

## P20 Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** April 14, 2023

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**Location:** Blue Ridge Community College

### In Attendance

Amy Barry, Brittany Brady, Dr. Michael Dempsey, Dr. Joseph Fox (consultant), Mark Garrett, Dr. John Gossett, Dr. Laura Leatherwood, Dr. Gene Loflin, Greg Lowe, Emily Nicholson (staff), Nathan Ramsey, Dr. Kimberly van Noort, Melissa Zenz (staff)

*Guests: Ivry Cheeks (delegate for Dr. Mark Dickerson), Darrell Clark (delegate for Dr. Mark Dickerson), Kevan Frazier (delegate for Dr. Kelli Brown), Joseph Hough (delegate for Dr. Rob Jackson), Emily Martin (successor for Brittany Brady)*

### Welcome

Mr. Lowe opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Dr. Leatherwood welcomed attendees to the Blue Ridge Community College campus and provided information about the building and meeting space in which the Council was meeting. Mr. Lowe initiated introductions due to the presence of several guests.

### Agenda

Mr. Lowe quickly reviewed the agenda and explained next steps for obtaining signatures on the final policy priorities. Mrs. Nicholson added details. Mr. Lowe reminded attendees to be thinking about successors, as their terms will end on 6/30. He informed attendees what they would be working on today, and Mrs. Nicholson added details and context.

Mrs. Nicholson asked whether there were any questions. Dr. Dempsey asked about succession planning in the bylaws and whether a member could continue instead of being replaced. Mrs. Nicholson clarified that a member could continue and ideally positions would be filled by active members. Dr. Dempsey proposed that other employers be recruited, and Mr. Lowe asked the group for suggestions on how to include employers. Mr. Lowe offered to leverage his network.

Dr. Loflin recommended action teams not be restricted to P20 Council members, and he gave the example of financial aid counselors who could serve on the FAFSA action team. Mr. Lowe voiced alignment with including content experts, and Dr. Fox also concurred, as it would provide more opportunities for community and employer engagement. Mrs. Nicholson asked Dr. Fox how such involvement could be initiated: whether this group would identify people who are already doing the work or whether an open call would be made to the community. Dr. Fox suggested members of this group reach out to people they know already doing the work in the community.

Dr. Leatherwood said that a lot of engagement with employers is already happening outside of P20. Dr. Dempsey said that work should be celebrated as successes by the P20 Council. Mr. Lowe asked whether all these efforts could be coordinated. Mrs. Nicholson shared about the planned summit that will uplift the successes of the P20 Council organizations, and also said brainstorming needs to be done about how best to spread the word about all the work that is being done and about best practices. Dr. Fox said that the mode of communication matters and said students engage mostly with apps, but schools communicate mostly through websites, which students don't use. Dr. Leatherwood proposed surveying members to ask for a few initiatives they are doing for each bucket, and then using that information to seed a repository of work being done. Dr. Fox identified the need for Mrs. Nicholson to have staff support to create and sustain such a project.

Dr. van Noort cautioned about collecting data if it's not done strategically and thoughtfully. She stated the importance of revisiting the group's mission periodically to ensure the group is staying true. Dr. Fox said one challenge is that the P20 Council does not itself do programming; its main functions are to provide resources and to advocate for policies that support its member organizations. Mr. Lowe asked how the group can ask for funding if they don't know everything everyone is doing. Dr. van Noort agreed that they can't know where the gaps are if they don't know what everyone is doing. Dr. Fox concurred that that has been a significant challenge and said staff often find out about updates on the news rather than hearing them from members.

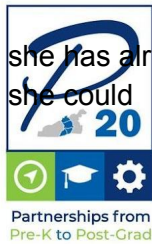
### **Workgroups**

Mrs. Nicholson explained the logistics of the next part of the meeting, in which the team would be moving upstairs to a different room and breaking out into their smaller action teams. Dr. Leatherwood noted that several action teams had only one member present, and Mrs. Nicholson said an Exec Comm/Steering Comm member could fill in. The team split out into small groups by action team to work through their assigned tasks.

