

USHE Weekly Legislative Report
Third Week: February 11-15, 2013
By Dave Buhler, Commissioner of Higher Education
February 18, 2013

This is the third weekly report for 2013 on the legislative session from the perspective of the Utah System of Higher Education, for distribution to Regents, Presidents, and Trustees.

Overview. Several years of hard work and leadership by Dixie's administrators and faculty, with support and guidance from Regents and Trustees, came to fruition this week when the Legislature took action officially renaming Dixie State College to Dixie State University. In addition, several other priority bills hit their midway mark in the legislative process.

As the 2013 Legislative Session commences its fourth week on Tuesday after the Presidents' Day holiday, the focus will shift more intensely on the budget. Revised budget projections are now expected on February 25. Those projections help form the initial pieces of the overall state budget and the real work on the budget begins.

The Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee met twice this week hearing presentations from three USHE presidents: Southern Utah University President Michael Benson, Dixie State College (now University) President Stephen Nadauld and Utah State University President Stan Albrecht. As with previous presentations, the presidents did an excellent job directly addressing the interests of the committee, emphasizing their unique roles, and highlighting new innovations in the classroom.

Presentations from the University of Utah and Salt Lake Community College are scheduled on Wednesday (2/20). An unofficial schedule of the Subcommittee is online [here](#).

Key Legislation of Interest to USHE

- **HB 28, Campus Safety Amendments*** by Rep. Don Ipson, would allow administrative officers at USHE institutions to dismiss individuals that trespass on the property of higher education institutions who disrupt the peace. The bill was supported unanimously by the Senate Education Committee and awaits a vote by the full Senate for final passage.
- **HB 61, Dixie State College – University Status*** by Rep. Don Ipson, a bill changing the name of Dixie State College of Utah to Dixie State University affirms the action taken Board of Regents at their last meeting on January 25. The full House and Senate passed it Wednesday morning. Several legislators voiced support and shared personal stories of their associations with Dixie State. Notable individuals in attendance included President Stephen and Margaret Nadauld, Trustee Chair Steve Caplin, former Speaker of the House and Trustee David Clark, former Senator Bill Hickman, St. George Mayor Dan McArthur, and former college president Doug Alder. Governor Gary Herbert signed the bill on Saturday at a ceremony on the Dixie State campus. Related news stories available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).
- **HB 254, College Credit for Veterans*** by Rep. Paul Ray, requires USHE colleges and universities to award credit for certain military service training and experience after meeting with a higher education student advisor. The bill was passed out of the Senate Education Committee unanimously and awaits a vote by the full Senate for final passage.

Please Note: The annual Higher Education Legislative Luncheon, sponsored by Rocky Mountain Power and Questar, will be on Friday, March 1st, 12 Noon, State Capitol Rotunda.

All Legislators, Regents, Presidents, Trustees and Student Body Presidents are invited. (Please arrive by 11:30.)

- **SB 42, Medical School Admissions Funding*** by Sen. John Valentine, authorizes the University of Utah School of Medicine to increase the number of students admitted by 40 students for a total of 122 students annually; and restricts the 40 additional admissions to students who demonstrate a strong connection to Utah. The bill passed the full Senate unanimously and is in the House awaiting further consideration and funding.
- **SB 51, Higher Education Tuition Waivers*** by Sen. Stephen Urquhart, removes the cap on the number of waivers allotted to institutions of higher education for nonresident students who meet certain academic and admission requirements; and extends alumni legacy nonresident scholarships at institutions of higher education to grandchildren of alumni. This bill was pass unanimously by the Senate last week and is in the House awaiting further consideration.
- **SB 100, Higher Education Scholarship Amendments*** by Sen. Jerry Stevenson, makes modifications to the Regents' and New Century scholarship programs to streamline the application process, raise standards to improve completion, and addresses concerns raised by constituents. After a debate that extended over three days, attempts were defeated to remove the provision of weighting International Baccalaureate course grades, and the bill passed on Friday (21-7) with amendment clarifying the process for citizenship verification of student applicants. A House committee will likely consider the bill next week. Click [here](#) for more information on the debate by the Senate.
- **SB 129, Assessment of College Readiness*** by Sen. Howard Stephenson, requires K-12 school to administer college readiness assessments which include a college admissions test that is most commonly submitted to local universities (e.g. ACT or SAT). USHE supports this bill as it streamlines the assessment of college readiness of high school students and applies a standard assessment statewide. The bill passed the Senate Education Committee and is up for consideration by the full Senate.
- **SB 132, Utah Medical Education Council Amendments*** by Sen. Wayne Harper, this bill is awaiting a substitute draft that moves the functions of the Utah Medical Education Council into the Board of Regents. The Council will still maintain its authority through its current board appointed by the Governor, to bridge the gap between public/private health care workforce and education interests. The bill has not yet had a committee hearing.
- **SB 162, Concurrent Enrollment Amendments*** by Sen. Stephen Urquhart, clarifies and modifies several elements of legislation he sponsored, and enacted, last year that were administratively burdensome, based on feedback from USHE. The bill was passed unanimously by the House Education Committee and awaits a final vote by the House.
- **SB 169, Education Task Force** by Sen. Stuart Reid, would create a task force of 14 legislators to review and make recommendations on long-term policies regarding public and higher education. The focus of the task force includes: workforce alignment, integration between education entities, improvement of the state's economic prosperity, and standards to be competitive in the United States and the world. A final report of the committee would be required in December 2013. The bill was passed out with a favorable recommendation by the Senate Education Committee and is awaiting consideration by the full Senate.
- **SCR 5, Concurrent Resolution Endorsing the Utah Education Excellence Commission*** by Sen. Jerry Stevenson, expresses strong support for achieving the goal that 66% of Utah's adults will hold a postsecondary degree or certificate by the year 2020; expresses the Legislature's determination to work with the Governor and Utah's education stakeholders to achieve the 66% goal through increased innovation and investment. This bill awaits consideration by the full Senate.

* USHE has taken an official position in support; ** USHE has taken an official position in opposition. For more information on legislation, committee agendas, or to view or listen to floor debates, see: <http://le.utah.gov/> Assistant Commissioner for Public Affairs Spencer Jenkins contributed to this report.