November 5, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: USHE Conference for Secondary School Administrators and Counselors

On September 12, 2014, the Utah System of Higher Education sponsored a conference titled “Supporting the Journey” for secondary school administrators and counselors with the purpose of helping them gain a greater understanding of the many resources that exist to support students as they transition from high school to college or university, including application, financial aid, scholarships, and other supportive programs. This annual conference is in its sixth year and was funded partly by the College Access Challenge Grant and partially through College Readiness money appropriated by the legislature. This event was coordinated by Assistant Commissioner, Melissa Miller Kincart, and members of her staff, primarily Heidi Doxey, and supported by the Utah Council, College Access Network of Utah and the Outreach Team in UHEAA.

Approximately 617 administrators, counselors, presenters, college access, admissions and recruitment staff from across the state participated in this day-long conference at Thanksgiving Point in Lehi, Utah. Our participants came from approximately 31 of 41 Utah school districts, in addition, a number of private and charter schools were represented. Tami W. Pyfer, education advisor to the Governor opened the conference, followed by Judy A. Petersen, Director of College and Career Readiness in Granite School District, who shared information surrounding the White House College Opportunity Agenda: Strengthening School Counseling and College Advising. They keynote speaker, Dr. Alice Anne Bailey, Director of the Go Alliance at the Southern Regional Education Board, spoke on supporting low-income and first generation students when planning for and applying to postsecondary education and how policies and procedures surrounding those practices could be improved.

Participants were able to choose from 27 workshops covering such topics as high school mathematics recommendations, engaging students and parents in social media, empowering Pacific Islander and Native American students, increasing parent involvement, undocumented student support, as well as sessions on the statewide initiatives such as Utah College Application Week, concurrent enrollment, Utah Scholars, UESP, scholarships, and panel sessions highlighting college, university, and business leaders. New this year was a set of three workshops geared specifically towards junior high and middle school counselors.
and administrators. Representatives from all USHE schools, as well as UCAT, BYU, LDSBC and Westminster College, StepUp, UESP, and UHEAA had information booths and were able to answer questions and distribute materials for the upcoming academic year.

Attached is the agenda from the conference for reference.

Feedback

We received 212 evaluation responses, which is a response rate of 35% of our total attendees. The evaluation was available in hard copy at the conference as part of the printed agenda, and afterward as an online survey. Of the respondents:

- 85% are school counselors; 54% work at the high school level and 31% at junior/middle schools.
- 10% of the additional respondents were college and university outreach and access, financial aid, or admissions and recruitment personnel.
- 43.2% were in their first five years of providing assistance to students and families about postsecondary options, while 23.3% have been in their role between six to ten years, and 32% in their role for more than 10 years.
- 83% were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the choice of conference workshops.
- 82% agreed that they have developed a greater understanding of the processes and potential hurdles students must navigate to succeed in college.
- 91% agreed that this conference prepared them to support students in their journey towards college.

We collected information regarding suggestions for future sessions and based on enormously positive feedback, we will be expanding and deepening the sessions geared toward middle school and junior high college readiness strategies. Additionally, we will include sessions around Utah College Application Week, interactive use of social media, additional information about programmatic support for Native American and Pacific Islander populations, parent engagement, and NCAA compliance. We continue to receive such positive feedback about this conference and try to build upon our experiences to improve our offering for the coming year.

Commissioner’s Recommendation

This is an information item only, no formal action by the Board is required. However, the Board is encouraged to read and take note of the information in this memorandum and review the attached event agenda. Note that further follow-up will be handled by the Commissioner’s Office as part of the Board’s Participation strategic objective.

