



Summer Caucuses & Forum with State Lawmakers School Districts, Colleges & Universities Caucus

Thursday, August 4, 2016 – 9 a.m.

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions – The School Districts and Colleges/Universities Caucus met on August 4, 2016 at 9 a.m. at Penta Career Center Culinary Connections Restaurant, 9301 Buck Road in Perrysburg, Ohio.

Frank Calzonetti, vice president of Government Relations at The University of Toledo and facilitator for the School Districts and Colleges/Universities Caucus, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. Introductions were made by everyone present.

TMACOG members who were present included:

- William Burns – Assistant Director, Center for Regional Development, Bowling Green State University
- Greg Clark – Superintendent, Northwood Local Schools
- Jennifer Fehnrich – Executive Director, Government and Community Relations, Owens Community College
- Rhonda Hogrefe – Adult Education Supervisor, Penta Career Center
- Ron Matter – Superintendent, Penta Career Center
- Debbie Morris - Adult Education ABLE/GED Consortium Coordinator, Penta Career Center
- Brian Paskvan – Executive Director, Workforce & Community Services, Owens Community College
- James Rossler – Treasurer/Business Manager, Exempted Village School District
- Alex Solis – Assistant Director of Development, Bowling Green State University
- Linda Stacy – Consultant, The University of Toledo
- Cory Stine – V.P. of Institutional Advancement, Terra State Community College
- Bob Vasquez – Board President, Toledo Board of Education

Non-TMACOG members who were present included:

- Vonzelle Hill – Section 3 Compliance Coordinator Lucas Metro Housing Authority

TMACOG support staff that was present included:

- Peggy Ricard – Director of Communications
- Mary Pat McCarthy – Writer/Associate Editor

Introduction of Discussion Topics – The caucus's conversation was organized around creating three questions for the Forum with State Legislators. Topics discussed included:

- **College Credit Plus.** This program allows high school students to gain college credits. Wide discussion about ramifications that may not have been considered by legislature.

Overall, serves the goal of reducing the cost of higher education but there are no measurements of value, no data and ongoing confusion at High Schools. What district pays for books? Some schools have students at four institutions of higher learning and are spending lots on books for one person to use for one class. Advising. High school students are trying out advanced classes including pre-med and STEM classes. If they get a few poor grades, they have just tanked their chances for being successful. Advisors would tell them to start with the pre-requisites. Early decisions not always good decisions. Educators asked why we expected kids to know what career they wanted when they are 16 or 17. Students are getting lots of college credit in fields they may turn out to not like. Money. Local districts are being billed for students at Penta who are earning college credit. “Transcribed credits” get lost at district schools. Lack of parent buy-in or stake in the process means that there are no consequences to the parents if the student fails or drops out.

- **Goal for 60% of population to have a post-HS degree by 2025** – Admirable goal but what is the state doing to support it? Where will the jobs be for well-educated people? The Caucus proposed a state-wide marketing campaign to encourage students to come to Ohio to learn, to work and to live. There may be ramifications to allowing community colleges to issue bachelor’s degrees that have not been thoroughly considered. There is a drumbeat going on that college is not necessary for good jobs, which is true, but parents will not encourage their children to pursue welding or trades.
- **Job Readiness** – All caucus members talked about their desire to produce young adults who are ready to go to work to support the economy and make good lives for themselves. All cited the depressing problem of students not being able to pass drug tests and having no experience with work ethic including showing up on time every day. General discussion that young people need more access to internships and part-time jobs in order to learn what the world of work entails. The schools would like better data about employment in the state; where the jobs are and what a successful candidate looks like.
- **Western Governors** – This business has been welcomed into Ohio to operate online higher education. One caucus member called it the “charterization” of higher ed. The legislative panel asked why this business was welcome and encouraged when existing higher ed has excess capacity including distance or online learning.
- **Drug Treatment** – Even elementary schools are dealing with epidemic of drug abuse. The panel members described family disintegration, neglected children, and parents involved in the legal system. Members of the legislative panel noted that schools are front line in the battle, geographically distributed, and a place where kids go every day. But they are not full-time drug counselors and just telling people about the dangers of drugs is not effective. It was noted that drug abuse is a by-product of poverty, and poverty is also directly correlated to poor academic achievement. The schools do not have an immediate solution to poverty in northwest Ohio.

Next Steps – There were no requested actions from the caucus.

Adjourn – The chair adjourned the meeting.