



**Meeting of the South Carolina Commission
on Higher Education
Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability (CSPA)
2:00 p.m., November 4, 2025, via Zoom Webinar**

Members

Commissioner Doug Snyder (Chair)
Commissioner Dino Teppara (Vice Chair)
Commissioner Amy Bigham

Commissioner Gene Fant
Commissioner Mark Masters
Commissioner Mick Zais

Commission Staff Present

Jeff Perez
Laura Belcher
Shardai Figgures
Angela Peters

Noah Perry
Elizabeth Robinson
Shakara Smith
Chariti Spann

Other Meeting Attendees

Trena Houpp, University of South Carolina Columbia

Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Snyder called the meeting of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accountability (CSPA) to order at 2:00 p.m. Ms. Smith introduced the Commissioners, confirmed the presence of a quorum, and announced that the meeting was being conducted in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Approval of the Agenda

Chair Snyder requested consideration of the CSPA meeting agenda. Commissioner Zais motioned to approve the agenda as presented, and Commissioner Bigham seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes: September 23, 2025

Chair Snyder presented the draft minutes of the September 23, 2025, meeting and invited any additions or corrections. Commissioner Zais motioned to approve minutes as presented, and Commissioner Fant seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.



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Approval of 2025 CSPA Committee Charter Revisions

Chair Snyder reported that the revisions to the CSPA Charter primarily involved updating the committee membership list. He then called for a motion to consider the revised charter, to which Commissioner Zais motioned, and Commissioner Bigham seconded. Chair Snyder called for the vote and the motion passed.

Chair's Report

Chair Snyder stated that the conversation would focus on advancing the strategic plan, with an emphasis on initiatives and metrics. He noted that Commissioner Teppara would lead the discussion on excellence.

CHE Metrics Discussion: Excellence

Chair Snyder called on Commissioner Teppara to present on the excellence metric. Commissioner Teppara explained that the metrics should be meaningful, limited in number, and focus on outcomes. He proposed five metrics to track the initiative *Strengthen Student Success and Workforce Alignment*:

1. Percentage of students graduating in four years from a bachelor's degree granting institution.
2. Percentage of students graduating in two years from an associate's degree granting institution.
3. Percentage of graduates employed within their field of study and in SC within three years of graduation.
4. Number of students graduating with a master's degree in a high-need field from an SC degree granting institution.
5. Number of students graduating with a Doctorate degree in a high-need field from an SC degree granting institution.

Commissioners discussed the importance of establishing baseline data, with President Perez recommending use of the most recent complete cohort data. Commissioners also considered the impact of changing definitions and the correlation between graduation rates and SAT scores. Commissioner Bigham raised concerns about the relevance of SAT scores in the current admissions landscape and the increasing flexibility of degree programs.

Commissioners conversed about the role of SAT and ACT requirements for state schools, with Commissioner Zais advocating for a recommendation to require these tests due to their predictive value for student success, though Commissioner Snyder noted concerns about student recruitment from neighboring states. Commissioners also explored the transferability of college credits between institutions as a measure of excellence, with Commissioner Masters suggesting this should be a key performance indicator. Commissioners agreed on three primary metrics for measuring institutional success: four-year graduation rate, total graduation rate, and employment in South Carolina within three years of graduation, with the latter metric being the least well-documented.

Commissioners continued the discussion on workforce development metrics and transferability of credits between institutions. Commissioner Fant highlighted the complexity of credit transfer, particularly for specific programs like engineering, and emphasized the need to consider certificate programs and alternative completion timelines for non-traditional students. Commissioners also discussed the potential impact of new short-term workforce Pell grants on the enrollment in technical colleges and certificate programs, as well as the emerging trend of students seeking a residential experience for socialization without the intention of graduating.

Commissioners further deliberated on metrics for higher education excellence, with Commissioner Masters highlighting five key performance indicators and noting that the excellence metrics might overlap with accountability measures. Commissioners agreed to do more work on defining certifications and credentials, acknowledging this is a national issue. Commissioner Snyder proposed simplifying the metrics presentation to three main metrics with different years of data, which he planned to present to the full commission on Thursday.

Ms. Belcher presented three other metrics for consideration by the Committee for the value of excellence:

For the initiative *Leverage CHE Expertise*

Metric: Number of collaborations (events, projects, etc.) with agency partners that CHE hosts or facilitates.

For the initiative *Enhance operational effectiveness*

Metric 1: Improvement in agency automation efficiency

Metric 2: Percentage improvement in employee climate survey results

External Studies

Ms. Belcher reported on progress related to the Inspector General's (IG) report and House Government Efficiency and Legislative Oversight Committee (GELOC) recommendations, noting that most tasks were on track or ahead of schedule.

Other Business

There was no other business to consider.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Snyder adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m.

