Call to Order

Vice Chair Robert Moore called the March 11, 2002, meeting of the Committee on Economic Development and Vocational Education to order at 1:40 p.m.

Members Present

Robert L. Moore, Vice Chair
Desirree-Michelle Abshire
Annie R. Bird
Julie Korenstein
Irene M. Menegas
Patricia G. Siever

Members Absent

Amy B. Dean, Chair (excused)

Other Board Members Present

George T. Caplan
Brian E. Conley
Antonia Hernandez
Richard H. Leib
Melba Muscarolas
Catherine L. Unger
Leslie Wang

Presentation by
Former Senator Patrick Johnston

Chancellor Tom Nussbaum introduced former Senator Patrick Johnston, who has recently been assigned to head the Governor’s Workforce Development Initiative Task Force. Johnston reported that meetings are being held with various stakeholder groups on the Governor’s interest in looking at workforce programs. Johnston stated that, in light of the current budget situation, it is the intention of the Governor and the Legislature to identify efficiencies or better strategies for organizing delivery of public services and eliminating duplication of services. The Governor recognizes that workforce preparation is an important component of economic development and Johnson acknowledged that those workforce development programs are delivered at the state level through a variety of mechanisms, including state and federal funds.

Senator Johnston identified three major components of the Governor’s focus. The first involves the system of delivery, and what work has been done in recent years comparing clusters and regional economies that historically do not always comport with political boundaries, service delivery areas or community college districts. He described this as an asset for the community
colleges because of the system’s broad regional accessibility.

The second component is ensuring the non-duplication of services. He referenced “California Workforce Development: A Policy Framework for Economic Growth,” a collaborative report signed by Chancellor Nussbaum, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Trade and Commerce, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. It identified major agency responsibility for parts of workforce preparation and efficient coordination strategies in local and regional delivery of services and channeling of resources. Johnston stated that this is an opportunity to institutionalize effective system policy to ensure that all major units of state government that have money and responsibility work together.

The third component under review is evaluation. For the last five years, the Performance-Based Accountability (PBA) system has been used. Programs that are evaluated submit data on participants in order to compare it, through the Employment Development Department, with information on wages. These data make it possible to look at what a participant earned prior to and after leaving the program. Johnston stated that the PBA is a structured method used to account for the success of job training programs in employment achievement. An effective accountability-based system could lead to receipt of additional funding. Johnston stated that the Board’s “Ladders of Opportunity” report is a good start and added that he would like to see the California Community College system have a stronger measure of power and control, more discretion, and more funds for the purpose of controlling decisions on which best practices should be rewarded -- where funding may be directed in order to serve both the economic needs of the state and the region. Considering the fact that funding is distributed on a per capita basis currently, it is up to the system to solicit cooperation from the districts, and, where the state has new sources of funding, it should empower the Chancellor’s Office to direct the money and hold local districts accountable, either for participation locally or for direct delivery of services. Johnston recommended that future monies should be considered incentive monies, and that the Board of Governors and Chancellor’s Office continue critical oversight of funding distribution.

Chancellor Nussbaum said that he appreciated Senator Johnston’s remarks concerning a stronger measure of control for the Board of Governors and the Chancellor. He asked for clarification regarding the K-12 governance aspects of the Governor’s proposal. Johnston explained that high school programs would not be affected structurally or through funding by this review. There will not be recommendations that will result in altering the amount or the method by which K-12 districts deliver services to their high school population. He addressed and dispelled the current fears regarding removing control of vocational education programs from the K-12 system to community colleges, stating that this will not happen.

Member Moore asked Senator Johnston if he anticipated coming up with recommendations for the California Workforce Investment Board (CWIB) that would make that Board more impactful. Senator Johnston acknowledged that the CWIB and the Administration should work in concert, stating that the Workforce Investment Board serves as an advisory body, and because
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federal law dictates membership, it is very large. He added that he is more interested in seeing the work that the Chancellor’s Office accomplishes in pulling together the agencies that execute policy and, if that occurs, the advisory CWIB will find its recommendations being received in a more constructive manner. The timeline is extremely short, with recommendations anticipated in the month of April for consideration in the May Revise. The task force, comprised of Administration agency heads with the responsibility for job training programs, will meet and flesh out a report, revisiting the stakeholders, including the community colleges, for additional input the week of April 8.

