration. Texas is a net importer of migration by about 400,000 a year from all the states. Slide 12 showed data from the Georgetown University study and it talks about what type of growth we can see or what we will need in higher education, and this projection only goes out to 2018, so you will see different numbers compared to the slide that Hunt provided last time, and that's because his went out to 2030, so we've got a different time scale. By 2018, two-thirds will require some type of higher education attainment. We're not going to have that number of graduates, and these are national numbers. Obviously, the biggest difference that they're seeing is in those STEM field areas such as healthcare, education, and community services. The biggest occupation clusters include the most entry-level jobs (retail, service industry), and demand less education, but are growing at a slower rate. So in sheer number, and you will hear this from other sources, most of the jobs are going to be created at a lower level.

Matthews said there have been several stories lately about college graduates being paid less now than they were several years ago, that there are a high percentage of college graduates who are unable to find a job; it just seems to be a bigger problem than what Texas has experienced before...is the trend line pointing that way?

Paredes responded that he thought Matthews was referring to that article that appeared in the New York Times yesterday, which said that 51% of college graduates are either unemployed or underemployed; the problem, he says, is less severe in Texas than in other parts of the country. Paredes: What we seem to be learning about higher education is we have to do a better job of informing students about what the job prospects are in different disciplines. For students who are still committed to majoring in the humanities, we've got to do a better job of infusing those majors with marketable skills—we haven't done that nearly as well as we should and that's clearly something we have to do better in the future. We have to do a better job of advising students where the jobs are and what their prospects are if they don't get strong, marketable skills. But that article scared people, including me.

Heldenfels noted a Georgetown University study which projected that, by 2018, 56-58% of jobs in Texas will require some form of postsecondary credential. Brown said that part of the solution to the problem is that Texas needs to create more jobs and advise students on the type of jobs available and in what occupations.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

Jiles mentioned that the representation of the chart is more than just an educational factor, and Texas as a whole is departmentalized; he emphasized the importance of Texas being more coordinated within each department.

Zárate commented on the importance of two-year institutions by giving an example of advising at Alamo Colleges that does not give students so many options as they had previously.

Heldenfels stated the importance of setting benchmarks and getting outcomes is also based on realigning policies after benchmarks are set.

11:15 a.m. A New Measure of Educational Success in Texas – National Center for Higher Education Management

- Larry Faulkner, President Emeritus, The University of Texas at Austin
- George Grainger, Director of Research and Planning and a Senior Grant Officer, Houston Endowment
- Members of the Council

Faulkner greeted the Council and briefly spoke about the Houston Endowment and his role with them. He said their data cannot be corrupted and that a lot of similar data out there can be corrupted.

The THECB did a study and Houston Endowment got very interested in it; Dr. Gardner provided the initial focus on 7th-grade cohort data. The "Number," which is 21.9%, is the percentage of Texas 8th grade students who earn any sort of postsecondary certificate or degree within six years of their expected high school graduation date. The number is a result of data gathered by measuring the educational attainment of 8th graders over 11 academic years.

If you apply the old completion rates to the class of 2010, the number dropped by 2.02%. Grainger stated that as a whole, Texas must pay attention or it will really be in trouble with the young Hispanics coming through the system. In addition to the population surge as a problem area, another thing to look at, which is a special challenge for Texas, is the 200,000 young men of color who did not complete a certificate or degree. In looking towards the future, the Houston Endowment argues that Texas needs a holistic educational plan—not bifurcated K-12 and higher education plans. For Texas, exploring regional and income disaggregation is something that needs to be looked at.

Houston Endowment uses 8th grade data so that longitudinal data systems from other states can be compared. Robertson wanted more information on how the data is collected and tracked. Faulkner said that individuals were not tracked by name but by a number. It is done blind but the individuals are real; they use anonymous identifiers. Faulkner said you can count the 8th graders and can follow individually; very soon this will be true on a national scale. We will be able to know if Texas students achieved any postsecondary credential in any state in the nation.

Faulkner said it is easy for K-12 and higher education to point fingers, although neither side can pin it on the other; the natural response should be improved coupling of high school graduates and early-college work. Grainger added that their job is to know what the number is, but they don't set benchmarks for what it should be or make a plan for how to get there. It's the job of forums such as this Council to determine what to do with the information provided.

