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Education Committee
April 19, 2013

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The Committee on Education met at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, April 19, 2013, in Room 1525 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the 2013 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report presented by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. Senators present: Kate Sullivan, Chairperson; Jim Scheer, Vice Chairperson; Bill Avery; Tanya Cook; Al Davis; Ken Haar; Rick Kolowski; and Les Seiler. Senators absent: None.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the public hearing on the 2013 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report that's going to be given to us by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. This is a public hearing, so it is...so I should also say welcome, Nebraska, whoever might be listening. We have almost a full house here. I think perhaps everyone knows everyone else, but I'll just go around real quick. And to my far right is Mandy Mizerski, the committee clerk; next to her is Tammy Barry, the legal counsel for the committee; Senator Rick Kolowski from Omaha; Senator Jim Scheer, to my right, the Vice Chair of the committee from Norfolk. To my immediate left is Kris Valentin, the research analyst; to his left is Senator Les Seiler from Hastings; and just joining us, Senator Tanya Cook from Omaha. And I trust the other senators will be joining us shortly. So with that, and this is, I might mention, something that is in statute that we're required to have this public hearing, and we are glad to have the staff with us today. So please come forward.

MARSHALL HILL: Thank you, Senator Sullivan. I'm Marshall Hill, M-a-r-s-h-a-l-l H-i-l-l, executive director of the Coordinating Commission. I'm pleased in more ways than one to be here this morning. I've been in Indianapolis on Tuesday and Wednesday for meetings, and was supposed to be home Wednesday night. And due to the incredible rain that's happened between Indianapolis and here, I rescheduled five times, and they told me the earliest they could get me home was tomorrow afternoon. So I rented a car and drove through the rain for about 11 hours yesterday. So I'm glad to be here. We thank you for being here as well. Our Higher Education Progress Report is a significant effort for the Coordinating Commission. One thing I'll say, is why in the world does it need to be this big? It doesn't need to be this big, but we find it more convenient to put the answers to questions, that we know we're going to get throughout the year on all these issues, into this. We are queried by institutions on the material that is in here. We make all of the background material available on-line, so an institution that wants to see the actual spreadsheets that lie behind the charts can do so. And this morning, I'm really not going to present this to you; I'm going to have Barbara McCuen, Dr. Barbara McCuen, who is our research coordinator. Barbara has a long background in being a university professor. Her field was marketing. And she has put this together for us since we have been doing it. She is helped most directly by Dr. Duncan Hsu, who is not here this morning. He is one of those nerdy data people who is more comfortable with all of that. He knows it inside and out and keeps it straight for us. I will comment occasionally

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throughout Barbara's presentation. She's going to fly very quickly. Want you to know that if you have questions, please interrupt as we...it's not an interruption. Please do so as we go along, and then afterwards we'll respond to any questions you have, and also as we go along, I mean after we conclude, to anything. So we have four of us here this morning, which is more than a third of our entire agency staff, so we look forward to...this is Dr. Barbara McCuen.

BARBARA McCUEN: (Exhibit 1) Well, I will try to go through this presentation very quickly for you so to maximize any amount of time we have for questions. Before I start, I want to tell you sincerely what an honor and pleasure it has been to author this report since its very inception, since Senator Don Pederson was in my office talking about it way before it was in statute, and it's just been an honor to serve the state of Nebraska in this way. This is the only state-level report we have and on the data...only available data we have to author such a report. So I want to this morning go through the report. As you all know, it's required by statute and distributed to the Governor, the Legislature, state higher education institutions, the media, and other interested parties. I'm going to try and focus today quickly on the major trends that are included in the report, beginning with those in enrollments. This is a very significant chart because it compares total head count enrollment for fall over a 11-year period with...or 2003-2012, and freshmen enrollment, first-time freshmen enrollment. As you can see, Nebraska did very well in terms of increasing its enrollment between 2003 and 2010, and we have seen a notable drop-off in the last two years. The first-time freshmen line at the lower side of the chart shows that enrollment of freshmen has been stable but now starting to decline. If you look at this by sector, you can immediately see where the enrollment of first-time...or total head count enrollment has declined, and that is at the community colleges. There's also been a notable decline in the for-profit enrollment. That's degree- and non-degree-granting schools, ranging from Kaplan University to very small hairstyling institutions. If you look at...we look at the next chart you'll see freshmen, total freshmen, first-time freshmen enrollment. The top line is total first-time freshmen. Then you see full-time compared to the lower line, which is part-time. Part-time only accounts for about 11 percent of first-time freshmen enrollment. As you can see, it is stable. It is not showing a decline. But the significant decline is in first-time freshmen. Now if we look at the full-time, first-time freshmen by sector, again, you can see where the declines are occurring. It is in the community colleges and in the for-profit sector. That decline in the for-profit sector is only in the degree-granting institutions, or I should say primarily. That is Kaplan, for example, ITT, University of Phoenix would be in that category. The small, the hairstyling schools and the radiology schools are stable. The biggest concern, of course, is the decrease in the community colleges, and I would like to just...you have some additional slides that I didn't put up here so you can read through the notes at your leisure later. But, Jason, if you'd like to go to the next slide. Oh, well, this is true, but let me just go to the picture. There we go. The decrease in these full-time, first-time freshmen, I do not believe that they are due to a decrease in the number of high school graduates. The data you see here is the number of high school graduates in the state of

