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ROLE OF CBHE CONTINUES TO EXPAND

Will transfer decision-making away from institutions to the CBHE

The Missouri Coordinating Board of Higher Education will soon adopt The Coordinated Plan for Missouri Higher Education. This plan is the most recent in a series of CBHE planning documents dating back to 1991. When considered together, these documents reflect a consistent and significant shift of policy decision-making away from Missouri higher education institutions into the hands of the Coordinating Board of Higher Education.

CBHE planning documents utilize terminology that can have multiple meanings to the casual reader. It is important to understand these terms in the context of CBHE. Some examples follow:

System of Missouri Higher Education: The CBHE plans speak often of the need to foster "a system of higher education" for Missouri. CBHE's definition of a system is all of the 200+ higher education institutions certified to operate in Missouri. However, among those 200 institutions, 25 are independent colleges and universities, 120 are private proprietary schools, and 58 are vocational technical high schools supported by school districts. Only 31 institutions are tax supported 4-year and community college institutions. To suggest that these 200 institutions comprise a "system" directly accountable to CBHE exceeds the authority granted to the Coordinating Board by Missouri statutes.

Collaboration: Several CBHE reports have stressed the need for collaborative efforts among Missouri higher education institutions. One document criticizes competition as undesirable, and pledges CBHE efforts to reduce or eliminate it. Fair and open competition has been a driving force in enhancing the performance of higher education institutions in Missouri. The elimination of competition will result in less creativity, fewer services aimed at consumers, and less effective operations in all of our schools.

Funding for Results: The CBHE budget process

includes additional funds for the "Funding for Results Initiative." While we all desire that funding be tied to results, an unintended outcome of this initiative has made it more difficult for public institutions to serve the typical Missouri student. Funding for results initiatives give bonuses to institutions that manage to raise admissions standards so high that the average Missourian cannot qualify for admission to the

program. By mandating high program admission standards, we have shifted the emphasis away from what students learn in the program to what students knew before they entered the program. To reward institutions for allowing only the best and brightest to be admitted is not good public policy. If results are to be rewarded, the reward should be based upon the change occurring in the student as a result of participation in the program.

The more aggressive regulatory role for CBHE has become evident in the last five years. Some examples follow:

Transfer and Articulation: In response to a handful of complaints regarding the difficulty some students have in transferring coursework from one institution to another, CBHE created a Transfer and Articulation Policy in 1998. The new policy specified general education requirements that must be accepted by the receiving institution, and established a rather extensive process whereby transfer decisions could be challenged. While the policy was mandated for the 31 public institutions, independent colleges were invited to be a signatory and voluntarily comply with the new policy. Some independent institutions did sign on out of fear of being at a disadvantage in recruiting transfer students. Most independent institutions viewed the policy as an infringement on institutional autonomy, and did not participate. Where before, public and private institutions could set their own standards for course transferability, now that authority has shifted to the Coordinating Board of Higher Education.

These documents reflect a consistent and significant shift of policy, taking decision making authority away from Missouri higher education institutions and placing it into the hands of the CBHE.

Surprisingly, this major change was not submitted to the standard rule-making process that allows public input, but was simply announced by CBHE policy dictate.

Dual Credit Regulation: For many years, higher education institutions were free to work with area school districts to allow college credit to be earned by students while still in high school. The Missouri State Board of Education had established a dual credit procedure in the early 1990's, and high schools worked with area colleges to arrange appropriate dual credit coursework. High schools and colleges were allowed flexibility in establishing these partnerships, so long as the local school board and the local college came to an agreement, and essential NCA requirements on quality were met. That stopped abruptly in 1999, when CBHE chose to write extensive regulations spelling out specific criteria that must be met for dual credit programs to operate. Independent institutions were also required to comply with the new regulations so students would be able to transfer that coursework from the independent college to a public institution. The result has been additional paperwork, less program flexibility, and no impact on program quality. As before, this major change was not submitted to the standard rule-making process that allows public input, but was simply announced by CBHE policy dictate.