Faulkner and Grainger Q&A

Messer questioned what the goal of the "number" is (21.9%).

- Grainger stated that 21.9% is the production percentage.

Jiles asked if the Houston Endowment could be a convener; is that under consideration?

- Grainger said that the Endowment tries to use their good reputation to convene smart people to come up with good ideas in order to better use institutional conditions in which all kids have equal chances to succeed.

Jiles asked Faulkner if he thought Texas should use international benchmarks.

- Faulkner urged paying attention to OECD data. He also stressed paying attention to Canada which is often taken for granted. Canada and Australia are two of the best performing countries that should be looked at for comparison.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

Heldenfels asked if Faulkner's last remark answered the question of the high-performing countries which would be a good comparison for benchmarks. Additionally, what countries other than Canada would work as well for comparison of benchmarks?

- Faulkner replied that Canada and Australia were two that are worth examining. The US's lack of homogeneity is a problem for comparisons with more homogeneous countries like Korea.

Heldenfels asked if Finland would be more homogeneous.

- Faulkner replied that Finland would probably be worth paying attention to because they've done a lot systematically recently that is worth looking at. It also has its own internal diversity but it's a more uniform country than the US.

Robertson wanted more information on the PISA test and how it is different from the current state-mandated test that Texas already administers. She asked if the PISA looks at competencies and if Texas is already looking at competencies with its mandated tests.

- Faulkner said he thought it is important for Texas to consider the PISA test; it's important for Texas to measure against other states/countries. Getting Texas to be internationally competitive is an important goal and PISA would be a useful tool.

Commissioner Paredes commented that he would like to follow up with Grainger's remark earlier about the 8th grade cohort data rather than 7th grade cohort data.

- Grainger said he was advised by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) that the data that would become available from other states would be 8th grade data.

Heldenfels asked if the 8th grade cohort would be sustainable into the pipeline.

- Grainger replied that when NCHEMS ran the data, they ran information for the 7th and 8th grade cohorts. Faulkner added that the 7th grade cohort would be better, but students actually start dropping out between 7th and 8th grades. Overall, the 8th grade data is what has been used because of the comparison on a national level.

Diebel wanted to know how is it that more money is being spent in US than any other country.

- Faulkner answered that he is not familiar with the particular OECD data that was shown earlier and would need more time to digest that information.

Heldenfels said that quality and cost efficiency must be taken into account.

11:45 a.m. Measures of Success

- Susan Brown, Assistant Commissioner, Planning and Accountability
- Lee Holcombe, Director, Higher Education Policy Institute
- Members of the Council

Susan Brown

Brown gave an overview of her and Holcombe's presentations as reviewing the top three out of nine FSG identified outcome measures (students completing credential within 150% of time, students obtaining a job six months after completion, and scores on critical thinking and analytical reasoning).

The results of the first measure—**students who completed a postsecondary credential within 150% of time**—are 58.4% for full-time university students and 30.6% for part-time university students. The results for two-year colleges are 13.8% for full-time and 8.9% for part-time.

Texas is ranked 35th nationally in the percent of students graduating in six years with 49.6% (for universities). National data also shows Texas ranked 35th in the percentage of students graduating in six years from the same institution. Brown mentioned that not all the other states have the tracking capability that Texas does.

Matthews wanted to know how was it possible that other states had a higher percentage if they did not track their numbers and whether those numbers were accurately reflected in the chart.

- Brown answered that they were accurate, but that there were limitations in the data.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

From FY2000-FY2011, Texas increased the number of students who completed a postsecondary credential within 150% of time from 49.2% to 58.4% in universities. Enrollment status upon entry makes a large difference. Financial need is a factor that goes into the cohorts. Using information from the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) standard, better prepared students are graduating at higher rates. Preparation is a major factor in graduation—the higher the SAT score, the more likely a student will graduate. Graduation rates differ by ethnicity. Brown mentioned that it is good to have graduation numbers, but the THECB looked at other measures as well, such as total degrees awarded, transfer graduation rates, percentage of students who started a two-year institution, graduation rates going out from seven to ten years, and workforce placement. Just looking at the graduation rates misses the numbers from community colleges.

