

MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

December 14, 2023

11:00 a.m.

Livestreamed, via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM) Advisory Council of the Board of Higher Education (BHE) was held virtually on Thursday, December 14, 2023, via teleconference (Zoom).

The following Board Members were present:

Chris Gabrieli, Chair

Alex Cortez, EBPM Chair

Ann Christensen

Noe Ortega, Commissioner

Other Board Members were present:

Cindy Mack, Student Advisory Council (SAC) Chair & BHE Student Member

Andrew Whitcomb, non-voting Student Advisor, UMass segment

I. CALL TO ORDER

EBPM Chair Cortez called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. and reviewed the agenda, which included current objectives of the evidence-based policymaking committee, key considerations in thinking about how we measure the value of our public postsecondary pathways, and what that means for existing commitments made as a Board and Department.

II. EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING ADVISORY COUNCIL

List of Documents Used

PowerPoint Presentation, "Measuring Value of Post-Secondary Education," December 14 2024.

Discussion

Associate Commissioner of Research and Planning Mario Delci began the conversation by reviewing the Board of Higher Education's (BHE's) objectives relating to the Performance Measurement Reporting System and the 2018 mandate to report earnings. Associate Commissioner Delci stated that there is a requirement to report on social and economic mobility with an equity lens

as part of the Strategic Plan for Racial Equity developed under former Department of Higher Education (DHE) Commissioner Carlos Santiago.

After setting the context, Associate Commissioner Delci introduced three ways by which the value of higher education is measured: 1) earnings gained from employment, 2) social and economic mobility, and 3) return on investment (ROI). Associate Commissioner Delci remarked that his presentation would acknowledge the pros and cons of these metrics while emphasizing the centering of equity—disaggregating results whether it be by race/ethnicity, gender or geography. Associate Commissioner Delci also raised the importance of higher education's non-monetary value.

Associate Commissioner Delci first covered the performance measurement system, stating that it is defined in legislation mandating two earnings metrics: pre/post enrollment earnings of individuals over the age of twenty-five (25) and post high school graduation earnings. Associate Commissioner Delci stated that these metrics were adopted and not operationalized. However, a methodology has been developed and shared with data governance groups, to be explained. Associate Commissioner Delci described a post-high school data model that tracks earnings after high school, either after graduation or after pre-graduation departure. This model can answer questions pertaining to the number of students who are employed and their respective earnings.

The second model that Associate Commissioner Delci presented was a pre/post enrollment earnings model for non-traditional first-time students or transfers over the age of twenty-five (25). Associate Commissioner Delci then stated that there is wage record data that dates back to 2010.

Associate Commissioner Delci took questions from the meetings attendees. Member Pagliuca then asked if there was program level data available for earnings. Associate Commissioner Delci answered that there is such data available but that while operating within the institutional accountability framework such as the PMRS, only degree level would be shown. EBPM Chair Cortez responded that program-level metrics should be aspirational.

BHE Chair Gabrieli followed the conversation by asking whether the DHE PMRS Earnings metric methodology is the same as the metric used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Given the Commonwealth's Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS)-based approach, Chair Gabrieli stated that it would be beneficial for both agencies and the Commonwealth to be on the same page.

Member Pagliuca raised the importance of looking at other measures of earnings aside from averages, such as the median and range which indicate the distribution of earnings. Associate Commissioner Delci then responded that the BHE is headed to more complex measures of earnings.

Associate Commissioner Delci then introduced Assistant Director of Academic and Workforce Analysis Moira Chiong to speak about mobility and different ways of calculating mobility rates. Assistant Director Chiong then spoke about three different mobility metrics: 1) the Chetty Intergenerational Mobility Rate, 2) the Third Way Economic Mobility Index, and 3) the Dallas College Mobility Metric. Assistant Director Chiong then added an explanation of the Mathematical Mobility Metric. Assistant Director Chiong added that these metrics have not been disaggregated by race/ethnicity. Assistant Director Chiong further elaborated by adding that the analysis had been conducted by Minority Serving Institution (MSI) status.

Associate Commissioner Delci concluded the presentation by offering summary remarks, and noting that each indicator tells a different story, because each is composed of different ingredients and their respective authors had different purposes. Finally, Associate Commissioner Delci shifted the conversation to guided student pathways and ROI. Associate Commissioner Delci proposed two methods of measuring value: the Bellwether Approach and Net Present Value.

The session ended with review of future steps that can be taken with PMRS earnings and mobility metrics, noting that this is a continuing conversation.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cortez made a motion to adjourn. On a motion duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.