Teacher Preparation: The most significant expansion of CBHE authority may be only now becoming evident. During the past year CBHE has been making it's presence felt in teacher preparation, an area specifically assigned by statute to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Recent actions

by CBHE include calls for higher ACT scores for admission to teacher preparation programs, involvement in MoSTEP visits, and sponsorship of annual Education Summits. This trend should concern K-12 educators, since CBHE personnel are almost entirely devoid of any K-12 practical experiences. The certification of teachers and the monitoring of teacher preparation programs have historically and legitimately been assigned to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. DESE has far greater expertise and understanding of K-12 school districts than does CBHE. The DESE staff is much more aware of and in tune to the needs of Missouri public school districts. There is no practical reason for CBHE to seek an expanded role in teacher preparation programs.

Missouri citizens should be aware of the more aggressive role CBHE is taking in regulating higher education in Missouri. Public school boards of Education and K-12 educators should keep an eye on these developments, as there is a potential for a significant shift of authority from DESE to CBHE on teacher certification and teacher preparation program approval matters. Legislators should monitor CBHE to ensure that its statutory authority is not abused, and that the regulations issued by CBHE go through the proper public review and comment channels. Our citizens must decide whether we have more faith in a centralized, powerful regulator of higher education, or we desire a more diversified system that allows decisions to be made locally that address local needs. The direction of higher education in Missouri will be impacted by our response.

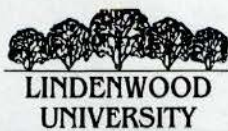
TEACHER QUALITY—OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY

Like the eternal search for truth, the education community continues to search for the ultimate answer to the "problem" of public education. Legislators, state education officials, and distinguished university researchers all investigate, study and propose solutions to the "problem" of public education. These well-meaning efforts fail because they do not take into account the uniqueness and diversity of students, parents, teachers and school systems. Most of these efforts do no harm, other than to detract us from the primary mission of teacher education: to ensure that beginning teachers are well prepared to enter their assigned classrooms and help

all students achieve higher levels of mastery.

Lindenwood University takes its mission as a producer of beginning teachers very seriously. We are an independent institution that believes educational decisions are best made at the local level. We champion the rights of colleges to work with local school districts to address local needs, as well as the rights of local school boards to employ teachers with a diversity of backgrounds, and with a variety of educational philosophies.

Because we are independent, we view several current trends with some concern. First, we are suspicious of efforts to standardize teacher preparation programs into a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Led by



EDUCATIONAL POLICY ISSUES FACING CONGRESS

Each term, the Congress of the United States deals with numerous issues related to the welfare of our citizens. Next year Congress will consider a wide array of social programs intent on improving the quality of life of Americans. No doubt, many will involve education-related issues.

It has only been during the last generation that Congress has seen fit to legislate on education matters. Prior to the 1960s, members of Congress were content to accept at face value the 10th Amendment, which reserved to the states and to the people authority not expressly given to the federal government. Since education is not mentioned in the United States Constitution, state and local governments assumed responsibility for education policy and accountability.

Beginning with the Great Society of the 1960s, the federal bureaucracy decided it knew more about such things than state and local elected officials. Thus began a trend of federal involvement in education that continues to accelerate to the present. While many would prefer a substantial reduction in that level of involvement, it is naïve to expect that the Congress will withdraw from this arena. However, members of Congress should pursue the following goals.

1. Our members of Congress should attempt to establish a more appropriate balance between the federal and state role in education. Surely, duly elected officials at the state and local levels are in a better position to make program decisions about local schools than are federal bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. Our Congress has increasingly developed very prescriptive solutions to local problems. The result has been a cookie cutter approach to all forms of educational issues. These broad ax solutions have resulted in enormous waste of resources that could be salvaged if the Congress showed some trust in local decision-making.

2. Our members of Congress should ensure that no legislation is passed that mandates service without providing full funding from the federal government. To adopt well-intentioned legislation that passes on cost to other taxing authorities is an abuse of power. If it is to be required, the Congress should provide the resources to do it.

3. Our members of Congress should streamline educational funding mechanisms. As long as federal grants are made available for educational services, school districts will chase those dollars. To do so often requires additional personnel that perform no other service but to generate those funds. Districts of any size make a major time commitment to comply with the mandates of these federal programs. If the education bureaucracy were reduced and funding mechanisms streamlined, available dollars could be spent directly on the problem, rather than the administrative costs related to grant competition and

regulatory management.