Heldenfels asked if anyone is measuring workforce placement after graduation other than institutions.

- Brown said that **students who obtain a job six months after graduation** is part of the THECB Accountability System. Brown said there are limitations for this data point; for instance, students show up in the Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage record but there is no data for the number of hours they are working (full-time or part-time) or what their occupation is. Other than the UI wage record, the data also includes military service and US postal service records.

Heldenfels asked about OECD countries and if they track that data.

- Brown said she hasn't seen any data that tracks into the labor market in a consistent manner. There was nothing represented through OECD data.

Not only were there variations among sectors, Brown said, but there were also variations among disciplines. From 2006-2010, baccalaureate degree holders were more likely to be continuing their education than working. Graduate-level completers had not changed and two-year college completers were more likely to be enrolled in further higher education. Increases in awards are not keeping pace fast enough to reach the proposed goal of 60%.

Gardner added that the proposed 60% goal is really achieved in several ways, it's not just graduates from our institutions, but it reflects the economy, so if the economy is prosperous and you're luring in graduates from other states, when you talk about the educational attainment goals, as measured by the Department of Labor, it reflects graduates from wherever they may have graduated. But at some point we could double the number of graduates if our economy was such that students had to leave the state to get employment, you might not look as good on that measure, so that 60% is a measure of the overall productivity and health of the state if not simply higher education's role in it—they're certainly intertwined and that needs to be remembered.

Lee Holcombe

Holcombe's presentation gave an overview of learning outcomes and **scores of critical thinking and analytic reasoning** as well as the proposed Student Learning Compact (SLC). Not all institutions are using student learning outcomes data for improvement—community colleges use outcomes data less than universities. The SLC would be a beneficial tool for addressing the need in the future. The contract consists of institutions committing to develop a 12-month plan for enhancing and advancing their work on student learning. Institutions can adopt an assessment and process to improve student learning that best fit their mission and priorities. HEPI is now gathering information from institutions about their Student Learning Compacts.

Zárate wanted to know if Holcombe discussed the concept of contextualizing a lot of the instruction that is happening in higher education especially within two-year institutions. He said the assessments were something to consider.

- Holcombe explained that the focus is more on the assessment piece. The literature emphasizes contextualizing.

Heldenfels mentioned an editorial by David Brooks in that day's *New York Times* which emphasized the importance of a voluntary approach to postsecondary student assessment. He asked Holcombe, in today's environment, what would work best.

- Holcombe said whether it's voluntary or mandatory is an open question. What is clear is to utilize where we are in the state's structure of things which needs to be communicated. That is a top priority of the state. It's an important topic for a number of reasons. Learning at any level is highly correlated with employment. We must deal with perceptions that we are watering down education and utilize objective assessments—that's where benchmarks are needed in moving forward. Standardized assessments are widely used in Texas. In 2009, over 97% of four-year institutions used standardized assessments. Embedded assessment is a standard rubric which is

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

used for student work produced as a requirement for class. Portfolios of student work are collected throughout a student's progression through higher education.

Jiles asked, when looking at writing and math, if there is a gap in expecting the coursework to take care of college-readiness deficiencies or if there are other mechanisms to address the deficiencies where needed.

- Holcombe replied that it would be at the discretion of the institution. One of the weaknesses of the standardized assessment approach is that the implication on how to change or redesign coursework to correct deficiencies is not as clear. With embedded assessment, it relates directly to what the student did in specific coursework so the implications for how you actually improve instruction are more clear and direct.

Jiles agreed that it absolutely depends on institutions because the Coordinating Board gets most of its data from the institutions' output results.

- Holcombe said one of the advantages of the standardized assessments is that they are relatively easy and inexpensive to administer most of the time. The profile of strengths and weaknesses for embedded assessments is almost a flip side of standardized assessments.

Heldenfels wanted to know what Holcombe's recommendation was for what would work best and how the Coordinating Board could make comparisons between institutions if they are all using different measures.

- Holcombe said the idea behind the compact is to put in place machinery within an institution. Groups of institutions are using similar approaches; therefore the CB could look at the measures within the groups of institutions.

Riter reminded the Council of who FSG is and asked whether the three success measures covered today were comparable nationally and internationally.

