

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE HEARING

STATE CAPITOL
MAIN BUILDING
HOUSE FLOOR
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021

PRESENTATION FROM PENNSYLVANIA
COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY COLLEGES

BEFORE :

HONORABLE STANLEY SAYLOR, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE MATT BRADFORD, MINORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE ROSEMARY BROWN
HONORABLE LYNDA SCHLEGEL-CULVER
HONORABLE TORREN ECKER
HONORABLE JONATHAN FRITZ
HONORABLE KEITH GREINER
HONORABLE DOYLE HEFFLEY
HONORABLE JOHNATHAN HERSHEY
HONORABLE LEE JAMES
HONORABLE JOHN LAWRENCE
HONORABLE ZACH MAKO
HONORABLE NATALIE MIHALEK
HONORABLE TIM O'NEAL
HONORABLE CLINT OWLETT
HONORABLE CHRIS QUINN
HONORABLE GREG ROTHMAN
HONORABLE MEGHAN SCHROEDER
HONORABLE JAMES STRUZZI
HONORABLE JESSE TOPPER
HONORABLE RYAN WARNER
HONORABLE JEFF WHEELAND, virtual
HONORABLE DAVE ZIMMERMAN

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BEFORE (cont.'d) :

- HONORABLE AMEN BROWN
- HONORABLE DONNA BULLOCK
- HONORABLE MORGAN CEPHAS
- HONORABLE AUSTIN DAVIS
- HONORABLE ELIZABETH FIEDLER
- HONORABLE MARTY FLYNN, virtual
- HONORABLE EDWARD GAINNEY, virtual
- HONORABLE PATTY KIM
- HONORABLE EMILY KINKEAD
- HONORABLE STEPHEN KINSEY
- HONORABLE LEANNE KRUEGER
- HONORABLE BENJAMIN SANCHEZ, virtual
- HONORABLE PETER SCHWEYER
- HONORABLE JOE WEBSTER

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ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

- DAVID DONLEY, REPUBLICAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
- RITCHIE LaFAVER, REPUBLICAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
- ANN BALOGA, DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
- TARA TREES, DEMOCRATIC CHIEF COUNSEL**
- HONORABLE BARBARA GLEIM**
- HONORABLE MARK GILLEN**
- HONORABLE CRAIG STAATS**
- HONORABLE CURT SONNEY**
- HONORABLE MARK LONGIETTI**
- HONORABLE NAPOLEON NELSON**
- HONORABLE MARY ISAACSON**
- HONORABLE BOB MERSKI, virtual**
- HONORABLE CHRISTINA SAPPEY, virtual**
- HONORABLE PERRY WARREN, virtual**
- HONORABLE JAKE WHEATLEY, virtual**

JEAN M. DAVIS, REPORTER
NOTARY PUBLIC

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 * * *

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I'm going to call on
4 Elizabeth Bolden, who is President and CEO of the
5 Pennsylvania Commission on Community Colleges, to start our
6 program. I'm going to have her comments and then I'll let
7 her introduce her people that are with her. And then I will
8 ask everybody to stand and raise their right hand to be
9 sworn in.

10 We'll start that way.

11 Elizabeth, it's your game.

12 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 We appreciate the opportunity to be here with you
14 today to share what the colleges are doing to move the
15 Commonwealth forward in these unprecedented times as well as
16 discuss the colleges' needs for the upcoming fiscal year.

17 On behalf of all the people in Pennsylvania who
18 are served by a community college, we want to thank you for
19 your leadership in securing funding for colleges in Act 1.
20 We also appreciate the leadership of everyone and support on
21 the Appropriations Committee.

22 We realize that the needs across the Commonwealth
23 are great. But in providing those funds to the community
24 colleges, you can be assured that they will be immediately
25 put to use to serve employers and students across the State

1 to help ameliorate the devastating impacts of the pandemic
2 on our students, our families, and our communities.

3 There are a lot of very good conversations taking
4 place in the Commonwealth about higher education. Those
5 conversations are important, long overdue, and should
6 continue. Our students cannot wait. They have lost their
7 jobs, their family finances are in disarray, some of them
8 are afraid to enroll in postsecondary study, and they need
9 help now.

10 And community colleges, thanks to your support,
11 can help them now. We don't have to wait for a study. We
12 don't have to wait for redesign. We don't have to wait for
13 the creation of career pathways because we already have
14 them. We don't have to wait for the Public Higher Education
15 Funding Commission or an updated State Master Plan. We are
16 ready now.

17 You can be assured that with the funding you
18 provided in Act 1, the colleges will provide acquisition,
19 help Pennsylvanians acquire the skills they need to learn
20 new skills, get back to work, and support their families.

21 With me today is Dr. Tuesday Stanley, President
22 of Westmoreland County Community College; Dr. Ski, President
23 of Harrisburg Area Community College; and Dr. Roger Davis,
24 President of the Community College of Beaver County. And
25 each of them will be pleased to tell you how the colleges

1 will use the Act 1 funds to move the Commonwealth forward.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Elizabeth, I was
4 waiting for you to pronounce Ski's whole name. I was going
5 to give you that job, but you didn't do that.

6 If all of you would rise and raise your right
7 hand.

8
9 (Witnesses sworn en masse.)

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Thank you.

11 You may be seated.

12 And we will start off with our first questioner
13 who is Representative Jim Struzzi.

14 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 And good afternoon. I appreciate you being here,
16 especially in person. It's always nice to be able to look
17 people at least in the eye, not necessarily face-to-face,
18 but eye-to-eye.

19 Before I get into my questioning, I want you to
20 know that I totally appreciate everything that the community
21 college system brings, the opportunities, the value, to
22 Pennsylvania students. I, myself, attended Westmoreland
23 Community College. I transferred those credits then to the
24 University of Pittsburgh. And obviously the value and the
25 opportunity were there. So I truly appreciate articulation

1 agreements, which is part of what I want to talk about
2 today.

3 I don't have a community college in my district,
4 but I do have Indiana University of Pennsylvania. And
5 thanks to Dr. Stanley, we do have, I guess you'd call it, a
6 branch campus of Westmoreland Community College. And we're
7 actually in the process of building a brand-new building to
8 house those students right next to our technology center.
9 It's going to involve a Challenger Learning Center. And
10 also the conservation district is on the same property. So
11 it's a great educational opportunity for the students in
12 Indiana County.