4. Our members of Congress should become knowledgeable about the purposes and limitations of standardized testing. The nation is caught up in a fanatical testing movement that causes major decisions to be made on the basis of a limited number of testing results. This is dangerous enough at the state level, but it creates enormous problems at the national level. Congress has a fixation on quick solutions, based on rewards and punishment. Standardized testing, while an essential component, is now given credibility far in excess of its reasonable limitations. Title II of the Higher Education Act (which attempts to rank the nation's teacher preparation programs on the basis of a standardized test) is simply unworkable and needs to be repealed. A much more rational way to evaluate teacher preparation programs would be to seek the judgement of the school principals who hire and supervise beginning teachers.

5. Our members of Congress should respect the diversity to be found in our university teacher preparation programs. There are forces at work that would standardize the preparation of teachers in a "one size fits all" model. But there is now a healthy diversity among the 1,300-plus teacher preparation programs in our nation. To force compliance with some mythical "national standard" in teacher preparation programs will weaken the preparation of teachers, and destroy the creativity that our nation's schools desperately need.

6. Our members of Congress should support efforts to help students pursue post-secondary education. In the 1940s, the G.I. Bill of Rights opened up higher education opportunities to returning military personnel. In the 1960s, the National Defense Education Act opened the doors of higher education to millions of young people who would have been unable to go to college without its assistance. Now, as much as ever, our nation's future depends upon young people who can continue their education. The Pell Grant Program, the student loan programs, and other funding mechanisms that help students (not institutions) fulfill their higher education goals continues to be the greatest service that Congress can provide in addressing educational policy.

With the beginning of the new century, Congress should seriously review its' responsibilities related to educational policy-making. The fear that the U.S. Department of Education is becoming the National School Board is gradually becoming a reality. Congress should focus its role in educational policy-making on helping states and local governments achieve educational quality with a minimum of bureaucratic interference, and supporting students in reaching higher levels of educational achievement.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY ISSUES FACING MISSOURI LEGISLATORS

The Missouri General Assembly has a unique opportunity to address some key educational issues before the citizens of our state. We believe our representatives in the General Assembly should pursue the following goals:

1. Our representatives should try to reduce the gradual shift of authority away from local control to the state bureaucracy. While this trend has been evolving for 40 years, it has accelerated rapidly in the last decade, transferring many of the decisions best made at the local level into the hands of the state education offices. This has taken decision-making away from Missouri citizens and placed it with appointed state boards and career officials who have no direct accountability to the public. The General Assembly should use legislative authority to begin the shift of responsibility for education back to locally elected public school boards, administrators and teachers, and to the boards of directors of the colleges and universities of our state.

2. Our representatives in the General Assembly should conduct a review to identify precisely what Missouri statutes require of the Coordinating Board for Higher Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Having identified the specific statutory responsibilities of these agencies, the General Assembly should reduce the involvement of these agencies in matters not specifically mandated by statute. By eliminating the multitude of tasks not expressly required by law, each agency can focus on its' core responsibilities. It can do a better job with essential functions if it is free from the non-essential tasks.

Having redefined the mission of each agency, the General Assembly should address staffing levels with the goal of reducing the bureaucracy. Savings gained by this reduction in salary costs, office space, travel expenses, and other overhead should be divided into two parts. The first half would be returned to the ultimate users of education programs; to public school districts on a per-pupil basis, and to Missouri college students through scholarship/grant programs. The other half should be used to enhance agency performance by rewarding remaining excellent staff members with salary increases comparable to similar responsibility levels in the private sector.

3. Our representatives in the General Assembly should demand that state agencies follow the law. Recent revelations that the Coordinating Board of Higher Education has routinely abused its regulatory authority cannot be ignored by those elected to represent our citizens.

4. Our representatives in the General Assembly should limit the automatic appropriation increases that institutions of higher education receive without regard to the numbers of students served. State appropriations should be based on the number of students served by that institution. The General Assembly should use any revenue saved to create a grant program that would benefit all Missouri high school graduates. Such a program could make

available up to \$3,000 for each high school graduate to be used at any approved Missouri higher education institution. Higher education institutions would only receive the funds in direct proportion to the number of students served. Our institutions would be more competitive if revenues were dependent upon success in effectively serving students.

