



Division of Higher Education

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Secretary

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Minutes

State Board of Private Career Education Arkansas Division of Higher Education – Meeting by Zoom Wednesday, January 22, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Alice Obenshain, Brock Thompson, Jack Avery, Jacqueline Brownell, Sterling Penix

Others Present: Alana Colburn, Tracye McKeown, Alisha Price, Mary Perry

Welcome and Approval of Minutes of the October 30, 2024, Meeting

Chair Alice Obenshain asked for a motion to approve the October 30, 2024, minutes. Jacqueline Brownell made a motion. Sterling Penix seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Report on Private Career Education Work at ADHE

Tracye McKeown reported that 37 transcripts from closed schools had been sent to students since the last Board meeting in October.

Alana Colburn reported seven new school applications are being processed including a court reporting school, two truck driving schools, a leadership and career development school, a hypnosis school, and an arborist school.

Colburn told the Board she is monitoring bills for ADHE during the ongoing session of the Arkansas General Assembly.

Brownell asked for information on the leadership and career development school application. Colburn said the school's name is The Academy for Career Development and Certification and will be in Bentonville with a mailing address in Eagle Rock, Missouri. The owner's name is Thomas Saccenti. Colburn added that she had not reviewed the curriculum but two of the programs to be offered are conflict resolution and pro-presenter certification. McKeown said the hypnosis school was previously licensed by the State Board of Private Career Education in 2014 and is based in Harrison, Arkansas.

Discussion on Ballot Issue 1 - Arkansas Lottery Scholarship Program

Obenshain said Ballot Issue 1 was approved by over 90 percent of voters. Ballot 1 allows the Arkansas Lottery Scholarship to be used at schools accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Obenshain added that Arkansas legislature will now look at the scholarship amounts, whether to allow credit or clock hours, minimum requirements, whether the ACT will be required, and GPA requirements. Obenshain said she is advising her students to start an application on ADHE's Scholarship Application Management System (SAMS).

Brownell asked if there was an age restriction. Obenshain said she did not know but there is currently no age restriction for eligibility for the Arkansas Lottery Scholarship. Obenshain said the goal is to make college less expensive for Arkansans and direct students toward career paths that are in high demand and pay a living wage. Obenshain added that there has been some discussion about whether the ACT will be a part of the requirements. Brownell asked if there is an anticipated start time for these monies to be disseminated. Obenshain said she does not know but they would like it to be enacted before the 2025-2026 fiscal year that begins July 1. Colburn said several private career education schools have asked if their students can apply for the lottery scholarship. Leadership at ADHE has said only if the school is accredited by an agency recognized by the U. S. Department of Education. Colburn said a private career school could pursue accreditation, but Arkansas law does not require it.

Obenshain said the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) has over \$200,000 of student financial aid available for students with a high school diploma or GED. Obenshain added that she is conducting a two-day FAFSA workshop at the Metropolitan Career-Technical Center in Little Rock for parents to bring in their 2023 taxes and help their children submit the FAFSA.

Next Steps

Colburn said the next meeting is scheduled for April 22 and she will send the Zoom invite to the Board.

Input from SBPCE Members

Obenshain asked for a motion to adjourn. Brownell made a motion. Brock Thompson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.