13 But what I want to talk about, as I said, are
14 articulation agreements and in particular, the agreement
15 that was signed on January 8th with Southern New Hampshire
16 University. I'm sure you're familiar with it. And
17 basically, it's a contract for all 14 community colleges in
18 Pennsylvania to take online classes with Southern New
19 Hampshire University.

20 I have some very serious concerns with that.
21 First of all, as I said, I have Indiana University of
22 Pennsylvania in my district. And at a time when we know the
23 State System is struggling, we are basically sending student
24 tuition dollars to another state for these online classes.

25 Talk to me about this agreement, how it came to

1 be. Was the State System considered as part of this
2 equation? Were the State-related universities considered?
3 And why you would choose to go out of state to enter into
4 this agreement?

5 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: Thank you, Representative,
6 for the question.

7 So first let me clarify that community college
8 students are in high demand across the country and
9 particularly in Pennsylvania because they are well prepared
10 for postsecondary study and they make great students and
11 even greater alumni.

12 So on a regular basis in my office, I receive
13 proposals from four-year institutions from within
14 Pennsylvania and from outside Pennsylvania who wish to
15 establish an agreement with us so that our students can
16 transfer seamlessly to their institutions to complete their
17 baccalaureate degree.

18 In the case of Southern New Hampshire University,
19 what was appealing to the community colleges on behalf of
20 our students was that Southern New Hampshire takes up to 90
21 credits and provides the students with a tuition discount.
22 We spent a significant amount of time reviewing the
23 proposal, as we have reviewed every other proposal that
24 comes to my office, and determined that for students who
25 wanted such a pathway, this was an appropriate pathway.

1 Southern New Hampshire University is accredited
2 by the very same accrediting body that accredits
3 institutions like Dartmouth University. So we were assured
4 of their quality and we decided that it was appropriate to
5 provide this pathway for students who wanted it.

6 Since we have signed that agreement, 56 students
7 from Pennsylvania community colleges have taken their
8 associate's degree and transferred to Southern New Hampshire
9 University, most of those students having come from two
10 universities.

11 The first is HACC, represented by Dr. Ski. It
12 makes sense that HACC would be one of the sending
13 institutions because they have nationally and, in fact,
14 internationally acclaimed online learning programs. And
15 they are nationally recognized for their success in taking
16 students to completion. So students who are comfortable in
17 an online learning environment, it would make sense that
18 they would be seeking out a degree completion program from
19 an online provider.

20 The second college that has a sending institution
21 to Southern New Hampshire is Montgomery County Community
22 College. That, in fact, is the college that had an
23 agreement with Southern New Hampshire prior to the statewide
24 agreement.

25 So I would say that as educators in public higher

1 ed, our mission and our goal is to ensure that our students
2 have the ability to attain their postsecondary goals. I am
3 happy to receive a proposal from all public higher education
4 institutions that want to provide a pathway for our
5 students.

6 Just last month, Dr. Stanley and Dr. Davis signed
7 an agreement with Robert Morris University in Western
8 Pennsylvania. We are anxious to provide these pathways to
9 our students and we will do it when we see that it is in
10 their best interest.

11 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: And I appreciate that.

12 And I know Dr. Stanley has a great agreement with
13 IUP. But my concern is, did you request proposals? Was
14 there a process? I mean, it just --

15 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: No.

16 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: -- seems to me to be
17 deeply concerning that, you know, at a time -- and in your
18 testimony, I believe you said there were about 23,000
19 students in the community college system that received
20 twenty-four, almost twenty-five million dollars in State
21 grants. Are they then taking these State grants and
22 basically paying tuition to a university outside of
23 Pennsylvania?

24 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: No. That's not how the
25 State Grant Program works. The Pennsylvania State Grant

1 Program is available to students who attend a college or
2 university in Pennsylvania.

3 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Okay. I see I'm out of
4 time. But I really think there's an opportunity here to
5 keep those tuition dollars in Pennsylvania. How long is
6 this contract?

7 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So this contract is for as
8 long as students want to. But I would encourage all higher
9 education institutions that are interested in providing a
10 pathway to community college students to submit a proposal.

11 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Okay. That's my only
12 point. I think we have an opportunity.

13 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: Agreed.

14 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: I appreciate if you'd
15 consider that in the future.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: Thank you.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Our next questioner is
19 Representative Kinhead.

20 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 Thank you all for joining us today. I actually
22 am going to segue right off of my colleague's questions. I
23 think they were very on point.

24 Can you speak to the transferability of credits
25 between community colleges in Pennsylvania and our PASSHE

1 and State-related schools? How easy is it under the current
2 system for students to have their credits recognized by our
3 Pennsylvania four-year universities?

4 DR. TUESDAY STANLEY: I just wanted to share a
5 story with you that's very recent. It's happening right
6 now.

7 We have a Westmoreland County Community College
8 student who came to us and did not know where he wanted to
9 transfer. And without that information upfront, you stand a
10 very, very high chance of losing your credits if you
11 transfer within Pennsylvania from a community college to any
12 university.

13 So unfortunately this young man applied to states
14 that are very transfer friendly, Florida, North Carolina.
15 And I believe he's going to land on going to Indiana
16 University in the state of Indiana. They didn't even blink
17 an eye. They accepted all of his credits without question.
18 He'll be entering with junior standing.

19 But the University of Florida, the University of
20 North Carolina, the University of Central Florida, and North
21 Carolina State also accepted all of his credits without
22 asking any questions.

23 Had he had that experience in Pennsylvania,
24 unfortunately again, he would have to know where he wanted
25 to go upon coming to us and then not veer from that path and

1 only go to the specific university that he had set up at the
2 beginning. That doesn't always happen for our students.
3 They don't always know or they change their mind and
4 unfortunately they would lose credits.

5 DR. ROGER DAVIS: I want to add to that.

6 My small institution Community College of Beaver
7 County, to be able to successfully transfer to four-year
8 institutions we've had to create 600 individual articulation
9 agreements and keep them current. So the transfer is very
10 difficult and the process is fraught with difficulty, not
11 just for the student but also for the institution.

12 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Thank you.

13 And as a followup to that, can you speak to the
14 accreditation process? Who accredits your programs and how
15 does that compare to our four-year universities and their
16 accreditation process?

17 DR. ROGER DAVIS: I can take that one.

18 So we're accredited by Middle States. And all
19 institutions in this region primarily are accredited by
20 middle states. Middle States was a regional accreditor and
21 now is a national accreditor. But most institutions in the
22 state are under Middle States.