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Nebraska from the Department of Education, and as you can see, there was actually an upswing in the number of grads between '09 and '10, and it was stable between '10 and '11. That means that we had as many students graduating from high school that could go on to college in those two years. So the decline in community college enrollment is not due to that, also because we are having no evidence that there was a decline in the college-going rate of those students. We don't have the final data for that. Yeah.

SENATOR SCHEER: On your numbers, are those, for example, college or career, technology, are those total numbers for graduates in Nebraska are just Nebraska institutions? So could it be that...

BARBARA McCUEN: These we are looking at only Nebraska institution enrollments.

SENATOR SCHEER: Okay. So some of the number of decline could be the fact that students from Nebraska may be going to Iowa or Kansas or some other state to school, rather than...

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes. We have no evidence that that's happening but...

SENATOR SCHEER: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: ...and we won't till this fall.

SENATOR SCHEER: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: But that...and I was going to mention that.

SENATOR SCHEER: Oh. Well, I'm sorry.

BARBARA McCUEN: Okay, you're just one step...one slide in. Okay. But that college continuation rate and the state they go in, if we go one more step, what...oh, excuse me, back, back, Jason, go back to the picture. We've deleted some slides here. I will say that my suspicion is that it's probably not students going out of state because that's so stable and it's over 80 percent of our students stay in Nebraska, high school grads, and in 2010 it was 84 percent. So I'm not thinking a big decline is in community colleges because community college students typically don't go out of state. They stay in their vicinity. The reason where I think there may be a decline, and we will be getting the data for that, is in the nontraditional students who go back to school for the first time. That's who I think we will find is missing. But we won't have data for...that's just being collected now so we'll find out in the fall. If you go to the next, total enrollments, we really don't have any data, any data to explain why those enrollments declined. We can only hypothesize and there's kind of two possibilities. One is that the economy is improving and enrollments are going back to prerecession levels. It's very common for enrollments