5. Our representatives in the General Assembly should confront the issue of fairness in state funding for the public schools. With over 60 hold-harmless districts, the present foundation formula is simply not working. Greater equality in state assistance should be provided on a per-pupil basis, with some special consideration for high need areas. Missouri has created a school foundation formula that is complex, unpredictable, and increasingly unfair. It must become a legislative priority in the future.

6. Our representatives in the General Assembly should begin to question the influence of high stakes testing on our educational institutions. The extreme pressure on schools to demonstrate higher passage rates on the MAP has become counterproductive. While measurable achievement by students is essential, the validity and reliability of current testing practices are clearly suspect. If the adult population of Missouri took the MAP, only a small percentage would likely be found proficient at the 10th grade level. We need to ask the question: Does the MAP really test the essential skills it is intended to measure?

7. Our representatives in the General Assembly should revisit the statute and regulations related to teacher preparation program accountability. On the one hand, state policies have made it more difficult for prospective teachers to become certified through the traditional preparation route. At the same time, numerous exceptions are being made to allow individuals with no teacher preparation coursework to teach. The important thing is not how teachers were prepared, but how well they do the job they are hired to do. Teacher preparation programs should be judged by their customers; those employers that hire program graduates. The current state approval process (MoSTEP) should be further modified to focus on outcomes by taking into account teacher performance during their first year of teaching.

8. Our representatives in the General Assembly should ensure that no program mandates are issued to educational institutions without full funding support. Legislating "good ideas" that must be paid for by other governmental agencies is a cowardly act. If it is important enough to mandate, the General Assembly should provide the funding source.

These eight actions would not address all the issues facing education in Missouri, but would be a good first step. There will be critics to each of these proposals, because each negatively impacts some special interest group. But the majority of Missourians would be well-served by these approaches. We encourage the General Assembly to thoughtfully address these issues.

NCATE, our state has been encouraged to adopt this national accreditation mentality, in spite of the absence of research that shows this approach produces a more effective teacher.

Second, we question the wisdom of an expanded role for the Coordinating Board of Higher Education in teacher education. The monitoring of teacher preparation programs has historically and legitimately been assigned to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. DESE has a much better understanding of K-12 schools districts than does CBHE, and its staff is much more aware of the needs of Missouri public school districts. We wonder why CBHE seeks an expanded role in teacher preparation programs.

Third, we observe with concern the artificial barriers that are being created to limit entry into the teaching field. Pressure to look good on the PRAXIS test is causing some institutions to raise its teacher education admissions requirements, even though there is only dubious research that shows any relationship at all to high ACT and/or PRAXIS scores and quality teaching. Teacher shortages in Missouri have caused DESE to develop a more flexible attitude in allowing provisional and alternate certification. Pressure on higher education institutions to produce only teachers with high test taking ability does not serve the state or profession well.

We think there are some common sense components that go into the preparation of effective beginning teachers. Above all, they must have sufficient content knowledge to stay well ahead of the classes they teach. Of course, this will vary depending upon the grade level and depth of subject matter

involved.

In addition, they need lots of practical applications, including extensive field experiences, practicum opportunities, and student teaching assignments. In almost every case, graduates report that these practical experiences were the key to their effectiveness as a first year teacher.

Finally, they need to be taught by experienced teachers who have recent and on-going experiences in the K-12 setting. Professors who have been isolated from the public school classroom for twenty years can offer very little assistance to prospective teachers who will soon have 30 students of varying abilities and achievement levels in their classrooms.

At some point, we may be able to determine teacher quality by the impact the teacher has on student learning. If the work of William Sanders can be replicated throughout the country, we may be able to identify the low achieving teachers and the high achieving teachers. Unfortunately, such is not yet the case in most states and school districts.

In the meantime, we believe the most effective judge of the quality of the new teacher is the building or district administrator who hires and supervises that teacher. We place far greater value on the feedback from the administrator than we do on PRAXIS scores, grade point averages, ACT scores, professor references or any other measure. While it may not be a perfect way to judge beginning teachers (and by extension, teacher education programs) it is the most effective means currently available to us to evaluate the quality of teachers and teacher preparation institutions.