23 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: And there are six
24 accrediting agencies across the country. We are one of the
25 six. So four year, two year, and even some high schools are

1 accredited through those accrediting bodies.

2 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: So the accreditation
3 process for the community colleges that you represent are
4 the same as the four-year universities?

5 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Yes.

6 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: So largely transfer of
7 credits should be pretty easy?

8 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Yes.

9 REPRESENTATIVE KINKEAD: Okay. Thank you.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks the lady
12 and recognizes the gentleman from Lancaster, Mr. Greiner.

13 REPRESENTATIVE GREINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 And thank you, everybody, for being here today.

15 I do want to echo what my prior colleague said.
16 I do think it's important.

17 First of all, I think the community colleges do
18 an outstanding job here in the Commonwealth. I obviously --
19 Dr. Ski is here. And I appreciate HACC in my district.
20 It's an asset to not only Pennsylvania but to the local
21 community. And I do hope that those credits -- we can find
22 a way to get credits transferred to schools in Pennsylvania
23 because there is a demand for workers and they're usually
24 outstanding students.

25 What I wanted to talk about today though goes

1 back to the COVID situation. The community colleges have
2 received a great deal of money from the Federal Government
3 through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, which
4 was part of not only the CARES Act but also most recently
5 the CRRSA Act. And it is my understanding when you receive
6 this money that at least half of it had to be awarded as
7 Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students, over half of it.

8 My question to you would be how do you determine
9 which students get those grants and then how much those
10 grants will be?

11 DR. ROGER DAVIS: First of all, thank you,
12 Representative, for your support of HACC.

13 Second of all, we had a committee that came
14 together following the guidelines from the Federal
15 Government that gave us more or less some wide-range ability
16 to decide on the amount, the number of students, the type of
17 students, that type of thing. And so we, and I think my
18 colleagues, all kind of did it a little differently. But we
19 ended up using students who were Pell eligible, on Pell, and
20 a few other variety of issues and ways that they were able
21 to gain those dollars, especially those that were majorly
22 disadvantaged throughout the COVID experience.

23 And so on average our students received about
24 \$2,000 from the first. We have not distributed anything of
25 the second CARES Act 2, if you will. This is just the first

1 round of the CARES Act 1 that we distributed.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GREINER: So each one of -- I
3 mean, across the board average would have gotten \$2,000?

4 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: At our institution, yes,
5 sir.

6 REPRESENTATIVE GREINER: Higher institutions.
7 Okay.

8 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Yes, sir.

9 REPRESENTATIVE GREINER: Okay. And then the
10 remaining money, what is that used for?

11 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: At our institution, the
12 money is being used for a variety of issues to take care of
13 some operating expenses that have been caused by the
14 pandemic but also technology. Technology has become so
15 critical for us to invest in so that we are able to continue
16 to offer our students the laptops, the hot spots. Because
17 as you may know, broadband is weak in many areas of the
18 Commonwealth.

19 And so we have used a lot of that money for
20 technology, both hardware, software, as well as for our
21 equipment on the campus, because we have about 10 percent of
22 our campus that is active with health care students,
23 manufacturing students, those types of things. So we're
24 using it for UV equipment. We're using it for protective
25 equipment. We're using it for a variety of those types of

1 issues.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GREINER: Thank you for that
3 answer.

4 And you're correct. The broadband issue is
5 important not only for myself but for a lot of my
6 colleagues, you know, for a variety of issues, not only for
7 college students but for high school and even elementary
8 schools students.

9 This session, our first piece of legislation we
10 passed was on how to spend the Federal Corona Relief Funds.
11 And we had earmarked \$14 million to go to the community
12 colleges. And my question is, have you received that money
13 yet and if you did not, do you know when you plan on
14 receiving it?

15 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: The colleges have not
16 received that money yet. We were in conversation with the
17 Department of Education last month. They indicated that
18 they were in the process of making a mechanism for us to
19 access those funds.

20 REPRESENTATIVE GREINER: That's good to know.

21 And just in conclusion, I do want to say what I
22 did before. I think our community colleges are a valuable
23 asset to this state and I think it's a great step.
24 Actually, to graduate is great, but it also provides a great
25 stepping stone for those that want to continue to a

1 four-year degree. So I applaud you for all your efforts.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE GREINER: And thank you, Mr.
5 Chairman.

6 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks the
7 gentleman and recognizes the lady from Dauphin, Ms. Kim.

8 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Thank you, Vice Chairman.

9 Good afternoon. I would just like to echo what
10 my colleagues have said. I really appreciate the role
11 community colleges play in the Commonwealth. It's a bridge
12 that can lead to other higher education institutions or
13 helps non-traditional students get a certificate later in
14 life because life happened.

15 I know many of my constituents attend HACC at the
16 Harrisburg campus and it's been instrumental in their career
17 upward mobility. So I thank you, everyone, for your hard
18 work.

19 It looks like your Commission requested a 5
20 percent increase or a \$12 million increase in the budget.
21 As you know, you are flat-funded. I believe workforce
22 development is key to helping us get back to work
23 postpandemic. It is essential to get people out of their
24 minimum wage dead-end jobs.

25 Could you tell us the challenges to update

1 workforce training or technical certification and align them
2 with local and statewide industry needs? And I'd like to
3 direct that to Dr. Ski.

4 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Thank you,
5 Representative.

6 And thank you for your support as well.

7 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Sure.

8 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: What HACC is doing in
9 regard to -- what we are finding is the need for investment
10 in equipment is one area so that we are able to stay state
11 of the art, as individuals are coming to us to be trained or
12 retained, re-skilled or up-skilled, as they move into
13 organizations, companies in your service region, such as
14 some of the larger manufacturing companies and other
15 organizations.

16 For us it's really the equipment that is the most
17 expensive and that needs to remain most current.

18 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: I thank you for that.

19 Dr. Davis, could you tell me a little bit more
20 about the impact of COVID on your campus in regards to, you
21 know, enrollment, employment, and other costs?

22 DR. ROGER DAVIS: Yes. When the COVID crisis
23 occurred, we had to furlough approximately one-third of our
24 workforce. We've laid off 10 percent of our full-time
25 workforce. We have lost over 200 students. You may ask me,

1 well, did you reach out? Yes. My faculty reached out to
2 all 200 students that did not return from the fall to the
3 spring. And at some level, they're at their capacity. They
4 do not have the technology at home. They only have one
5 computer that their child is using for K-12.