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in college to increase during a recession. The other option is the economy is not improving for many people, at least, and it is difficult for them to be able to go back to a college with low income or nonexistent incomes and high cost of education. So we don't know. And as we watch trends, we will continue to report on what may be happening. If we go...again, we'll look at additional trends and I would like to start sharing some of those with you. One is the trend in the projected number of high school graduates. This is very important because high school graduates in Nebraska are the main source of first-time freshmen for our institutions. As I mentioned, nearly 80 percent of our graduates go to school in state. If we look at the projections, this compares the paths to the projections. These are the just-published projections so they are, I think, very accurate at this point. You can see that we're going to have only about 4 percent more graduates in 2021-22 than we did in 2011-12. So it's going to be hard to increase our enrollments in higher education in Nebraska just based on an increase in the number of high school graduates. We just aren't going to have a much greater pool in ten years than we do now, about 1,000 more students. If we go to the next slide, we also know that the demographic composition of those high schools graduates is continuing to change. And on the left is the...shows you that in 2002-03, when we started this work, nearly 90 percent of high school graduates in Nebraska were white, non-Hispanics. That will be down to 73 percent by 2021-22, and we will have nearly 17...we'll have 17 percent Hispanics, according to the most recent projection. We will continue to have other minorities, Asians and blacks, of course, and they will continue to have stable shares, but we will see an increasing Hispanic subgroup from our graduates. We look at graduation rates. Nebraska's high school graduation rate was 86 percent in 2010-11, and among the top ten, I don't give you a rank because there were several ties among the top ten. There were like ten states that had three different rates. So...but this is the first time that we have ever been able to compare high school graduation rates across states because, as you know, the state of Nebraska is now following the same procedure as the other 49 states and Puerto Rico. Nebraska's high school graduation rate increased to 88 percent for 2011-12, which is great. State comparisons aren't available yet, but I assume we will stay in the top ten. Now while that is true, white...while that is true that the high school graduation rate, in general, is up and the rates for blacks, Hispanics, and Natives are also improving, they continue to be significantly lower than the rates for white, non-Hispanics, and a significant number of our students continue to drop out of high school before they earn diplomas. This is very important, I think, for our state, so we have four slides here to quickly illustrate this. This shows you the lower graduation rates for Hispanics, Natives, and blacks compared to whites and Asians. This slide shows you the total number of students who dropped out of school between 7th and 12th grade last year and I always say this is nearly the...this is the size of a small town. I came from a town of about 6,000 in Iowa. A town of 2,000 is a small town. It's the size of town that was damaged by the fertilizer explosion in Texas. This is a town's worth of people, nearly 1,900 students, and...

MARSHALL HILL: Barbara, I'm going to make a comment here.

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BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah.

MARSHALL HILL: A lot of people in Nebraska believe that the high school dropout problem is a minority problem.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Excuse me.

MARSHALL HILL: Am I not...?

TAMMY BARRY: You can't because she...it's a public hearing. Sorry.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: You can...I'll say it.

MARSHALL HILL: Would you say what...do you know what I was going to say?

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes, I'm going to say...I know what you were going to say and I will. This slide I think is important because for two reasons. One, as Marshall wanted to say and is very true, when you think of a high school dropout you don't think of white. You think of minority. I mean it's just the prejudice we have. But as you notice here, more than half of our high school dropouts are white, or at least half. These are...and I just want to bring that up because the stereotype, right or wrong, is not white. But if we do look at...we see that the numbers of Hispanics and black students are very high relative to their numbers of graduates, which I'll show on the next slide. Yes.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Barbara, the last slide on this one, do you have it by gender broken down in any way, shape, or form?

BARBARA McCUEN: We do now. We are...

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: In this report?

BARBARA McCUEN: No, but we do have that and males do not graduate from high school at the same rate as females. I don't want to take time of the hearing, but I do...

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: That's fine. I just ask the question.

BARBARA McCUEN: We have that, and I think I do put it by...but we have not had it by race but we are doing that by race now where we have college continuation rate as well as high school. But if we go to the next slide, this is what we just found last year, the first time we had data we could do this, where we could show you the proportion, the

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number of students graduating compared directly to those dropping out by gender. And what we see here is that for Hispanic and black males, these students are disproportionately represented among the dropouts to a higher degree than they are the graduates. And what was...and again, this kind of stereotype, you think of a high school dropout, think of black, Hispanic males going, like an Hispanic, going...leaving high school to work in the family business is very common. But we also find them among females, and this is what was shocking to me, is the proportion of black and Hispanic young girls who are dropping out of high school; that, that again, is not in the stereotype picture and very important for us to recognize. Now our preparation, we won't spend much time on this but our state is very interested in this and we are working on other research related to preparation of students.

SENATOR SCHEER: Excuse me, but just...

BARBARA McCUEN: Uh-huh. Oh sure. I'm sorry.

SENATOR SCHEER: ...because it was astounding to me, there's actually a higher percentage of black females that drop out than males.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes, as a percentage of the females, yes.

SENATOR SCHEER: Percentagewise, yeah. Wow, I hadn't (inaudible).

BARBARA McCUEN: Now that fluctuates, Senator Scheer. It does fluctuate. Last year's charts look a little different than this year's chart. Last year it was glaring that the Hispanic young women were dropping out. This year the blacks kind of stood out more. So it does fluctuate a little bit, but the generality is the same.

SENATOR SCHEER: Okay. Thank you.

