

NCHE NEWS

Vol. XXIX, No. 1 National Council for Higher Education June 2006

Spelling's Commission: A Journey, Not a Destination

The federal Commission on the Future of Higher Education has issued a total of fifteen issues papers and eight other reports of interest.

The papers were written by board members, Commission employees and consultants and are meant to inform the Commission's work as it prepares a final report to Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings. The report was due by August 1, but the Commission recently announced a due date of mid-September.

The recent paper on state financing notes that the long-term prognosis for state finances is poor.

The paper on graduation rates indicates there is a continuing decline in high school and college graduation rates, but the trend could be reversed if states could reduce the gaps in racial and ethnic differences.

The paper on adult learners focuses on how colleges can be more responsive to adult learners and non traditional learners.

The paper on work-force issues of doctors and nurses recommends ways to increase the supply of medical professionals and professors.

A second paper entitled "Costs, Prices, and Affordability"

examines issues differently than a previous report that blamed increased costs on faculty and antiquated work rules.

All papers are available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/index.html>

NCHE RESPONSE

Since the Commission's inception, NEA and NCHE have concerns about the make-up of the Commission and lack of public input into what claims to be a national dialogue. However, we have participated where possible and monitored the Commission's activities as follows:

- On March 3 Vicki Schray, Deputy Director for the Commission's Management and Planning, was invited to the NEA's Higher Education Conference to hear critiques and questions from NEA members as well as to present information about the Commission.

- Reg Weaver, NEA President, wrote a letter to the Commission delineating the philosophical positions of the NEA and rebutting unsubstantiated assertions in the Commission's paper entitled "Frequently Asked Questions About College Costs." <http://www.nea.org/lac/letters/506hecommission.html>
- On March 20 Cathy Boudreau, Massachusetts Teachers Association President and higher education member, and Len Paolillo, NEA Legislative Committee Chair, testified in Boston on behalf of NEA. http://www.nea.org/he/freedom/images/testimony_CBoudreau.pdf and http://www.nea.org/he/freedom/images/testimony_LPaolillo.pdf

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NCHE Summer Meeting

Friday, June 30, 4-6 PM, Convention Center
Room West 314 B

See page 2 for details of the NEA RA Schedule

FL-RA AT-A-GLANCE

Monday, June 26 12:00 n-5:00 pm	National Council of Urban Education Associations Meeting (NCUEA)
Tuesday, June 27 9:00 am-5:00 pm 9:00 am-6:00 pm	NCUEA Joint Conference on Concerns of Women and Minorities
Wednesday, June 28 7:30 am-8:30 am 9:00 am-12:00 n 9:00 am-2:00 pm 8:30 am-3:00 pm	Women's Issues Hearing NEA Fund for Children and Public Education NCUEA Joint Conference on Concerns of Women and Minorities
Thursday, June 29 1:30 pm-5:00 pm 9:00 am-6:00 pm 7:00 am-9:00 pm	NEA Board Meeting Resolutions Committee Meeting NCHE Executive Committee
Friday, June 30 8:00 am-10:00 am 9:00 am-5:00 pm 10:00 am-3:30 pm 4:00 pm-6:00 pm	Open Hearing on Resolutions Registration State Delegation Meetings NCHE Summer Meeting: West 314 B Convention Center Room
Saturday, July 1 10:00 am-12:00 n 10:00 am-4:00 pm 1:00 pm-3:00 pm 1:00 pm-3:00 pm 5:00 pm 6:30 pm-10:00 pm	Open Hearing on Budget and Strategic Plan Resolutions Committee Meeting Legislative Open Hearing Open Hearing on Constitution, By-Laws and Rules NEA Board of Director Meeting Human and Civil Rights Awards Dinner
Sunday, July 2 9:30-11:00 am 11:00-5:00 pm	NCHE Meeting: Convention Center Room West 314 B NEA RA
Monday, July 3- Wednesday, July 5 Lunch Breaks	NEA RA NCHE Meetings: Convention Center Room West 314 B

HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP MEETING

Kathy Sproles, NCHE President, and Jim Rice, NCHE Vice President, met with NEA Higher Education Directors Ann Shadwick, Sally Pestana, Theresa Montano, Susan Brown, NEA staff: Mark Smith, NEA Higher Education, Con Lehane, NEA Publications.

This meeting, held during lunch on the first day of each Board of Directors meeting, provides an opportunity for NCHE leadership to share and receive input from elected higher education leaders and NEA staff.

Significant points covered were as follows:

- NEA Home Page. This page continues to appear disorganized, and there is need of a link to Higher Education. Efforts are being made to eliminate this problem.
- Spellings Commission. A memorandum summarizing the May 5, 2006, meeting consisting of NEA Representatives Mark Smith, Nancy OBrien and Kathy Sproles and the Commission Staff: Cheryl Oldham, Eleanor Schiff and Vickie Schray was reviewed. The Commission staff indicated that the goal of the Commission is to develop a national strategy that will be a "Call to Action." The NEA representatives were assured an "in depth data" report on college costs would be forth-

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coming and in fact is now published. The Commission representatives stressed that all letters to the commission are read, and they requested input on admissions, accountability, alignment(2-4 year and high school to college) and best practices.