6 And so it's been pretty devastating to our
7 institution. And yet we're still trying to future proof the
8 institution as we move forward. But these are dire times
9 for our institution as this crisis has impacted not just
10 institutions but really our entire community.

11 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: President, I know some of
12 your frustrations. You know, community colleges have played
13 an important role, as we have all reiterated. But, you
14 know, PASSHE gets all the attention right now because
15 they're in need. Erie Community College was thrilled to
16 have theirs. You know, funding is going there. You guys
17 have just stayed steady in the work that you're doing but
18 you have costs as well. And again, it's a gem in my
19 community.

20 President, can you tell me what your predictions
21 are? I know that enrollment went down because of COVID.
22 But, you know, during the last recession, you might have had
23 increased enrollment. What are your predictions? I know
24 you don't have a crystal ball in front of you. But what are
25 your predictions in your future for community colleges?

1 DR. ROGER DAVIS: And we all did -- we did
2 predict that students were going to return. This was our
3 moment, we thought. But remember, COVID impacted the
4 poorest students. And the poorest students attend community
5 colleges.

6 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Right.

7 DR. ROGER DAVIS: This is the population that is
8 suffering the most. And so they no longer can take care of
9 their children and try to find employment and take care of
10 their parents and still sustain. And so what we're
11 predicting is students will move to a much more part-time
12 basis.

13 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Okay.

14 DR. ROGER DAVIS: And it will be a slower drive
15 to the ultimate goal of some type of credential. That is
16 one of the areas.

17 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Okay.

18 DR. ROGER DAVIS: But I think what it has helped
19 the community colleges do is we have reinvented ourselves.
20 There is no sector that can pivot like we can pivot. And so
21 one of my dreams was to get my faculty trained to teach
22 online. And that was a big dream. Well, it happened
23 because of COVID-19.

24 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Ms. Bolden, if you wanted to
25 comment and then I will end my questioning.

1 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: Thank you for that
2 question.

3 You know, our crystal ball is not very clear.
4 But what concerns us really is the impact that this has on
5 our students and their reluctance to enroll in postsecondary
6 study. Enrollment is down, which is different than what
7 happens in a normal recession.

8 We think anecdotally -- and every President here
9 can tell you -- that it's because they're suffering.
10 They're afraid. They're not sure that it's going to be
11 worth it. They're not sure what job they're going to get at
12 the end of all of this.

13 And so we really need to do work in helping
14 people to understand the value of postsecondary study and
15 helping them to understand that there are short-term
16 credentials and training programs available that can help
17 them re-skill and up-skill and immediately enter the
18 workforce.

19 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Thank you.

20 Thank you, Vice Chairman.

21 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks the lady
22 and recognizes the gentleman from Venango, Mr. James.

23 REPRESENTATIVE JAMES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Ladies and gentlemen, welcome.

25 I have one -- well, no. Let me restart.

1 I'm going to drill down just a little bit more on
2 inter-college relationships, if I may, just to clarify a few
3 things. A couple years ago, questioning revealed that there
4 were difficulties in collaboration between the community
5 colleges and the other four-year schools, primarily, I think
6 is what we're talking about.

7 Now, I don't know whether we're all playing well
8 in the sandbox yet or not, but I would love to hear from one
9 of you about what the current state of affairs is,
10 especially with regard to the transfer of credits.

11 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So honestly, it's complex.
12 We have a system in Pennsylvania that is not built on
13 collaboration and partnerships. It's built on competition.
14 We have a very decentralized higher education system.

15 So while at the local level there are some very
16 good partnerships, which the presidents here can talk to you
17 about, on a statewide level, we struggle to have a higher
18 education system that works well in the best interest of
19 students. And I think it's due to the competition for
20 students and the competition for funds.

21 REPRESENTATIVE JAMES: I'm a Clarion University
22 alum. And when asked those questions -- or when I ask those
23 questions of other trustees and the presidents, I'm assured
24 that that situation is not the case at Clarion University.

25 Would anyone care to comment on that? You're

1 welcome to dodge the question if you want.

2 DR. TUESDAY STANLEY: So I don't know if I'd
3 speak directly to Clarion. I would say that our
4 relationship with all of the universities within our area is
5 very strong individually.

6 But again, there's only so much that can be done
7 on an institution-by-institution basis. And I've seen and
8 lived and worked in higher ed in states where it is
9 legislatively mandated that you have the universities accept
10 the associate's degree intact. That works extremely well
11 for students and it saves taxpayer dollars, as students are
12 not duplicating coursework at institutions that are
13 supported by taxpayers.

14 So I think our relationships are strong, but
15 they're individual relationships with individual
16 institutions.

17 REPRESENTATIVE JAMES: I was always led to
18 believe that it was a matter of course content. Do you
19 think you have that issue resolved in regard to transfer
20 eligibility?

21 DR. TUESDAY STANLEY: So what typically happens
22 is that the faculty have to agree that your course is equal
23 to. And they go course by course. And therein lies the
24 problem and why the states who are really doing this very
25 well require legislation.

1 DR. ROGER DAVIS: I do want to say Clarion has
2 done a wonderful job with my institution. We have an ADN,
3 Associate Degree in Nursing, a BSN, and they take up to 90
4 credits from CCBC. And then we do teach the remaining
5 courses at our campus sometimes.

6 If you want to solve the problem with
7 transferability, you should look at SUNY, the State
8 University of New York System. They have a two-plus-two
9 path. They take any student that has a two-year degree from
10 a community college and you go at junior status to the
11 four-year institution.

12 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: And, sir, I won't repeat
13 what my colleagues have said that I agree with. I just want
14 you to know that Millersville University and Shippensburg
15 University have an excellent relationship with HACC.

16 REPRESENTATIVE JAMES: Okay. We can build on
17 that. Thank you very much.

18 I did a little mathematics, too. One of the
19 selling points -- what is it? Southern New Hampshire
20 University was the low expense per credit hour. And I did
21 the math on Clarion and it actually came in a little bit
22 lower than the 288 that New Hampshire is bragging about.

23 I was going to ask a question on that
24 accreditation agreement or articulation agreement as well.
25 But the last thing I would like to clear up, about a month

1 ago we had another hearing in which different facts came out
2 then than are coming out today from your testimony here,
3 which I read. And you guys are doing a great job.