Brown answered that the 150% benchmark, when using the national definition, can be used to benchmark across all the states.

12:15 p.m. Council Lunch (Tejas Room)

- Members of the Council

12:45 p.m. Facilitated Small Group Discussions (Tejas Room)

- Members of the Council

Please note the following summary incorporates small group breakout discussion/chart notes and individual verbal summary of group presentations provided to the Council at the end of the meeting.

Summary Themes:

- International benchmarking recommendations: The most recommended countries are Canada, Australia, Germany, and Korea. Canada and Australia were recommended by all three groups. Germany was recommended by groups two and three. Korea was recommended by groups one and two. Finland was also recommended by group one. All three groups felt an examination of states similar to Texas should also be considered.
- Reasonableness of a 60% benchmark for 2030: Groups one (adding that it may be too much of a stretch) and two — while emphasizing a focus on the pre-kindergarten/preschool through a four-year college degree (P-16) to meet the goal — felt it was a reasonable benchmark, while group three felt it was unrealistic.
- Incorporating competency levels: Group one did not answer this question. Group two discussed the usefulness of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Group three emphasized the need to define competency and the need to modify how it is measured nationally to gain relevance.
- Tracking 8th graders in and through college: All three groups recommended that it be added as a metric. Groups one and two emphasized the importance of including the P-16 component in the metric. Group three discussed the need for a common language if tracking is utilized.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

- Group recommendations regarding the three measures of success presented by the Foundation Strategy Group/FSG-Social Impact Consultants (FSG): All three groups recognized the value of existing Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data for the percent, number, or percent increase of students who complete their credential within 150% of program time across all states.

Group one felt that 12 months might be a more realistic timeframe to accurately measure the percent, number, or percent increase of students who obtain a job six months after completing their credentials. Group one felt that the Student Learning Compact (SLC) presented by Dr. Holcombe, could serve as a goal for higher education institutions to enhance their learning outcomes measurement work, and that the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) should be incorporated in the next few years.

Group two felt that American Association of Community College's (AACC) Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA) tool might be a good future presentation for the Council. Group three emphasized the difficulty of measuring scores on critical thinking across all disciplines.

1) Does your group recommend that Texas add international benchmarks, and if so, which countries does your group recommend that our state uses for purposes of comparison?

Group 1 (Guy Bailey, Fred Heldenfels IV, Charles Matthews, Ray Messer, Pam Willeford):

We recommend adding international benchmarks, specifically those countries that are the U.S.'s competitors and have similar diversity, population, and financial structures. We recommended Canada, Australia, and Finland (3+3) or Korea and China (5+5). The best states in the U.S. should also be included in the benchmarking.

Group 2 (Harold Hahn, Brenda Hellyer, Jodie Jiles, Elaine Mendoza):

Canada, Germany, and Australia should be examined for their strategies and best practices. Examine Korea as a country that will provide a context for global competitiveness. We need countries that are excelling but also have similarities to the U.S. (i.e., social, political, and economic). Consideration of states in the U.S. should also be included.

Group 3 (Phil Diebel, Whit Riter, Beth Robertson, Roberto Zárate):

We recommend Canada, Germany, and Australia. Examining emerging countries isn't good for Texas. Other states in the U.S. should be included.

2) Is 60% a reasonable benchmark for 2030, or should there be different levels?

Group 1: Yes, but as a percentage of 2030's 25-34 year-old cohort and expressed as needing 1% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) through 2030. Group Note: Can this be reconciled with higher education? Perhaps look at 1% gain each year. Is it really doable to set this big of a stretch goal?

Group 2: We feel 60% is already very challenging enough and we don't want to go lower. We need to focus across the systems (i.e., P-16) because we can't reach 60% by just focusing on the high school level.

Group 3: No, 60% is not reasonable. We need to aim for a more realistic goal; we're at 32% now and 35% nationally — the answer is in the current numbers. *[Note of clarification for the minutes: According to Mr. Woody Hunt during his presentation on January 25, 2012, and based on Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) data, the U.S. still has one of most highly educated labor forces, with 41% of the adult population having attained a tertiary degree.]*

3) How should we incorporate competency levels?

Group 1: Not answered.

