

EDUCATIONAL APPROVAL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, March 12, 2009
10:30 a.m.

Eighth Floor Board Room
30 West Mifflin Street
Madison, WI

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

Members Absent: Jo Oyama-Miller and Rick Raemisch

Others Present: David Dies, Joan Fitzgerald, Linda Heidtman, and Blanca James, EAB; Shana Weiss and Brock Vander Velden, Globe University; Don Madelung, Herzing University; Kira Brown and Michael O'Herron, Kaplan College; Dave Steffen, University of Phoenix; Mike Rogowski, Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek SC

The chair of the Educational Approval Board (EAB), Michael Cooney, called the meeting to order at 10:39 a.m. A motion (Craney, Heim) to approve the December 11, 2008 board meeting minutes was adopted unanimously.

OFFICER ELECTIONS

Mr. Cooney noted that state law requires the board to elect officers at its first meeting of the year. Officers consist of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary. Mr. Cooney entertained nominations for secretary. Ms. Brown nominated Joseph Heim. Mr. Heim accepted the nomination and was elected unanimously. Mr. Cooney entertained nominations for vice-chairperson. Mr. Heim nominated Monica Williams. Ms. Williams accepted the nomination and was elected unanimously. Mr. Cooney relinquished the chair to Ms. Williams who entertained nominations for chairperson. Mr. Heim nominated Michael Cooney. Mr. Cooney accepted the nomination and was elected unanimously. Ms. Williams relinquished the chair to Mr. Cooney.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Don Madelung, Herzing University, commented on the EAB's new requirement that schools submit an institutional plan document as part of the 2010 school renewal. He expressed his gratitude to the board and staff for listening to the schools regarding their concerns about inclusion of proprietary information in the institutional plans. Specific language was included in the instructions of the planning document that clearly states "the EAB does not expect any school to divulge any sensitive, proprietary business information in the institutional plan."

BOARD STATUS REPORT

Mr. Dies highlighted a number of items provided in the board materials based on the EAB's respective strategic goals.

Involvement in Postsecondary Education Policy Decisions

Mr. Dies commented on his participation in the planning process of the Making Opportunity Affordable (MOA): Wisconsin initiative. He also noted the introduction of Senate Bill 63, Assembly Bill 80, and Assembly Joint Resolution 16. The three legislative proposals would directly affect the EAB, approved schools, or students attending EAB-approved schools.

Positive Working Relationships and Alliances

Mr. Cooney, who is the Editor of the Career Education Review, indicated that an article on the EAB was being written for a special report on accountability and outcomes. He indicated that the draft article provided to board members was a good piece of work and that he would provide copies of the entire report at the next meeting.

Consumer Protection

Mr. Dies reported on recent EAB activity concerning diploma mills. He spoke specifically about "Carlingford University" and actions being taken to have them cease and desist operations. The EAB has referred the matter to the Department of Justice for legal action, pending a formal criminal investigation.

Postsecondary Educational choices (Public Awareness & understanding)

Mr. Dies reported that distribution of the EAB News Digest was expanded to include legislators that sit on the respective higher education committees as part of an effort to inform them about trends and issues affecting the private career school sector. In addition, Mr. Dies discussed the redesign of the EAB's approved schools directory, which will have a number of improvements and changes made based on user feedback.

Mr. Cooney added that he and Mr. Dies were guests on the In Business with Jody and Joan radio show to discuss the role of the EAB and the private career school sector.

Operational/Administrative Procedures and Policies

Mr. Dies provided a brief summary of the EAB's budget and an overview of monthly revenues and expenditures. By all indications it appears that year-end revenues will be sufficient to cover expenditures. Additional detail is contained in the board materials that were provided to board members and made available on the EAB's website.

SCHOOL APPROVAL ISSUES

A motion (Brown, Williams) to approve items A through I of the School Activity Report for the period of December 1, 2008, through March 6, 2009, was approved unanimously.

2009-11 BIENNIAL BUDGET

Mr. Dies reported that with the exception of standard adjustments, the EAB's budget request for additional staff was denied. He also informed board members that the Governor's budget includes a provision that will require the EAB to lapse \$5,900 in each year of the biennium, in addition to the 10 percent withholding that is already required.

EAB MODERNIZATION UPDATE

Mr. Dies provided an update on the several initiatives of the EAB's modernization agenda.

Modernization Bill

Although an agreement regarding bill language was previously reached with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), officials at DPI have indicated that additional changes need to be made before they will support the bill. Mr. Dies noted that the requested changes had been reviewed and were found to be unacceptable. At this time, the EAB is exploring other options to move the modernization bill forward as originally proposed.

Employment Verification

During the 2010 school renewal process, the reporting of employment information will be integrated into the online renewal system and schools will be required to provide the information electronically. In response to feedback provided at the conference, schools will be given the option to indicate that employment information could not be provided, and only approximate dates of when a student began employment or the school contacted the employer will be required.

The EAB is exploring the capability for schools who are currently tracking this information electronically to upload information from existing data systems they may be using. Unlike the 2009 renewal, schools that are unable to provide verification of employment, including an employer contact name and date of contact, must report that complete information could not be obtained and the student will not be included in the total "employed" data count.

Institutional Planning

It was noted that schools will be required to submit an institutional plan as part of the 2010 renewal process. The EAB has developed a standardized format the schools will be required to use. By requiring institutional plans, the EAB is seeking to establish a more useful and collaborative relationship with schools – one in which school administration consultants can have a deeper understanding of the school's plans and the ability to engage in a meaningful dialogue about them. More importantly, the EAB believes that a formal planning process will lead to better schools and programs for students.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion (Heim, Williams) to adjourn was unanimously approved at 11:37 a.m.