4 I was led to believe that there were possibly as
5 many as 50,000 Pennsylvania students now leaving
6 Pennsylvania after their two-year experience to go to any
7 other state, not just Southern New Hampshire. Your
8 testimony suggests that number is more like 500. Can you
9 help me out? They don't balance, clearly.

10 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So I do not know how many
11 students are going elsewhere across the country. That's not
12 a question I have been asked.

13 I can tell you that pursuant to the Southern New
14 Hampshire agreement there have been 56 students who have
15 transferred pursuant to the agreement. Now, if there are
16 students who attended a community college in Pennsylvania
17 and subsequently went somewhere else and then transferred to
18 Southern New Hampshire, they would not be reflected in my
19 count.

20 I don't dispute the numbers that you have. I can
21 only give you the numbers that I have. However, I'd be
22 happy to follow up with you on that.

23 REPRESENTATIVE JAMES: Well, I appreciate your
24 answer. It doesn't clear it up for me, but I appreciate
25 your answer.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, panel.

REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: The Chair thanks the gentleman and recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Mr. Webster.

REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon to our esteemed panel here.

I may be beating a dead horse so excuse me for a minute. I'm a new guy to the Appropriations Committee and fairly new here in the House.

I keep running into things like Pennsylvania is one of two states that something. In this case, Pennsylvania is one of two states that doesn't support dual enrollment of high school students and college students. We just went through a long discussion of the other side of that, the articulation from your institutions to four-year schools, etc.

My question is kind of pretty broad. We're sitting in a budget hearing. Is this a budget issue that we're talking about? Are we creating barriers in our budgets that we administratively can't do these things?

MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So you are correct. We are one of two states that doesn't have a State-funded or coordinated dual enrollment program. And I think where it intersects with the appropriations process is that in other

1 states, State funding is provided or redirected to allow
2 students to participate in dual enrollment because, of
3 course, someone has to pay for it. Community colleges
4 cannot give away their credits for free. And the presidents
5 here can speak to that more specifically.

6 DR. ROGER DAVIS: Dual enrollment is a pathway,
7 one, out of poverty, right. Even at the freshmen level,
8 high school students can take dual enrollment courses. It's
9 discounted at the community college level, which gives a
10 student a pathway quickly so that by the time they graduate
11 from high school -- and some states the student is
12 graduating with a high school diploma and an associate's
13 degree at the same time.

14 We are finding in Beaver -- we have a dual
15 enrollment program in high school and we have a high school
16 academy. So after their junior and senior year, they have
17 one year of college complete.

18 My famous story very quickly, Peyton (inaudible).
19 He did the high school academy as a pilot. He then came and
20 did his one year with us. He got his associate's degree.
21 He went and got his bachelor's degree on our campus at
22 Southern Illinois University. And then he is now a private
23 pilot flying jets at 24 years of age. You cannot do it any
24 faster without dual enrollment.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: That's a great story.

1 I'm going to switch just a little bit because
2 this is all connected and I'm trying to pull the thread
3 through in my own brain.

4 At the same time, your request in the budget this
5 year is to be allowed to credit baccalaureate degrees. So
6 we're creating -- at least in my assessment, I hear the
7 PASSHE counselors come in and talk about wanting to do more
8 hands-on trade kinds of degrees and you're interested. So
9 where's the balance?

10 I think you've already said -- Elizabeth Bolden,
11 you already said that this is a competition model, right?
12 And we seem to be creating more of that.

13 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: Right. And I think that's
14 a good question about how can the Commonwealth make the best
15 use of its public higher education institutions. And with
16 the levels of student debt that we see in Pennsylvania, I
17 think it is worth considering whether community colleges
18 should be authorized to award applied baccalaureate degrees
19 and programs that aren't available in the four-year
20 institutions particularly because we know many of our
21 students are place bound and simply can't afford the tuition
22 at some of those baccalaureate degree granting institutions.

23 And I also think it's a question of fairness. If
24 four-year institutions in Pennsylvania are being given
25 increased flexibility to offer both baccalaureate and

1 associate's degrees but community colleges are being
2 hamstrung and told you must stay in this lane, you can't do
3 anything else, we're missing an opportunity to utilize all
4 of the expertise that community colleges have in this space
5 in providing programs and degrees that are aligned with
6 workforce needs.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: Would anyone else like
8 to address that?

9 I guess I'll take one more step on this. It is
10 interesting to me, I guess, historically. Again, this is
11 all coming on my learning curve here. Historically our
12 system was set up that the State would provide 33 percent of
13 the funding and a local sponsor 33 percent and then the
14 student would be responsible.

15 I have a young man who is at Montgomery County
16 Community College. I'm curious now personally but obviously
17 from our committee perspective of how that trend is going.
18 I would expect that probably we're not funding 33 percent
19 from the State, but what are the local sponsors providing as
20 well?

21 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So the State share is
22 currently at 22 percent. And in order to bring the State
23 share up to the one-third, we would need approximately 107
24 million more dollars than we are currently receiving.

25 In Fiscal Year '19-'20, local sponsors provided

1 approximately 11.9 percent on average. That ranges from a
2 low of 2.6 percent to a high of 22.4 percent. So it does
3 vary across the state depending on the capacity of the local
4 sponsor.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEBSTER: And I guess I'll close
6 my comments by echoing what Dr. Davis started his answer
7 with. And obviously when that falls on the student to make
8 up the difference, that's not a pathway out of poverty.
9 That's a pathway to debt.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Next is Representative
12 Greg Rothman.

13 REPRESENTATIVE ROTHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Presidents, if the rest of your presidents are as
15 good as President Ski, our citizens are in great shape. I'm
16 a former student at HACC. And I want to thank you for all
17 you do. You all play a very important role in education.

18 I want to go back to the high school students.
19 Several years ago we heard that in some areas of the state,
20 the high school guidance counselors at the time, that there
21 wasn't collaboration and that there wasn't cooperation and
22 you weren't attending college fairs.

23 Has that changed over the years? Any of you can
24 answer it.

25 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Well, Mr. Rothman, first

1 of all, thank you very much for your support. We appreciate
2 you.

3 I will say that for us in our region, we have a
4 good working relationship with our guidance counselors in
5 our 65 high schools, some more than others, of course. But
6 especially in Cumberland Valley, which is where you
7 represent, we are very closely aligned with those guidance
8 counselors.