BARBARA McCUEN: You're welcome. This is what I consider one of our more depressing charts. This is the percentage of students who meet all four standards on the ACT in English, Algebra, Biology, and Social Science. These students, by reaching the benchmark on all four test areas, they are pretty much guaranteed they will earn at least a B or C in college courses in these areas their freshman year. But as you can see, only 30 percent of our high school students who take the ACT reach the benchmarks on all four subjects, and if we look at it by race you can see that the percentages for Hispanics, Natives, and blacks are dismally low. We just don't have an alignment of what professors expect the students to know in college and what the students are demonstrating on the test. Another major trend, of course, is college-going rates, another concern of our state. Based on IPEDS data available every two years, Nebraska's college-going rate of 69.5 percent for 2009-10 high school grads was seventh highest in the nation. Using Student Clearinghouse data and data from the

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Department of Ed, we know that the college-going rate for public high school graduates in '10-11 was 71.2 percent. These are simply different databases producing slightly different results. The Clearinghouse rate is always higher than the IPEDS rate, because we look at that rate after students...at the end of the academic year so...whereas IPEDS data is collected in the fall so you have more students who go during the year that aren't caught in that first fall number. So you always see that difference. The Nebraska's overall college-going rate has improved over the past eight years, but the college-going rates are not consistent among groups. And this kind of gets to the, again, gender differences, which we are very concerned about. This chart shows the dark line in the center is all graduates, the college continuation rate or college-going rate. They mean exactly the same thing--the percentage of high school grads who we have evidence went to college within the first year after high school. And as you can see the non-low-income students, which are identified whether they are participating or not in reduced- and free-lunch program. The non-low-incomes here are not participating in that program; the low-income students are or have participated in free lunch. You can see that there is a significant difference, that the lower income students go to college at a much significantly lower rate than non-low-income. If we look at the next slide, it shows that male graduates of Nebraska high schools do not go on to college at the rate that females do, regardless of whether they are low-income or non-low-income. The girls are just outpacing the boys and they are doing it nationally, and there is no indication that the trend is going to abate. And we are very concerned as to why the males have lost the momentum that they have had in the past. Now on some new data that is not ready to be shared, we were doing a project with the Nebraska Department of Education on the ACT Pilot Project, but I can tell you that this we always know is true, that Hispanics, who will continue to account for an increasing percentage of the state's high school graduates, have significantly lower college-going rates than the overall state rate. Blacks and Natives also have significantly lower college-going rates than whites and Asians. And we have not had this data ever before. Yes.

SENATOR HAAR: On this graph you just showed us with the females going to college more,...

BARBARA McCUEN: Uh-huh.

SENATOR HAAR: ...do you have any breakdown by gender in terms of the test scores of the ACT tests that...

BARBARA McCUEN: No, we do not get that.

SENATOR HAAR: Okay. So we don't know if the males score equal or lower or...

BARBARA McCUEN: No, I do not get that.

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SENATOR HAAR: Yeah.

BARBARA McCUEN: But we could...if your committee at some point wants that data information, I'm sure you could obtain that from the Department of Education, from the ACT data.

SENATOR HAAR: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: The summary report I get does not.

SENATOR HAAR: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: Now if we look at another trend, you were mentioning...the senator was mentioning Nebraska students going out of state, out-of-state students also coming in. If we look at the percentage again of the students who go to school in Nebraska, Nebraska's high school graduates who go to college, of those more than 80 percent already are going to college in Nebraska. Consequently, it's going to be difficult to increase Nebraska college enrollments only by increasing the percentage going to college, because they're already going, a high percentage, to our schools already. So even if we increase our already high college-going continuation rate, I figured out, what, I think about 300 students, if we significantly increased our college-going rate, it would only increase about 300 students at the rate they go to Nebraska schools. Uh-huh.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Do you have information following up on holding power, the dropout rate of freshmen...

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: ...after their freshman year in college?

BARBARA McCUEN: Oh, persistence? Yes, we'll show you some of that later on.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Okay. Thank you.