- Mark Smith covered the Commission meeting of May 18 & 19, 2006.
- College Affordability Campaign. The goal of this initiative is to make college affordability part of the national debate about what is wrong with the current priorities of Congress and the Administration. The short-term goals are to cut interest rates on student loans and to boost Pell Grants. The NEA Higher Education Advisory Sub-Committee and NCHE are recommending joining twenty national organizations in a nationwide collaborative initiative and are requesting funds from NEA for financial support.
- 2007 Higher Education Conference. Hawaii statewide contracts are about to expire thereby making the Hawaii location not advisable for next year, so NEA is looking at Portland, OR, San Diego and San Jose, CA among other locations for the March 2-4, 2007, conference and will revisit the Hawaii proposal for 2008.
- NEA Messaging. NCHE continues to work on issues of message content, audi-

ence, and alteration of the strategic components in the overall NEA message.

- NEA Publications. Con LeHane announced the implementation of the recommendation from the sub-committee of the Membership Advisory Committee to link the theme “Academe at Work” so as to join the authors and topics of **Thought and Action** to the higher education conference content next year.

NCHE RAM SUMMARY

NCHE Election Results

Christine Domhoff (OH) was elected by acclamation for a two-year term as NCHE Secretary/Treasurer. Incumbent Armando Ramos-Vasquez (CA) was re-elected to a two-year term in a four-way contest for an At-Large seat. Beverly Stewart (PA) was elected in a run-off for the remaining At-Large position. Incumbent Bill Ricketts (IW) was re-elected Membership Chair by acclamation for a two-year term.

NEA Endorsements

The NEA candidates, Lily Eskelsen, Secretary-Treasurer; and Executive Committee candidates Mark Cebulski and Carolyn Crowder were all endorsed.

NCHE Positions Concerning NEA Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules

- **Constitutional Amendment 1: Opposed** Inserts “public” into the Preamble and
- **Constitutional Amendment 3: Opposed** Expands the definition of classroom teacher.

See report on page 4 for a fuller explanation.

The NCHE floor strategies for the RA were reviewed and are ready for use at the RA.

Study Committee

The new business item calling for the NCHE President to appoint a Task Force to study the delivery of higher education programs, services and communication to NEA Higher Education members passed overwhelmingly.

NCHE President Kathy Sproles appointed NCHE Vice President Jim Rice, Cathy Boudreau (MA), Tom Auxter (FL), Gaziur Rahman and herself to the task force which subsequently met on May 13 and 14, 2006, in Denver, CO. The Task Force on The Status of Higher Education Within NEA will have a progress report for the delegates at the NCHE RA meeting.

Davenport Award

The James Davenport Award is given annually at the opening plenary session to recognize an NEA member, group, or organization for outstanding contributions to higher education at the 24th NEA Higher Conference.

This year’s recipient was Barry Stearns, MI. Barry was recognized in part for his extensive leadership at the local level where he held every leadership position at least once; statewide contributions which included two terms as State Higher Education President, and at the national level as a two-term NCHE President. He also has the unique distinction of having known and worked with Jim Davenport.

We welcome Barry to a long list of distinguished honorees.

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- On May 3, 2006, Nancy OBrien and Mark Smith, NEA Staff, and Kathy Sproles, NCHE President, met with Vicki Schray and other staff of the Commission at the Education Department.
- May 18 & 19, 2006, Mark Smith, NEA Staff, attended those Commission meetings.
- NEA and NCHE are preparing a longer, more comprehensive response when the final report is released in mid-September. This response document will reject the Commission's findings where appropriate and lay out NEA's alternative vision for higher education.
- NEA and NCHE will also meet with a media firm and representatives of Campaign for America's Future to determine coalition activities regarding college affordability; this issue is an area that transcends both the Spelling's Commission and the Higher Education Reauthorization Act.

NEA Board Positions on Constitutional, Bylaw, and Standing Rules

- **Constitutional Amendment 1: No Position**
Inserts the term "public" before the first term "education" in the Preamble to the NEA Constitution.
- **Constitutional Amendment 2: Support**
Allows NEA bylaws to provide NEA membership for persons who are not education employees.
- **Constitutional Amendment 3: Oppose**
Changes the term "Classroom teachers in higher education" to "Active members employed in higher education faculty and professional positions."
- **Bylaw Amendment 1: Support**
Adds a new membership category "Associate" and permits the Board of Directors to set the dues rate.
- **Standing Rule Amendment 1: Oppose**
Adds Background and Clarification to the NEA New Business Item submission form.
- **Standing Rule Amendment 2: Oppose**
Prevents points of information from taking precedence over speakers for or against an item being debated.
- **Standing Rule Amendment 3: Support**
Prevents resolutions set aside for a separate consideration and new resolutions submitted from the floor be voted on "en masse."

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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