### **Closing Comments and Adjourn**

After working for an hour in their small groups, the Council reconvened for a report-out. Mr. Ramsey initiated a discussion about the significant lack of childcare availability in the region, and several other attendees concurred and shared their experiences with having been on a dozen or more waiting lists. Dr. Fox said this reality reinforces the need for P20 to advocate for more funding for early childcare.

Ms. Barry suggested the Council consider revising the bylaws to stagger replacements rather than turn over the entire membership at the same time. Mrs. Nicholson said that issue could be addressed at the next meeting in July. Dr. Fox agreed with Ms. Barry, and he suggested an informal vote be taken today to see which members are planning to remain on-board. Dr. Leatherwood asked Mrs. Nicholson what she needed out of members, which could inform decisions about membership and potential successors. Dr. Dempsey said that Dr. Leatherwood's service is very valuable and would humbly request that she provide personnel that are experts in this area if she herself would not be continuing. Mrs. Nicholson replied that



she has already been working with at least one other person in nearly every represented organization and

she could 20



identify those people if necessary. She stressed the necessity of members being decision-makers, not just worker bees. Mr. Garrett asked whether attendance could be split such that the decision-maker attended perhaps annually while their worker bees attended the other meetings. Dr. Loflin shared the background that an original intention when the group was founded was for it to consist of decision-makers so that the work could get done.

Mrs. Nicholson moved to the next agenda item, which was to report on their small-group meetings. Ms. Martin spoke for the communications team, which recommended that P20 request funding for personnel support for Mrs. Nicholson, that marketing/communications focus more on role definition and what the Council is, and that P20 amplify existing programs rather than focusing on new ones. Mr. Ramsey spoke for the credentials team, which recommended spreading the word about the credentials list on the P20 website, potentially by having a lunch-and-learn with career center staff to learn about that resource and by offering opportunities for K-12/CC/Univ. career advisors to learn about it. Dr. Dempsey spoke for the policies team, which recommended refining/condensing the policies list so it would not overwhelm legislators, and identifying funding amounts, wherever possible. He stressed the need to get the info in front of legislators in a manner that works for them. Ms. Barry added her recommendation that focus be on only one SD in a particular meeting with a legislator. Dr. Loflin spoke for the FAFSA team, which recommended that AB Tech & BRCC have meetings with their high schools to inquire about barriers to FAFSA completion at those specific schools, that initiatives to address those specific issues then be implemented, that FAFSA be added to the personal finance course, that P20 support both a parent education campaign and a general education campaign about FAFSA, and that P20 continue to advocate for FAFSA simplification.

Mrs. Nicholson said that FAFSA completion had been mentioned specifically by the Council's main funder, JMBE, which asks frequently what the Council is doing to address that issue. Dr. Fox added that JMBE is especially interested in equity issues around FAFSA.

Dr. van Noort spoke for the benchmarking team, which recommended the previously proposed summit be held in the fall and invitations be sent to stakeholders from education and industry, as well as to legislators. She referenced the successful healthcare policy forum that had been held recently at UNCA and had been attended by ten members of the NCGA. She recommended the one-day event be held centrally, not at an educational institution, and that an admission fee should be charged. Dr. Leatherwood added that it would be great from an economic development standpoint by demonstrating that a 4-county region is collaborating on these issues.

Mrs. Nicholson asked whether there were any final questions or thoughts. Dr. Fox asked guests to share their initial impressions about P20. Ms. Martin said the meeting had been helpful in defining P20 for her, and Mr. Clark and Ms. Cheek both voiced their satisfaction with the meeting. Mr. Hough said he had been taking notes on how BCS specifically could be more involved.



Mrs. Nicholson thanked members and guests for their attendance and reminded members to follow up regarding their signatures. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

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## Next Meeting

TBD