________________________________________
David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/MMK
Attachment
Supporting the Journey

Friday, September 12, 2014
Thanksgiving Point • Lehi, Utah
Tami Pyfer
Utah Education Advisor to the Governor

Tami Pyfer is a resident of Logan who was appointed by Governor Herbert as his Education Advisor in January of 2014. Previously, she served four years on the Utah State Board of Education where she was elected as Chair in December 2013. For ten years, Tami worked in the College of Education at Utah State University as a Clinical Instructor in the Special Education Department. While at Utah State she taught classes in Assistive Technology, Preschool Special Education Assessment, and the Introduction to Special Education course for general educators. She supervised on-campus student teachers as well as teachers enrolled in the early childhood alternative teacher preparation program, and coordinated research activities for a narrative language study. In addition to her university duties, Tami worked as a faculty trainer for the IRIS Project through Claremont College and Vanderbilt University, training university faculty in the use of online learning modules. Tami earned her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Special Education at Utah State University. She is currently adjunct faculty in the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation.

Before her service on the State Board of Education, Tami served eight years on the Logan City Council and seven years on the Logan Schools Foundation Board of Directors where, prior to her Foundation Board term, she spent seven years as the Foundation’s Executive Director. For 25 years Tami was active in her children’s education, serving as a PTA volunteer, PTA president, School Site-Based Committee member, elected Community Council member, classroom volunteer, and fundraiser. She advocated for teachers and sought funding to help enhance the educational experiences for all students in the Logan School District.

Tami notes that her greatest satisfaction has come from raising five talented and kind children with her husband, Aaron, at her side. Although they are now empty-nesters, Tami and Aaron are adjusting remarkably well and are enjoying grandparenthood.

Judy A. Petersen
Director, College and Career Readiness, Granite School District

Judy Petersen is currently Director of the College and Career Readiness Department, Granite School District, Salt Lake City, UT. She oversees Granite School District’s K-12 school counseling program, the district’s high school graduation initiative, AVID, Latinos in Action, Freshmen Academy, and all things college and career readiness related. Judy’s resume includes service as Guidance and Career Development Specialist for the Utah State Office of Education, adjunct faculty at the University of Utah and Utah State University, President of the Utah School Counseling Association, Guidance and Career Development Vice President for ACTE, and a longstanding member of ACTE’s Guidance and Career Development Policy Committee. Judy is very involved in local, state, and national issues related to school counseling and college access. She directed Granite School District’s involvement in the National Office of School Counseling Advocacy (NOSCA) Urban School Counseling Initiative, National FAFSA Completion Project, and Utah’s College Application Week pilot. Judy has presented at state and national counseling and CTE conferences and has contributed to school counseling research. Judy is forever dedicated to helping students prepare for college and career, and her license plate holder proudly states: Plan for the Future!
9:00 – 9:45 am

Welcome
Welcome by Tami W. Pyfer, Utah Education Advisor to the Governor
White House House Opportunity Agenda: Strengthening School Counseling and College Advising Update
Judy Peterson, Director, College and Career Readiness, Granite School District
Conference overview by Melissa Miller Kincart, Assistant Commissioner for Outreach and Access, Utah System of Higher Education

9:45 – 10:35 am

BREAKOUT SESSION 1

Utah College Application Week: Working together to help more students Step Up to higher education
Presented by Melissa Miller Kincart, Utah System of Higher Education; Julie Brough, Kearns High School; Nicole Batt, Utah College Advising Corp
The American College Application Campaign (ACAC), is a national initiative of the American Council on Education (ACE) to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students who pursue a postsecondary education. The purpose of this initiative is to help high school seniors navigate the college admissions process and ensure each participating student submits at least one college admissions application and completes their FAFSA pin during the school day in a computer lab during the designated week. In November 2013, Utah joined 39 states by launching a pilot in three districts and eight high schools and reaching over 2,300 students. In 2014 we expanded our pilot to include 14 districts and 50+ schools, and hope to double the number of partner schools in 2015. Join our session to learn about this exciting, low cost, high impact initiative and how you can get involved.

Recommending on High School Mathematics Preparation
Presented by Liz Hitch, Associate Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs, Utah System of Higher Education; Peter Trapa, Mathematics Department Chair, University of Utah
What math courses make the most sense for students to take for as they are planning their high school schedule—especially if they want to be college-ready? The adoption of the Utah Core Standards in Mathematics provided an opportunity for the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) to recommend pathways for high school students intending to enroll in USHE institutions, especially from the perspective of reducing time-to-graduation and increasing retention rates. USHE convened a Task Force consisting of mathematicians and educators from both public and higher education to consider this issue. The recommendations of the Task Force as affirmed by the State Board of Regents will be presented in this session. Time for questions and discussion will be provided.