TRENDS IN MISSOURI HIGHER EDUCATION FOUR YEAR INSTITUTIONS IN MISSOURI

Enrollment

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Public	115,339	121,904	+5.7%
Independent	56,605	93,790	+65.7%

Degrees Conferred-1999

	<u>BA</u>	<u>MA</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Public	15,961	4,160	21,973	50.05%
Independent	11,739	7,970	21,926	49.95%

RULE-MAKING PROCEDURES NOT FOLLOWED

Rule-making procedures required by Missouri statutes have not been followed by the Coordinating Board of Higher Education on at least two major issues, according to officials of the Missouri Senate Division of Research. A June 21, 2001 staff opinion declares that "regulation of credit for dually-enrolled high school students does not clearly fit under CBHE's duties and responsibilities and does not appear to be

within CBHE's statutory authority." The advisory continues: "neither of these CBHE policies (dual-credit and transfer/articulation regulation) was adopted by the process established under Chapter 536, RSMo, for such rule-making." The Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) will soon review these recent actions.

A PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE STUDENT FINANCIAL AID SERVICES

By DENNIS SPELLMANN

Few Missourians are aware that some of their tax dollars are used to help underwrite the college education of a number of out-of-state students who study at Missouri colleges and universities. Even fewer tax payers know that less than 25 percent of our own academically qualified, need-eligible Missouri students who apply for a Missouri Student Grant will receive one.

At the same time we assist out-of-state students with our tax dollars, we are turning away 80 percent of qualified Missouri students who apply for the Missouri Student Grant, because the program is so poorly funded and because our funding priorities are misplaced.

I do not question the importance of promoting diversity in our colleges and universities. Students

from many lands and many cultures and students from diverse racial and ethnic groups who study and learn together provide a richer educational environment. But the price of enticing talented students beyond the borders of our state is too high as long as four out of five academically qualified and need-eligible Missouri students are turned away in their quest for Missouri student grant assistance.

The Missouri Student Grant Program has been providing grants for eligible Missouri students since 1973. To receive the grants, students must demonstrate a financial need as determined by the Federal Needs Analysis Formula (a formula which Congress reviews every five years) and attend or plan to attend an approved Missouri public or private post-secondary institution full-time.

Funding for the MSGP comes from state general revenue appropriations, federal appropriations from the State Student Incentive Grant Program and private sources.

Yet, as we have pointed out, existing funding levels from this combination of state, federal and private sources are sufficient to serve only some 25 percent of applicants who are eligible for this need-based grant program. Over 24,000 eligible Missouri applicants remain unfunded annually.



The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education has recently sponsored a series of forums across the state to inform Missourians about its goals for Missouri higher education. A major goal of the Coordinating Board listed was its efforts to "promote access."

Access for whom? Is not our first obligation to promote and enhance access for Missouri

students? The best way to achieve the goal for promoting access is to put Missouri students first now and to fully fund the Missouri Student Grant Program.

Following World War II, the G.I. Bill was one of the most successful programs ever in increasing the educational level of our nation. President Harry S.

Truman supported that bill, and surely he would support the notion that we should be funding Missouri students, not institutions.

Any increases in funding for higher education in Missouri should be invested in the state's students, not the state's institutions. Doing this would freeze funding for existing tax-supported institutions at a sizable subsidy level, and any funding increases would be based on increases in the number of Missouri students an institution could attract. Let the dollars follow the students to whatever college or university they choose to attend. Whenever freedom of choice is a viable option, all competitive enterprises, including colleges and universities, have a built-in incentive to provide the highest quality of service possible for the dollars they receive.

Each year, we are pouring more and more tax dollars into institutions, many of which are educating fewer and fewer students. The time has come to put our tax money where it counts the most. The greatest need is for funding the Missouri Student Grant Program. We cannot afford to help educate children from afar until we first take care of our own. Put Missouri students *first*.

A+ For All Missouri Students

A small number of Missouri high schools participate in the A+ schools Program. Some graduates of A+ schools can attend a local community college without tuition costs. Participating school districts must absorb additional administrative costs in order to qualify for participation.

Why not make A+ scholarships available for all Missouri high school graduates? Our state could provide all graduates with a basic grant to be used by the student at the Missouri approved institution of their choice. This would eliminate the additional costs required of participating high schools, and would offer the student a variety of college choices most appropriate to their needs and interests.

Encouraging the pursuit of the education beyond the high school provides a clear economic advantage to our state. An A+ program benefiting all graduates is sound economic development policy.

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