



**Meeting of the South Carolina Commission
on Higher Education
Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability (CSPA)
10:00 a.m., April 3, 2025, via Zoom Webinar**

Members

Commissioner Doug Snyder (Chair)
Commissioner Dino Teppara (Vice Chair)
Commissioner Gene Fant
Commissioner Mark Masters
Commissioner Mick Zais

Other Guests Present

Tyuanna Williams, Carolina News and Reporters

Commission Staff Present

Jeff Perez
Laura Belcher
Jessica Berry
Corey Gheesling
Shakara Smith
Mark Swart

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Snyder opened the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability (CSPA) meeting and called it to order at 10:00 a.m. President Perez introduced the Commissioners. He confirmed a quorum of the Committee and Ms. Belcher announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Chair Snyder asked for consideration of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability meeting agenda. Commissioner Zais motioned to approve the agenda as presented, and Commissioner Masters seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes: March 5, 2024

Chair Snyder introduced the draft minutes of the March 5, 2025, Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability meeting and asked for any additions or corrections. Commissioner Zais motioned to approve minutes as presented, and Commissioner Masters seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.



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4. Chair's Report

Chair Snyder reported that the Committee has established its strategic plan elements and said that today's discussion will focus on the strategic plan timeline and the value of accessibility. He said that President Perez will also give an update on his interactions with stakeholders regarding the agency's strategic plan. Chair Snyder reiterated that the Committee would like to have a draft strategic plan developed for consideration during August Board Retreat.

5. Strategic Plan 2030 Stakeholder Input Review

Chair Snyder asked President Perez to provide an update on the Strategic Plan 2030 Stakeholder Input Review. President Perez reported that he met with Senators Hembree and Taylor and in those discussions, there were some common themes regarding what the General Assembly expects from the Commissioner on Higher Education (CHE):

- Be more responsive to the General Assembly, providing complete and accurate information.
- Expand CHE's research and analysis capacity.
- Keep the General Assembly briefed on what is going on in higher education through data presented in an easily digestible manner.
- Display muscular leadership in the higher education world—within our statutory capacity but as if we are a Board of Regents.
- Be more proactive in working with the General Assembly and with campuses.
- Review all statutes regarding CHE to determine relevance and to bring ideas to legislative staff to either amend, repeal or add to statute strategic plan.

Commissioner Masters asked whether the CHE had already completed a scrub of the statutes as part of the Inspector General's (IG) review, to which President Perez clarified that he is referring to meeting with legislators and staff to determine the importance and relevance of each statute as it relates to CHE's work. He further explained that the study done during the IG's review was not a thorough review of all statutes. Chair Snyder explained that the study was broader and that he wants the Committee to start at the broad level, then merge the review of statutes into the Committee's plans between May/June.

6. Discussion on Values: Affordability-Accessibility

Chair Snyder asked Commissioner Zais to lead the discussion regarding the value of accessibility. Commissioner Zais highlighted reasons for considering accessibility rather than affordability, as accessibility encompasses both aspects. He further explained that accessibility is comprehensive and addresses the following: basic skills needed to be successful in post-secondary education; awareness of students and their families about various educational opportunities available; continued focus on FAFSA completion; motivation of students; and proximity/transportation needs.

Chair Snyder asked what is CHE's position relating to these accessibility aspects, to which Commissioner Zais explained that CHE does not directly influence the development of secondary students' skills and knowledge, however, CHE can continue to support various initiatives that influence other aspects. He listed a few examples of current CHE initiatives: College and Career Day; College Goal; and FAFSA completion initiatives.

Chair Snyder asked what is CHE's role in working with higher education institutions and students in terms of outreach. Commissioner Masters said that it starts with K-12 outreach. Commissioner Zais said that outreach in 4-year institutions is good, but there could be improvement within 2-year institutions. Commissioner Masters expressed concern with the cost of education and that the space available is being underutilized.

Chair Snyder asked about the Coordinating Council of Workforce Development's (CCWD) work, to which President Perez referenced the Unified State Plan and said that there needs to be greater collaboration with the SC Department of Education.

Commissioner Teppara said that there needs to be more fiscal transparency as the true cost of higher education is not clear to students and families. He explained that earning capacity is also unclear based on each career. Commissioner Teppara recommended making this information available on CHE's website, to include the top 30 careers with its pathway and earning potential listed. President Perez said that CHE is collaborating with other agencies that collect this data. Commissioner Teppara also recommended that the CHE create a one-pager that includes this data. Commissioner Zais recommended having posters within high schools and colleges displaying average salaries for careers. Commissioners agreed that CHE should serve as a one-stop information source for students and their families.

Chair Snyder asked each Commissioner to list one goal as it relates accessibility.

Commissioner Fant suggested identifying barriers to accessibility and identify solutions to overcome those barriers. He also expressed the importance of identifying demographic barriers as there is a need for workers of all levels.

Commissioner Teppara recommended CHE encourage education-related fiscal transparency through the uses of data and collaborations. He also suggested addressing the stigma of 4-year versus 2-year higher education institutions.

Commissioner Masters would like to focus more inward, with CHE being the leading entity to help right-size the higher education system. He also expressed the importance of clarity on the cost to run higher education institutions. He recommended that there be a study on what needs to be done to help improve the system. He also wants to ensure a 100% completion/graduation rate.

Commissioner Zais recommended having a portal on the CHE's website that links compensations to academic programs. He also recommended the development of posters that will be distributed to high schools and technical colleges. Upon completion of his remarks, Commissioner Zais recommended we use "Access" as the goal.

7. Strategic Plan 2030 Timeline and Activities Summary

Chair Snyder said that President Perez will continue meeting with stakeholders and has administered a survey to the Council of Presidents. He explained that the work will be continuous.

8. Other Business

There was no other business to consider.

9. Adjournment

Chair Snyder adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.