Group 2: Yes, PISA could be a useful tool and we're unaware of other similar tools that might be useful to us. If we are made aware of other similar tools like PISA, we may choose to recommend them, too.

Group 3: Our challenge is answering how competency levels translate to workforce. We need to define competency and modify how we measure competencies nationally, in order to make them relevant.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

4) Does your group recommend that we add as a metric the simple ratio introduced by National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) for tracking the success of 8th graders in and through college?

Group 1: (The group asked how it correlates with the 60% benchmark)...Yes, it is a good metric in its simplicity and positivity. It can be utilized as a more centralized metric, while proven success can be the overall measure. Include the P-16 component to address the overall pipeline of education.

Group 2: Yes, it is important, and the emphasis needs to be on P-16 because students in 8th grade need to have adequate preparation from elementary school. Gaps will exist if earlier grade levels are not given equal attention.

Group 3: Yes, the important thing is to keep this conversation alive for awareness purposes. We need a common language if we're going to track. We need to compare higher education plans regionally.

5) Does your group recommend that we add any of the three measures of success as recommended by FSG? If so, which of the three measures does your group recommend?

Group 1: Perhaps six months is too short a time to accurately measure – perhaps 12 months is a more realistic timeframe? We're not sure if this timeframe is a national or generational expectation. Yes on the critical thinking scores measure – although it doesn't reconcile with the competencies; professional exams – and the SLC is an easier sell while also a good method to encourage institutions of higher education as a goal for higher to enhance their learning outcomes measurement work, due to the existence of a large amount of competency measures already available. The SLC can serve as a goal for institutions of higher education, while allowing each one to implement on their own terms since one size doesn't fit all. The compacts will sell well on campuses but it is more complicated selling them as competency measures. We may want to incorporate the AHELO exam in the next few years.

Group 2: AACC has a new community college tool, the VFA, which utilizes metrics for academic, workforce, and outcome measures. This tool might be a good future presentation for us to examine as we try to see how it could work at the state level. Transfer alignment for 9th grade to the first four years of higher education is critical. Collecting scores on critical thinking requires a lot of money to move it forward but it is crucial to implement. We must look at reaching and engaging our diversified population differently – how to measure (disaggregate data).

Group 3: It is difficult to measure scores on critical thinking across all disciplines. How do we even get them in a room to take a test after graduation? The 150% and 6 months measures are both reasonable.

1:45 p.m. Summary and Discussion of Next Meeting Agenda

- Fred W. Heldenfels IV, Chair of the Council

Messer commented on the 60% benchmark, he thinks his group also agrees that it was a stretch, but he is of the theory that one should set stretch goals. He would rather set a stretch goal of X% and fall 3% or 5% short instead of only going 80% of what the stretch goal should be and meet it, because we really didn't have to work very hard to meet a low goal. When you set a stretch goal, you have to work hard at it, and so there's nothing wrong with setting a stretch goal, just accepting that we may fall a bit short.

Heldenfels commented that way his group talked about the 60% goal was just to remember that we're talking about the 25-34 year-olds of 2030, who are today's 7-16 year-olds....can that group (and this includes not just productivity of institutions, but in-migration and bringing adults back into the education system) achieve 60% with that cohort in the year 2030, so when you put it in that context it still is a stretch goal and a huge challenge, but it's not the Houston Endowment metric (a snapshot of one point in time six years after those eighth graders entered college). So that 21.9% (the Number), as Diebel mentioned, we're starting from that current base of 32% [see clarification below] among our 25-34 year-olds. So 1% compounded growth per year in that cohort's attainment level....is that feasible or not? That's what we need to think about—whether we can set that big of a stretch goal. [Note of clarification for the minutes: According to Mr. Woody Hunt during his presentation on January 25, 2012, and based on Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) data, the U.S. still has one of most highly educated labor forces, with 41% of the adult population having attained a tertiary degree.]

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education

Heldenfels thanked the Council for their participation, and said that they are covering a lot of ground, but in the end, the Council will come up with the ability to select those vital few goals as well as what measurements are the building blocks for those vital few overall goals. He told the Council members to feel free to contact either him or Gardner if they had any questions about the presenters or wanted any more data.

2:00 p.m. Adjournment

Heldenfels adjourned the meeting.