

RECORD
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE
4.10.2013, 1 p.m., Little Rock Headquarters

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Commissioner Frazier, who noted the presence by phone of members Commissioners Malone and Shipp and of Commission Chairman Pickard. Also present were Director Woosley, Auditor Brown and staff members Baldrige, Block, Vick, Fetzer, Stebbins, Craig and others.

Discussion was begun regarding the development of an educational program supported by vendor grants to benefit Arkansas high school students. Commissioner Frazier said the years-old need for remediation in many Arkansas schools is well-known, and that he supports assisting students in schools with a high remediation rate. He asked Commissioner Pickard, with whom the plan originated, to bring the other members up to date.

Commissioner Pickard said that he had received information around January 2012 about a program funded by the Missouri lottery vendor GTech to provide computer labs to selected high schools. He said that the idea appealed to him because of his education background and that he decided he would like to see something similar considered for Arkansas. He spoke about the process, the work and preparation he had done, as well as work by Patti Vick as well as his wife, who has expertise in this area, and Emily Jordan-Cox in the Governor's Office, who met with Director Woosley and Commissioner Pickard to discuss the idea. He said that it is known that some schools would really benefit from the donation of hardware or software that they cannot afford. He mentioned a group of schools

He said he had spoken to Director Woosley and Jean Block about developing a simple grant application system, gathering a list of the top schools for remediation in Arkansas, developing guidelines to use to contact the appropriate schools. He noted that Director Woosley had contacted our vendors and that Intralot had pledged \$20,000. He said there was not yet a response from Scientific Games, whose officials had said they would have an answer when more details about the program are known.

Commissioner Shipp said that consideration should be given to setting up a system by which the vendor contributions would be tax deductible, through a nonprofit or similar device; and that she thinks the recipients should be chosen by someone other than the Lottery Commissioners. Commissioner Malone said that he thought this was a good goal but did have concern about the Commission being in a decision-making role on the awards. noting that there could be a convenor and facilitator. He suggested getting input from the school districts and the Department of Education.

Commissioner Shipp said the DofE or ADHE may have a vehicle through which the funds could be funneled. The Education License Plate program was mentioned. Commissioner Malone noted the excellent Career-coach program model in Northwest Arkansas supported by private funds. Commissioner Shipp said that Conway County has a School Counts program which is privately funded. Commissioner Frazier brought up the Upward Bound program that has been in place for many years, as well as the TRIO program. The Renaissance program was mentioned. Commissioner Shipp said that electing to go through an existing program may result in a shorter startup time. She also said there was a level of comfort in a program already tested, with guidelines and the like. Commissioner Malone mentioned Arkansas Works through ADHE. Commissioner Pickard said, speaking of the Upward Bound programs since he is more familiar with them, it is possible that program or similar would be a good way to direct the money. It was decided that Commissioners Frazier and Pickard would speak to ADHE Director Shane Broadway.

Commissioner Frazier summarized that the next steps would be to go forward with the known \$20,000, hoping for \$40,000, and talk to Director Broadway regarding outsourcing. Commissioners Malone and Shipp said they would be available to call in whenever the next meeting is called.

There being no further immediate business, the meeting was adjourned.