9 So I would say maybe over the last several years
10 there has been more intention in engaging with those
11 counselors.

12 REPRESENTATIVE ROTHMAN: Thank you.

13 Again, I would just -- if there's anything that
14 we can do as a General Assembly to help to get -- I had a
15 daughter who took an accounting class and is now at Penn
16 State, but, unfortunately, they wouldn't accept her credits.
17 But what we can do to help get -- at least encourage the
18 schools to accept those credits. But that's no complaint of
19 you.

20 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Mr. Rothman, if I can
21 add. You know, the high school counselors have a very
22 difficult job, maybe one of the most difficult jobs in K-12,
23 because they're dealing with an awful lot of students. In
24 many cases they're dealing with the top 10 percent of the
25 students and maybe the bottom 10 percent. So there's that

1 neglected majority in the middle.

2 And so what some of us are trying to do is maybe
3 look at moving our advisors into the advising unit of those
4 high schools to be able to help those departments out. I
5 know it's something that we're moving towards doing. That
6 may provide assistance.

7 REPRESENTATIVE ROTHMAN: All right. Well, thank
8 you for your time today. We appreciate what you do.

9 Thank you.

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Our next questioner is
11 Representative Clint Owlett.

12 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: Thank you so much for
13 being here. We really appreciate you coming in. This is
14 great to have you here today. Welcome.

15 I want to talk a little bit -- I noticed your
16 passion, which I love to see that. And I want to talk a
17 little bit about workforce development. We touched on it
18 just briefly with one of my colleagues.

19 But could you talk a little bit -- maybe each one
20 of you because I imagine it's just a little bit different
21 for each of you. How do you engage with workforce, you
22 know, across the Commonwealth to make sure that we're
23 preparing our students, not only for the jobs of today but
24 the jobs of tomorrow? What does that look like? How do you
25 engage with these industries and these employers on a yearly

1 basis or whatever to make sure that we're hitting it, you
2 know, hitting the nail on the head, as far as making sure
3 students are ready for those future jobs?

4 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: So what we'll do at HACC
5 is we provide an opportunity for employers from the
6 different sectors to come together in a focus group -- and
7 we do that four times a year -- where we're able to
8 understand what their current needs are, as well as what
9 their future needs are.

10 And what we will do from a non-credit perspective
11 is we may develop a program that ultimately may move into a
12 credit program. But we are trying to stay very close to the
13 employers, understand what their training and education
14 needs are, and then offer either credit or non-credit at the
15 workplace or on our properties.

16 We pretty much, all 14 of us, do share in that.
17 How we go about doing it will vary. But at least for us
18 we're trying to stay very close to the employer.

19 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: A student could go back
20 and forth a little bit?

21 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Yes, sir. It's called a
22 stackable credential in many ways. A very good example is
23 we have a young lady who got her Certified Nursing Assistant
24 Degree, then went for a Licensed Practical Nursing, and now
25 is a Registered Nurse and I understand will be getting her

1 Bachelor's in Science of Nursing at one of the PASSHE
2 schools this coming May, so kind of stackable.

3 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: Thank you.

4 DR. TUESDAY STANLEY: So I would share a couple
5 of examples of how this is going very well. We have an
6 Advanced Technology Center. We went into the Sony Plant
7 that moved out of Westmoreland County.

8 We have -- we are not an incubator. We're an
9 accelerator. We have two companies that have business
10 within the Advanced Technology Center. One is Tronix3D.
11 It's a 3D manufacturing company. The other is (inaudible),
12 which is a CNC company. They're mid-sized companies and
13 that partnership is very important to us. They hire our
14 students. They also allow our students to do internships
15 there. And in turn, we also get their input on what is the
16 latest in the industry so we keep current.

17 With that said, I would say we have a little bit
18 more work to do in particular in southwestern Pennsylvania.
19 There's a misalignment between what our young people are
20 studying and the high-demand, high-wage careers within our
21 region. And so our ability to be able to educate entire
22 families that make that decision collectively on what a
23 student studies is very important to us.

24 DR. ROGER DAVIS: At my institution we have a
25 40-member advisory board that's made up of companies like

1 Shell, of course, Nova Chemicals, VASF, Marathon, and they
2 come together just like Ski multiple times a year to talk
3 about the industry.

4 One of the deliverables they gave us was that if
5 you want to retool or enter into the energy and advanced
6 manufacturing industry, you have to still have a job to do
7 that. And so we created a new model with the National
8 Science Foundation Grant called FEFE, it's Flexible Entry,
9 Flexible Exit. It allows a student to enter anytime the
10 semester starts. You work at your own pace. You only come
11 to the campus to do the lab work on the weekends or by
12 appointment.

13 That was from the industry telling us you have to
14 pivot somehow and be more creative if you want students to
15 enter into these careers. So that's one example I wanted to
16 share.

17 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: If I could just finish
18 with one last one. One of the popular areas is
19 apprenticeship. And it's something that we know is an
20 age-old process for individuals. We, and I know many of my
21 colleagues here as well, we are offering apprenticeship
22 opportunities for EMTs. We're offering them for hotel
23 workers. We are now looking at medical assistance with a
24 group of hospitals to be able to offer an apprenticeship
25 program. So these individuals are able to work, earn a

1 living, as well as, you know, gain the credentials they need
2 for a good job.

3 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: Thank you so much for
4 staying super engaged, it sounds like, with our industry
5 leaders and employers. It really encourages me to see that
6 engagement because these students -- I mean, these are
7 great-paying jobs. And if they can get these certifications
8 or these degrees while working with some of these industry
9 leaders, I mean, that's a win-win for everybody.

10 When I visit employers, the No. 1 question is,
11 how do I find employees? I need help. Like, I need help
12 now. And to hear you're trying to make that connection is
13 encouraging to me and I'm sure it's encouraging to this
14 body.

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the time.

16 Thank you.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Next is Representative
18 Torren Ecker.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ECKER: All right. Thank you, Mr.
20 Chairman.

21 And thank you, folks, for being here in person.
22 I really, really appreciate that. It's nice to speak
23 directly to you.

24 Dr. Ski, you and I had a conversation about what
25 I'm going to ask last week, so you've got a little bit of a

1 primer for it. You know, this leads in right from my good
2 friend from Tioga County who talked about workforce
3 development and apprenticeship programs. Something I've
4 noticed in talking with some industry leaders, as we know,
5 agriculture is one of our No. 1 industries here in
6 Pennsylvania, but there doesn't seem to be a lot of options
7 necessarily through trade schools and through our community
8 colleges where I think really could be a great place for
9 people to get a certification, an apprenticeship, a two-year
10 degree in the agricultural community.

