

EDUCATIONAL APPROVAL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 13, 2007
12:30 p.m.

Schneider Training Academy
911 Glory Road
Green Bay, WI

Members Present: Christy L. Brown, Michael Cooney, Terry Craney, Joe Heim (via teleconference), and Monica Williams

Members Absent: Jo Oyama-Miller and Rick Raemisch

Others Present: David Dies, Joan Fitzgerald, Linda Heidtman, Blanca James, and Patrick Sweeney, EAB; Scott Delarwelle, Midwest Driver Development; and Leslie Windorff, Schneider Training Academy

The chair of the Educational Approval Board (EAB), Michael Cooney, called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m. Prior to the start of the meeting, the EAB board members and staff toured ITT Technical Institute - Green Bay and Schneider Training Academy. A motion (Brown, Williams) to approve the board minutes of June 21, 2007 was adopted unanimously as corrected.

BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Cooney reported that on August 28 he and Mr. Dies testified before the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities in support of AB 281, the EAB's modernization bill. Representative Nass, who chairs the committee, also testified in favor of the bill; Department of Public Instruction (DPI) representatives testified in opposition to the bill; and Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) testified for information and indicated that the EAB had no authority over their schools. Mr. Nass will be holding meetings in his office with interested parties to see if everyone can come to a consensus.

Mr. Cooney reminded the board members that the EAB conference would be taking place on November 15 in Madison and encouraged the members to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Dies elaborated on the content of the conference as well as the presenters scheduled to speak. He provided board members with an update on the renewal of schools, noting that renewal applications and payments were due September 1. As of September 8 the

majority of required information and payments had been received, with 18 schools still needing to complete some part of the process. Mr. Dies noted that the EAB continues to build upon the web-based renewal. From the schools' point of view, the process has worked very well and has been well received.

Mr. Dies commented that the EAB is exploring different possibilities pertaining to licensing its web-based renewal computer application. Unfortunately, the EAB is not well positioned to benefit financially from licensing the application since revenues generated would not be credited to the EAB's appropriation. Presently, the EAB is in the process of creating documentation for the renewal application and plans to obtain a copyright. The EAB is also looking at the option of having NASASPS become the licensing agent. Following some discussion by the board, it was suggested that the EAB consult with the Department of Administration before proceeding further.

The board was reminded that at its last meeting, it was reported that revenues for FY 07 had been lower than usual and year-end revenues were not sufficient to meet the statutory provision requiring 10 percent of revenues be withheld and deposited into the general fund. To address the FY 07 revenue problem, the EAB shifted expenditures from its general operations appropriation to the student protection fund appropriation. These funds will be replaced during FY 08. Additional discussion and clarification of the deficit took place.

It was noted by Mr. Dies that organizational staffing changes will be implemented to better utilize employee skills and expertise. Two consultants will focus on ensuring compliance with applicable state laws and administrative rules, and one consultant will take on a greater role for ensuring program quality and maintenance, and assessment of institutional systems. This individual will also be lead in a redesigned comprehensive school visit process.

SCHOOL APPROVAL ISSUES

Mr. Cooney introduced the school approval issues paper and indicated that a motion for the approval of items "A" through "I" of the School Activity Report would be appropriate following any discussion. Mr. Dies highlighted school-related issues to be discussed and referenced the background information provided in the board materials.

St. Croix Culinary Institute - After ordering the school to cease and desist all activities, and not being able to contact the school officials for records and financial information, the EAB requested the assistance of the Department of Justice (DOJ) in locating and taking possession of student records and ensuring the school does not operate in Wisconsin without approval.

Springfield College - The EAB rendered a decision regarding the complaint filed by students of the Bridge Program who had alleged the Milwaukee campus intentionally misled them. Based on its investigation, the EAB concluded the school did not misrepresent to students information and found no evidence to support their requests for full refunds.

Stratford Career Institute (SCI) - The EAB received a number of complaints regarding this distance-learning career training school. Following several months of discussion with the school and its law firm, approval has been granted for SCI to offer its on-line accounting program to Wisconsin residents.

A motion (Craney, Heim) to approve items A through I of the School Activity Report for the period of June 8, 2007 through September 5, 2007 was approved unanimously.

REQUEST FOR HEARING

The University of International Arts (UIA) requested a hearing before the EAB board to appeal the decision by staff denying initial school and program approval. EAB staff recommended the board delegate to the executive committee the authority to conduct an appeal hearing subject to the review of the full board.

Following some discussion, a motion (Brown, Craney) was offered directing the executive committee to conduct a hearing and advise the board of its decision for review by the full board. If after 7 days there is no dissent, the decision stands. If any member dissents, it will be presented at the board meeting in December for discussion and a final decision. The motion was adopted unanimously.

EAB MODERNIZATION UPDATE

Mr. Dies reminded the board that Mr. Cooney covered most of what needed to be said about the modernization bill earlier in the meeting. In addition to seeking legislation to create an organized statutory framework, he said the EAB staff has been working very hard on redesigning the school visit process, establishing processes in which data provided by schools is verified, and rewriting the school and program approval guide.

STUDENT LENDER PRACTICES

The EAB has been monitoring the actions of state and federal policymakers regarding conflicts of interest within the student loan industry. Mr. Dies noted that Congress has responded by passing a measure known as the Student Loan Sunshine Act, which will impose restrictions on Title IV-eligible schools. The EAB will continue to monitor this issue.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion (Heim, Craney) to adjourn was unanimously approved at 1:58 p.m.