President Leib noted that Member Dean was unable to attend due to flight delays, and shared her disappointment in missing this opportunity to discuss these critical issues impacting the career ladders approach with Senator Johnston.

Chancellor Nussbaum thanked Senator Johnston for providing the Board and Chancellor’s Office with the latest status and his insights.

5.1 Approval of Minutes

The committee approved the minutes of the January 14, 2002, meeting.

5.2 Workforce Development Initiative Implementation Plan

Victoria Morrow, vice chancellor of Educational Services and Economic Development, distributed a written update on the Governor’s Proposal, Improving California’s Workforce Development System.” She provided a briefing on the Johnston Workforce Development Review and Reform Task Force and explained how the workforce development initiative addresses the progress that has occurred and the ways that the initiative can move forward without additional funding.

Morrow encouraged the Board to review the list of accomplishments and outlined the three recommended approaches: 1) assessment of career ladders in the system; 2) policy and funding alignment; and 3) the active pursuit of all other opportunities to further a career ladders approach. On the assessment issue, Morrow noted that the Board has discussed possible assessment approaches. One of particular interest to Member Dean, and which has involved discussions with the Irvine Foundation to explore the possibility of its funding a “scan” of career ladders in the system. Member Dean sees this being accomplished independently by a contractor. Other approaches might rely upon MIS data and labor market information tools.

Vice Chancellor Morrow stated that this item recommends the immediate formation of a Consultation Task Force on Workforce Development for the purpose of providing advice to the Chancellor on the design of the assessment, the continued interaction with the Governor’s Task Force, and the development of common performance measures.

Addressing Member Siever’s request for clarification concerning the proposed assessment scan, Morrow explained that the term “scan” applies to: 1) the assessment of the degree to which the colleges are already utilizing career ladder approaches consistent with the Board’s Initiative; and 2) identification of best practices to assist with career ladder objectives on campuses where a gap in career ladder methodology is
evident. Siever asked what role the Chancellor’s Office would take in working with the Irvine Foundation in this assessment and Morrow stated that the Board should determine the definition of the role of an outside foundation in the process. Member Moore emphasized that this is an opportunity for the Board to express ideas in directing this endeavor. Siever stated that the Board would not be able to provide direction to staff unless Member Dean was present, unless Vice Chancellor Morrow advised which assessment approach, either in a systemwide and holistic manner or separately through the foundation, would be the most appropriate. Morrow emphasized that regardless of which assessment approach is chosen, the systemwide expertise would be important in the shaping of the assessment for the purpose of addressing questions from the Board and the field, assisting in the direction of future system action through policy and funding efforts, and prevention of additional workload for the colleges.

President Leib asked about Member Dean’s position on the requested Consultation Task Force and future assessment steps to be taken. Morrow advised that Chair Dean is eager to move forward with seeking foundation support for the purpose of providing independence to the effort and to capitalize on the interest that foundations are beginning to show in the California Community College system.

Chancellor Nussbaum clarified that, in addition to input from the system to the foundations, his staff would also play a role in coordination of system expertise with the foundations.

Member Moore stated that the decisions should include the formation of and charge to the Consultation Task Force. He cautioned that once funding has been appropriated from the foundation to conduct the assessment, system input is critical in determinations of what is assessed, how the process is to occur, what criteria will be used, and what results of the analysis will be commented on. Chancellor Nussbaum stated that it is equally critical that the Board of Governors and the system, through Consultation, have the ultimate say in terms of what the program standards will be within the education streams with which we are funded; and it is imperative that the system, through the proposed Consultation Task Force, review the program standards outlined in the item, for the purpose of identifying our version of accountability for funds under our jurisdiction. The Board advocated the task force approach proposed and encouraged Vice Chancellor Morrow to continue working with Chair Dean and the foundation contact in tandem to begin initial implementation with the collaboration of a Consultation Task Force.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Moore adjourned the meeting of the Committee on Economic Development and Vocational Education at 2:15 p.m.