11 My question for you folks is, one, you know, what
12 your various colleges are doing in that ag arena, but, 2,
13 how can the industry advocate? You know, you talked about
14 manufacturing does a great job with its apprenticeship
15 programs. What can the industry, what can the agricultural
16 industry, do to get involved with community colleges?

17 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So I'd like to answer your
18 question in two ways.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ECKER: Sure.

20 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: The first is, what we have
21 found, because we do know and recognize that agriculture is
22 a signature industry for Pennsylvania, in our Mechatronics,
23 Robotics, Accounting, the entrepreneurship programs provide
24 students with transferable skills that they can use whether
25 they're working in agriculture or somewhere else because the

1 skills are the same. So we hope that we are providing
2 support to the agriculture industry in that way.

3 However, as you heard earlier, all of the
4 colleges do have industry advisory councils. So for any
5 industry that is looking for education and training, the
6 best way to get that is to approach the local community
7 college.

8 You know, recently Amazon partnered with Lehigh
9 Carbon Community College on a Robotics and Mechatronics
10 apprenticeship program. And that was not something that
11 Lehigh Carbon sought out. It is something that Amazon
12 approached the college for because of our reputation of
13 providing customized job training skills for employers who
14 are seeking that kind of training for their workers.

15 REPRESENTATIVE ECKER: Absolutely.

16 And I think, you know -- I think that's why a
17 community college is so great is that they're listening to
18 the communities they represent. Community colleges get it.

19 Really I guess, you know, my goal is to advocate
20 for the agricultural industry to reach out to you folks,
21 reach out to our local colleges, to get those opportunities.
22 Really I think you've done great things for the
23 manufacturing community. I'd like to see that happen in the
24 agricultural community as well.

25 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: Representative, again,

1 thank you for your support.

2 And as we talked about recently, we would very
3 much engage with whoever it is that you believe represents
4 that industry and to talk to them. We do have quite a
5 relationship with our apple growers and our snack food
6 companies in Hanover and the Adams County area.

7 We'd be happy to be able to come together and
8 listen and see what we might be able to do and maybe combine
9 all of our efforts to help.

10 REPRESENTATIVE ECKER: Great. I appreciate your
11 time.

12 Thanks.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Our next questioner is
14 Representative Doyle Heffley.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 And I just want to commend you all on being here
17 today. I think it's so important that we lead by example
18 and show people that we can do things in a safe way amongst
19 this COVID pandemic. So thank you for being here.

20 Obviously community colleges really are on the
21 front line in a lot of this education. I heard earlier a
22 comment that one of the great opportunities for lower income
23 families is dual enrollment programs between the high
24 schools and the community colleges.

25 Both of my daughters had went and done the dual

1 enrollment program, so it's good for everybody. Let me tell
2 you, I mean, the cost savings are significant, especially
3 when we're looking at, you know, how do we pay down student
4 debt, students that come out with six figures or pretty much
5 a mortgage payment in student debt. Meanwhile, if they
6 would have started taking classes in 9th Grade or 10th
7 Grade, dual enrollment programs, they could have had their
8 associate's.

9 I really think the model that we should be
10 focused on with our community colleges when kids graduate
11 high school, they should get their high school diploma and
12 their associate's degree at the same time. I think that's a
13 goal. I think it's an achievable goal and something that we
14 really should be pushing for.

15 With that, do the community colleges still run
16 into issues with schools not wanting to partner with that
17 dual enrollment opportunity for their students with the
18 public schools?

19 DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI: I can speak from Central
20 Pennsylvania. The answer would be no. We serve 65 high
21 schools, high school districts. And all of them are very
22 open to dual enrollment.

23 I will say in the last several years, the dual
24 enrollment landscape has become more competitive because
25 more and more of the four-year institutions realize that it

1 is a good marketing campaign as well. And so we notice in
2 some of our larger high schools within our district that we
3 have more competition than we ever did before.

4 However, our price, \$375 for a college course, is
5 still less expensive than some of our four-year brothers.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: And competition always
7 makes things better, so I love it. And I think that's
8 definitely the model that we should be going for, a
9 significant savings.

10 Now, one other thing. A lot of the classes that
11 they take, that the students can take at the community
12 college, also can count for their high school credits. How
13 do we message that and how can we do a better job getting
14 that information out to families?

15 I learned a lot from my daughter. When she went
16 through the program, I learned a lot about how this program
17 works and the benefits of it. But what can we do to better
18 promote this? That's where the cost savings really comes in
19 for the families and those students.

20 DR. ROGER DAVIS: One, I would encourage the
21 legislation to consider to fund it. Fund dual enrollment.
22 That will get the message out.

23 In my institution we only have 14 school
24 districts. We have 54 agreements with schools across the
25 state for dual enrollment. So that's how well it's going

1 with Beaver County.

2 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: We have a little bit of
3 time yet.

4 So with dual enrollment programs, there's two
5 parts of it. One, you have the dual enrollment with the
6 public school, the high school, with the community college.
7 And then you also have the dual enrollment with the
8 community college. And the secondary could be Penn State,
9 Temple, any of the State university schools, where students
10 can actually take courses on campus at a community college
11 that count towards those State schools or online and never
12 have to set foot on a State university property. Therefore,
13 they're living at home. They're working a job. They're not
14 acquiring all that debt to pay for lodging, you know,
15 charging up their meals on a credit card, so to speak, to
16 pay that off.

17 What more can we do on the second step, the dual
18 enrollment between a community college and the other State
19 or affiliated universities?

20 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So, Representative
21 Heffley, the best example that I can think of is the
22 agreement between Delaware County Community College and West
23 Chester University which allows students to continue taking
24 courses at Delaware County Community College by West Chester
25 faculty. It helps those students make the transition from

1 Delaware County Community College to West Chester.

2 It would be a good thing for Pennsylvania
3 students if an agreement like that could be scaled
4 statewide.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Thank you.

6 I think that's definitely the model that I have
7 pursued for my daughters as they're going through this.
8 And, yes, you're exactly right. My daughter graduated. I
9 think she got her Bachelor's degree a year and a half after
10 graduating from high school and it just really put her far
11 ahead and she's got a great job now. That's what we should
12 be pushing. The shorter time that students are spending in
13 the classroom in higher education, the less debt they're
14 going to have to pay back.

