

**Minutes**  
**State Board of Private Career Education**  
**Arkansas Division of Higher Education – Meeting by Phone**  
**April 29, 2021 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Alice Obenshain, Brittney Matthews, Brock Thompson, Jacqueline Brownell, Jasmine Wilson, Jack Avery, Sterling Penix

**Others Present:** Julie Chavis, Alana Boles, Tracye McKeown

**Welcome and Approval of Minutes of March 24, 2021 Meeting**

Brittney Matthews called the meeting to order and asked if anyone had any comments or questions regarding the minutes from the last meeting. There being no questions or comments, the minutes of the March 24, 2021 meeting were approved with all present voting in favor.

**Report from Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE) Staff**

Alana Boles sought the opinion of the board about a situation that has come up several times regarding giving grace periods on license renewals to school owners who are still not fully having classes due to Covid-19.

Boles asked Tracye McKeown to give a report about a recent conversation she had with a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) school owner. McKeown reported that the school owner renewed her license in 2020 but has not had students since 2019 due to Covid-19. McKeown added that the school owner has been in contact with the nursing home where her students have clinicals but the nursing home has not been able to project or provide a date when it will allow CNA students back into the facility.

Julie Chavis recommended that in light of decisions by the Governor to rescind orders put into place during Covid-19, the board treat this situation like any other renewal and not provide exceptions or grace periods. Chavis added that the school owner has options to either renew or close the school and reopen when the nursing home allows students back into the facility. Matthews agreed with Chavis on her

recommendation that the school owner could close her school and reopen when the nursing home allows students in the facility.

Sterling Penix asked how many calls staff had received from school owners concerning this issue. Boles said she had received two calls, one in 2020 and this more recent call. Penix asked what counterparts in other states are doing regarding this issue. Alice Obenshain stated that there are no exceptions for Texas and California and added that open businesses are still expected to maintain occupancy licenses, insurance, etc., unless they decide to close. Jasmine Wilson said she would vote to not allow the exception at this time.

Chavis recommended a vote of the board to return to business as usual as conducted prior to Covid-19. Brock Thompson made a motion that business continue as usual and that the school owner renew or close until there are enough students to open.

The board voted with all in favor and none opposed. Chavis added that if things take a turn for the worse with Covid-19, the board could reconsider its decision. Jacqueline Brownell asked if the board should be proactive with rules or protocols to be followed in the event there is another Covid-type situation. Chavis recommended for future guidance the board wait and see what recommendations the Governor makes and if executive orders are issued.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

There being no questions or unfinished business, the meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.