Influencing the Influencers: Engaging Students through Social Media
Presented by Kim Raap, Love Communications
Learn how to use social media platforms to enhance communication with your students and influence them to take the right courses, remember important dates, and support their journey to college.

Regents’ Scholarship: Empowering Applicants
Presented by Carrie F. Beckman, Scholarship Manager, Utah System of Higher Education
This session will review the application process for the Regents’ Scholarship and provide tips to empower students as they work towards becoming a Regents’ Scholarship recipient.

10:45 – 11:35 am

BREAKOUT SESSION 2

Collaborative Partnerships with Jr. Highs and Middle Schools in Creating a College-Going Culture
Presented by Carmela Castañeda, Community School Director, Granite Park Jr. High; Jill Sandstrom, Chief Operating Officer, Big Brothers Big Sisters; Frank Magaña, Director of Operations, Latinos in Action; Andrea Cox, Director of Destination Graduation, United Way of Salt Lake
Representatives from Latinos in Action, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Granite Park Jr. High, and United Way of Salt Lake will lead a conversation centered around how schools and local non-profits can successfully collaborate around a common goal using collective impact principles to create a college-going culture at Jr. High and Middle Schools. The group will discuss how they utilize real time data gathering and analysis to intentionally target at-risk students to better align high-quality programming, backbone support, and continuous communication for student success. They will also share best practices and some "fail forwards" challenges of utilizing collective impact principles to continuously improve strategies intended to help students succeed in school and in life and how these practices can be shared across communities.

Advising Undocumented Students through Utah’s Higher Education System
Presented by Maria Martinez, Utah System of Higher Education; Richard Diaz, Salt Lake Community College; Tudi Lewis, Utah Valley University; Karla Motta, University of Utah
With the increasing number of undocumented students entering Utah’s K-12 system each year it has become exceedingly important to understand federal and state policies which affect them. Through the College Access Network of Utah an undocumented student working group was recently formed to identify and continually address barriers these students face. Join the working group for a panel presentation on state and federal policies, resources available to students including privately funded scholarships, and how, as educational leaders, can continue to support their journey through higher education.

Building Tomorrow’s Workforce
Presented by Keith Buswell, Co-Chair, Prosperity 2020; Vice President of Corporate Relations, Wadman Corporation; Douglas Fogg, CDO, Sorenson Genetics; Eric Iommi, Assistant Vice President for Utah Public Policy, Century Link; Kevin Driggs, HR Workforce Manager, IM Flash
Prosperity 2020 is the largest business-led movement ever assembled to advance education investment and innovation in Utah. Prosperity 2020’s vision is for the state’s educated and trained workforce to propel us to enduring prosperity. Building Utah’s workforce successfully requires collaboration and communication between business and education to drive the development of Utah’s most valuable resource: our people. Join our business leader panel to discuss the skills, preparation and education students need to be successful in the global marketplace of 2020.

Recommending on High School Mathematics Preparation
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What UHEAA Has for You
Presented by Michelle Riddle, Maureen Braakke, and Sumiko Martinez, Utah Higher Education Assistant Authority
This session will introduce you to all the resources that UHEAA has for you, ranging from self-paced online financial aid education to video resources and printed materials. We even have a tool to help your school manage scholarships for your students. You’ll leave with resources and an understanding of how you can utilize what UHEAA has for you to benefit your students and parents.
In this session, you will learn about the Utah Scholars Initiative and how to make this 8th grade outreach program just your own.

Presented by Kim Raap, Love Communications
11:45 – 12:35 pm

“Get Started! Learn How UESP Can Help Your Students Prepare for College” is a session that will provide participants with a brief overview of the Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP), Utah’s official nonprofit 529 college savings program; how families can prepare and save for future higher education expenses; and how UESP can support the efforts of Utah secondary school counselors to educate their students about college preparedness.