15 Thank you very much.

16 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Next is Representative
17 Longietti.

18 REPRESENTATIVE LONGIETTI: Thank you all for
19 being here today.

20 So we know that there's significant learning loss
21 that has occurred this year among education in the pandemic.
22 And I'm thinking particularly about high school seniors that
23 will be transitioning hopefully to higher education. You
24 mentioned it's hard to predict right now but enrollment data
25 doesn't look like where we might think that it would be

1 particularly in times like these.

2 Tell me a little bit about opportunities to
3 remediate those students so that they are ready for higher
4 education, for community college, and whether there's
5 partnerships available or you can envision partnerships with
6 school districts and try to get students ready so they can
7 come to community colleges. I know you all work in that
8 space traditionally. So I'm just interested in what your
9 thoughts are.

10 DR. TUESDAY STANLEY: So a key point of community
11 colleges is we meet students where they are and get them to
12 where they need to be. And so during any particular time
13 throughout the years we have done that work and will
14 continue to do that for the benefit of the students and the
15 Commonwealth.

16 REPRESENTATIVE LONGIETTI: I appreciate that.

17 Would anybody else like to comment on that?

18 MS. ELIZABETH BOLDEN: So I can share with you a
19 model that's being used in Northampton County Community
20 College. They are working very closely with their school
21 district, even before the pandemic, to bring students who
22 weren't college ready exposure to college-level coursework
23 to make sure they were college ready.

24 So embedding community college curriculum in the
25 high school, moving college courses into their senior year

1 in high school are all things that can be done.

2 I think the Commonwealth should explore some sort
3 of bridge opportunities, particularly this summer, because
4 as you point out, we are concerned about the potential
5 learning loss. And it's not the student's fault. We want
6 them to succeed in their first semester of college. We know
7 that that is a really important milestone.

8 And so to the extent that we can incentivize
9 school districts and community colleges to work together to
10 ensure that everyone is ready for fall 2021, I think that
11 would be a good use of our time.

12 REPRESENTATIVE LONGIETTI: Very good. Thank you.

13 I think there's a terrific opportunity there.
14 And maybe, you know, just thinking about it, maybe there's
15 some hesitancy, too, some lack of confidence in some high
16 school students graduating that, you know, they don't think
17 they're quite ready yet because of everything that has
18 happened. We need to make sure that they have the supports
19 necessary so that they can have that confidence and be
20 successful.

21 Thank you.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Next is Representative
23 Mako.

24 REPRESENTATIVE MAKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 And, Presidents, thank you for being here.

1 Well, I do have to say that all my questions were
2 already asked prior to me getting up here, so I guess this
3 will just be a shameless plug for the community colleges.

4 First off, the two that are in my backyard,
5 Lehigh Community College and Northampton Community College,
6 which I am a grad, Dr. Erickson is doing a great job. Two
7 anecdotes just mentioned about how great they are.

8 I just want to say that when we do talk to
9 community college presidents, like yourselves, we always get
10 a good sense of what's going on and then there's always a
11 helpful hint, like, hey, did you know that we were doing
12 this? And I always love talking to the community college
13 presidents just for that reason. You are always going above
14 and beyond.

15 One of the things that I didn't even know about
16 was advocating for, as Dr. Ski said, his advisors in high
17 schools. I think that is a great idea to get out ahead of
18 this, help the advisors in the high schools. As you
19 mentioned earlier, they're outnumbered. And they absolutely
20 need the help. So I think that's a great idea.

21 Not only are you doing that, but then you're
22 advocating to the four-year schools saying, hey, take the
23 college credits that we're offering these kids. And I think
24 on a state level, that's something that we definitely need
25 to take a look at. These kids are going to school as I did.

1 I transferred from Northampton Community College to Kutztown
2 and they accepted my credits. No doubt that was the work of
3 the presidents talking to the PASSHE system and the State
4 related saying, hey, we should probably do this to keep us
5 in the system. I thought it was a great program and it
6 worked out and I finished my bachelor's on time and really
7 appreciated that.

8 That's all I had for you. I just wanted to say
9 that the community colleges are always out in front. And I
10 think they're doing great work and continue to work. Let us
11 know what we can do to help you continue doing that.

12 Thank you.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: So I'm the last
14 person. I have no questions.

15 But I do want to say that we're very blessed in
16 Pennsylvania. All of you have done an outstanding job
17 today. I've been tickled to hear what each of you have had
18 to say about what you're doing to work with school districts
19 and students.

20 You know, one of the biggest complaints I've had
21 -- and I've served with Elizabeth as a Commissioner on the
22 Commission of Education in the state -- has been the fact
23 that, you know, too many of our college students, four-year
24 college students, come out of college and don't work in the
25 field they get a degree in.

1 You really have been meeting the needs of
2 Pennsylvania's industry and real job creation. You really
3 have. Between you and the trade schools, you are the
4 backbone of our Pennsylvania economy. And I want to thank
5 you for all you do and how you guys have been working and
6 partnering with everybody to make our students successful.

7 I think that if more parents would realize this,
8 they could save a lot of money. They would put their
9 students in community college for two years and then ship
10 them off to a four-year degree if they wanted.

11 We know many kids don't really decide until
12 probably the second or third year that they really know what
13 they want to do. Some go to college and spend two years
14 there and decide to drop out because it's not for them.

15 So I want to thank all of you because you're
16 saving taxpayers of Pennsylvania a lot of money. You're
17 getting our students real jobs, good family-sustaining jobs.
18 And you need to be applauded for that. I thank you.

19 I know Representative Bradford and I are very
20 proud of the fact that we were able to amend Senate Bill 109
21 and make sure we got you dollars, Federal dollars.

22 Matt, I'm sure you agree with me. That was one
23 of our great successes this year already.

24 So, again, good luck. God bless. We'll look
25 forward to bragging about you a little more as we go along.

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Thank you.

Also, tomorrow this Committee will reconvene at 10 a.m. to do the Department of Labor and Industry. I want to remind everybody all the remaining Budget Hearings will take place here on the House Floor.

With that, this meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the hearing concluded.)

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I hereby certify that the proceedings and
evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes
taken by me on the within proceedings and that this is a
correct transcript of the same.

Jean M. Davis
Notary Public