

January 11, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: Outreach & Access Updates: Expect the Great Conference, USHE Counselor Conference, and High School Feedback Reports

Expect the Great Conference November 2016

The Expect the Great Conference is a free college and career awareness event for African, African-American, and black students and their families. The conference also includes an overnight retreat for Black Student Association Officers from across the state and a career and college fair. Aimed at increasing college participation, retention, and graduation, it was initiated six years ago by Board of Regent Vice-Chair France A. Davis.

The 2016 conference was hosted by the University of Utah on November 4th and 5th with over 400 people in attendance. Breakout sessions focused on high school students, non-traditional students, families, and community members. The theme was "Build, Invest, Connect."

Presidents of the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) institutions and Westminster College each provided \$2,000 of financial support for the conference and assigned staff members who worked collaboratively as a planning team, with support from the USHE Office of Outreach and Access. This year's committee chairs were Nedra Hotchkins and Patrick Jones. The committee will meet again in the spring to begin planning the 2017 conference, which will be hosted by Westminster College.

USHE Conference for School Administrators and Counselors September 2016

This year marked the 8th annual USHE Conference for School Administrators and Counselors, which was held in September at the Salt Palace Exposition Center. The theme was "College Knowledge: Start Now" with special keynote speaker Dr. David Conley, author of the bestselling book *College Knowledge* and Director of the Center for Educational Policy Research at the University of Oregon.

The conference is a free training event for high school, junior high, and elementary school counselors and administrators who can earn professional development credits for attending. It is designed to provide tools to help create a college-going culture in their schools, support college preparation, and increase students' access to higher education. Participants could choose from 28 sessions with multiple topics including: training on changes to federal financial aid, Title VII programs for American Indian students, the new concurrent enrollment math pathways, changes to the Utah Scholars Program and the Regents' Scholarship application, and tools for parental engagement.

Over 650 people attended the conference from all over the state of Utah, The conference has grown and expanded over the last several years to the point where it is difficult to find venues large enough to host it. As a consequence, we will be capping enrollment in 2017 to 650 participants.

High School Feedback Reports

The Office of the Commissioner has a strong partnership between its Outreach and Access efforts and the Utah State Board of Education. High School Feedback Reports were developed in support of that partnership to provide principals and superintendents with information on their students after they graduate from high school. The reports rely on information from the Utah Data Alliance to track whether students from the high school graduating class of 2014-2016 enrolled in college the following year, which institutions they attended, how well they performed in critical gateway courses like Math and English, how many students took remedial courses their first year in college, and continued from fall to spring semester. The report also consolidates other information on students' levels of college preparedness into one report, including ACT benchmark scores, number of Regents' and New Century Scholarship recipients, fall semester college GPAs, and Pell Grant eligibility.

The reports have been provided to all public school superintendents and principals. The Chief Academic Officers from USHE institutions received copies of the reports for districts within their service regions, to help them track progress toward the Regents' goal of having 75% of high school seniors enroll in college within 5 years of graduation. The public may access the district-level reports online at <https://higheredutah.org/reports/high-school-feedback-reports/>. They provide a more detailed view of high school graduates' levels of college preparation which is otherwise unavailable through a single measure like a standardized test score.

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is an information item only, no formal action by the Board is required.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/JH