Presented by Scott Pettit, Outreach Specialist, Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP)

BREAKOUT SESSION 3

Influencing the Influencers: Engaging Students through Social Media
Presented by Kim Raap, Love Communications
Learn how to use social media platforms to enhance communication with your students and influence them to take the right courses, remember important dates, and support their journey to college.

Financial Aid 101
Presented by Michelle Riddle, Maureen Braakke, Samko Martinez, Utah Higher Education Assistant Authority
If you’re new to the world of financial aid or would like a refresher course, this session is for you! We will talk about the different options for students including scholarships, grants, loans, campus work-study, and institutional aid.

Utah Scholars Initiative as a College-Going Foundation
Presented by Dr. Christie Fox, Director of Utah Scholars, Utah System of Higher Education; Erika Norton, Utah Scholars, Megan Stone, Herriman High School, Stephanie Doyle, Matheson Jr. High School
In this session, we’ll talk about the role of the Utah Scholars Initiative in providing resources and support to secondary school counselors to help students prepare for college.

11:45 – 12:35 pm

2:10 – 3:00 pm

College and University Panel
Presented by Dixie State University, Utah Valley University, Weber State University
Representatives from Utah’s colleges and universities will share information related to school programs, admissions, and more. This session will be a moderated Q&A session.

College and University Panel
Presented by Southern Utah University, University of Utah, Utah State University
Representatives from Utah’s colleges and universities will share information related to school programs, admissions, and more. This session will be a moderated Q&A session.

College and University Panel
Presented by Brigham Young University, LDS Business College, Westminster College
Representatives from Utah’s colleges and universities will share information related to school programs, admissions, and more. This session will be a moderated Q&A session.

College and University Panel
Presented by Salt Lake Community College, Snow College, Utah State University-Eastern
Representatives from Utah’s colleges and universities will share information related to school programs, admissions, and more. This session will be a moderated Q&A session.

Programs for Success: Helping Low-Income, 1st Generation College-Going Students
Presented by University of Utah, Utah State University
This session will provide an overview of programs and resources available to support low-income, first-generation students.

Improving Access and Outcomes for Native American Students, Rural and Urban
Presented by Georgiana Kennedy Simpson, InPACT Coordinator, and Angelina Whitehorse, Utah Campus Compact VISTA, Utah State University-Eastern, Blanding Campus
In a recent CIRI Money survey, Utah State University-Eastern was ranked #3 in the nation for Student Success. With a campus population comprised of 57% Native Americans, 60% females, 79% first generation college-bound, 43% low-income, and 33% single parents, this USU outpost tackles the unique struggles of several typically underserved populations. InPACT Coordinator, Georgiana Kennedy Simpson, works to ease college access for interested individuals in an area containing the most remote communities in the lower 48 states and encompassing the largest Native American population in the United States; including portions of the Navajo, Uinta Mountain Ute, Southern Ute, Southern Paiute, and Hopi Nations. This session will focus on educational communities from a cultural and socio-economic perspective, deepening understanding of the individuals we serve, and providing tools and support for their educational success.

Keynote Address: The Next Generation of Student Supports: What Today’s Low-Income Students Say About their Postsecondary Knowledge and Needs
Dr. Alice Anne Bailey, Director, Go Alliance, Southern Regional Education Board
In December 2012, Go Alliance was awarded a grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education to determine how technology could be used to better support low-income students in planning and applying to higher education. In 2013, SREB, in partnership with market research firm Smarty Pants, LLC, conducted 16 different focus groups of low-income high school students at eight public high schools nationwide. Students were asked about their experiences when planning for and applying to education after high school, what supports they need along the way, and how the postsecondary planning and application process could be improved. Findings have several significant implications for state and institutional policy and practice. Alice Anne Bailey will relate these findings to current research and practice and make recommendations for how to best support low-income and first in the family students.

Pacific Islander Outreach: K-12 and University Partnerships
Presented by Barney Nye, Utah Valley University; Kris Coles, Utah Valley University
This session provides information about the ways in which UU has focused its Native American and Pacific Islander outreach efforts through USHE InPACT grant funding and discusses the ways in which community members, K-12 education, and university faculty and staff have joined together to co-create a pathway forward to improve educational outcomes for Pacific Islander Students.

REGENTS’ SCHOLARSHIP 101
Presented by Carrie F. Beckman, Scholarship Manager, Utah System of Higher Education
This session is geared towards counselors and administrators who have little to no prior knowledge of the Regents’ Scholarship program. The session will cover basic scholarship requirements.

Lunchbox Pick up

A Break Out Session

Five Things Parents Need to Know About College
Presented by Dr. Christie Fox, Utah Scholars Director, Utah System of Higher Education
In this session, we’ll talk about ways to empower parents during the college preparation and application process. With just minimal messaging, you can help parents feel in control of the situation and not overwhelmed. Many parents want to surrender the process to the counselor rather than being a partner with the counselor and the student. We will focus on helping parents help themselves and their students through the process, with an emphasis on what the students and parents can do and how you can gently communicate that to them.

Get Started! Learn How UESP Can Help Your Students Prepare for College
Presented by Scott Pettit, Outreach Specialist, Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP)

“Get Started! Learn How UESP Can Help Your Students Prepare for College” is a session that will provide participants with a brief overview of the Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP), Utah’s official nonprofit 529 college savings program; how families can prepare and save for future higher education expenses; and how UESP can support the efforts of Utah secondary school counselors to educate their students about college preparedness.

Presented by Scott Pettit, Outreach Specialist, Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP)

Room Key:

= Show Barn
= Mammoth Room
= Amber Room
= Rose Room
= Velvet Room
= Utah Room
BREAKOUT SESSION 5

College and University Panel
Presented by Dixie State University, Utah Valley University, Weber State University
Representatives from Utah’s colleges and universities will share information related to school programs, admissions, and more. This session will be a moderated Q&A session.

Rethink Education: the Value of Certificates in College Completion and Careers
Presented by Jared Haines, Vice President of Student Services and Instruction, UCAT; Jordan Rushton, Director of Public Relations, UCAT; Mark Middlebrook, Director of Marketing, MATC; Ellen Lange-Christenson, Vice President of Student Services and Marketing, TATV; Mac McCullough, Outreach and Diversity Manager, WOATC
Come discuss with Utah College of Applied Technology (UCAT) representatives the advantages and value of a technical certificate. Student debt in the United States is at an all-time high and unemployed/underemployed undergraduate college graduates are far too frequent. Earning a certificate can give a student meaningful employment and experience as they continue down the path of higher education or take advantage of the high demand career opportunities available upon completing a technical certificate. If continuing on with further education is the student’s goal, they can do so with a good job and stable income. Starting at a UCAT campus can give students the confidence they need to be successful regardless of their future plans or aspirations. Come find out why it’s time to “rethink EDUCATION” and enroll at your local UCAT campus.

College and University Panel
Presented by Salt Lake Community College, Snow College, Utah State University-Eastern
Representatives from Utah’s colleges and universities will share information related to school programs, admissions, and more. This session will be a moderated Q&A session.
Breakout Session 5
I attended the following session:

- Institutional Panel: Dixie, UVU, UVU
- Institutional Panel: SUU, UV, USU
- Institutional Panel: Rethink Education: the Value of Certificates in College Completion and Careers
- Institutional Panel: SLCC, Snow, USU-E

Please evaluate the conference as a whole; place an “X” in the appropriate box.

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The length of individual sessions?

The choice of session topics?

The conference site?

The food served at the conference?

The booths and additional resource information?

I would rate this session as:

- Poor
- Fair
- Neutral
- Good
- Excellent

Comments:

This conference prepared me to help support students in their journey towards college.

As a result of attending this conference I have gained a greater understanding of the processes and potential hurdles students must navigate to succeed in college.

I received valuable information from the college & university representatives.

What are the major take aways from this conference?

What would you change about the conference to make it more useful to you?

What trainings or workshop topics would you like to see in the future?

[Image of the cover of the College Guide]

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