BARBARA McCUEN: Number of out-of-state and foreign students, the, just quickly, in fall 2010 we know there were 3,454 foreign and out-of-state students came as first-time freshmen to Nebraska. We know that also at that time, in that year, we had...we were importing 527 more out-of-state and foreign students than we were exporting Nebraska high school graduates out of state. So that was a positive number. This data is collected only every two years so we are just getting that data now, literally, and we will be summarizing it in next year's report, you will find, if that balance has changed. We don't know, given the decrease in enrollment, you know, we don't know what has happened to that export-import balance. That's basically what I just said. Just go ahead. Another

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thing we like to look at is the representation of minorities among Nebraska's first-time freshmen. If we look at this chart, it's very stable. Every year we see this, that if we compare directly the demographic profile of high school graduates to the demographic profile of our first-time freshmen, they look about the same. So as Marshall has repeatedly said in these hearings and I have repeatedly said it at presentations, if we can get students to graduate from high school in Nebraska, we see them represented fairly well at the freshman level in college. They're going on to college if they graduate, about the same, at least representation. But as I mention, we now have the evidence that those college continuation rates are not the same. So these numbers, you can see the Hispanics are a little lower than their representation. That's reflecting that college-going rate as being lower. The blacks are about even, but I believe some of those are out-of-state students recruited. So we will just get more information; as this develops, we'll get a better picture of how many of our students are really going on. State-funded financial aid, we track this, of course, and to improve access Nebraska has increased the amount of state funding for both the Nebraska Opportunity Grant and the very successful Access College Early, ACE, Scholarship, as I agree with Marshall, we'd love to change their name to the ACE Scholarship Agency because it's such a great program. This total available funding for the state grant program shows you what a significant increase there has been in the funding since '03-04, when we started this report, and the last academic year, 2011-12. Now unfortunately, while the funding has increased, the state's share of need-based aid awarded to public institutions in the state has decreased. That is not including loans. So direct funding of public institutions, the funding has gone up. But as a share of all the funding coming into those institutions of need-based, the state appropriation has decreased slightly. And as we all know, student borrowing continues to increase and state funding is not keeping pace with the increasing number of students eligible for aid, just because of recessionary pressures and many other pressures. So we can just keep trying to do a good job. Another approach to expanding access has been the introduction of the Access College Early Program, initiated in '07-08, and a coordinated program, ACE Plus, which was introduced in '11-12. The growth of the ACE Plus Program has been impressive going from only about \$115,000 to currently available \$880,000. The number of students served through this program has increased from about 300 to nearly 11,000. Just to remind you, this is providing scholarships to high school students to take high school and college...a college course for high school and college credit. And this shows you the tremendous number of...I said students served, I meant credit hours earned. But we had about 300 students. We now have nearly over 1,800 students receiving these scholarships. And as you can see, those students this past year earned nearly 11,000 academic credits toward college while they were also completing their high school. So they're getting a head start on college. The college continuation rates for ACE Scholarship recipients is really wonderful to see. This chart shows you the ACE Scholarship recipients' college-going rate compared to non-low-income and low-income students. And you can see what this scholarship is doing is enabling low-income students--you have to be low-income to qualify for this scholarship--to go on to college

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at a rate that's higher or as high as non-low-income. So it's an enabling, successful program in that respect. The ACE Plus is a scholarship awarded for students who have been, in the past, ACE recipients. So if you've received an ACE Scholarship in the past, you are now eligible to apply for an ACE Plus. You may apply for that ACE Plus going into your freshman year of college or in your second year of college. It was difficult to communicate, correct me, but it was difficult to get the word out on the first year to the second-year students to even know the scholarship exists, but they're now responding to the scholarship as well. But this shows you for first year, about 234 first-year students; 240 the second year were awarded to the first-year students, if I'm making myself clear. In the first year, only 83 student awards were made to students during their sophomore year, call it their sophomore year. Technically, it's...we're calling it second. But that was doubled the second year. More of those students knew about the scholarship and applied for it, so we were able to serve nearly 400 students with this scholarship. Now what's great is that giving these scholarships we can see how well these ACE students are doing once they are in college. And this shows you for the first-year recipients--these students are receiving ACE the first year they're in college--this is their grade points in high school. So these were good students. As you can see, 80...nearly 85 percent had 3.5 to 4.0 points high school. So these were low-income but high-achieving students. The next slide shows you this even better really. This shows you the grade points of the second-year ACE students. They are now in their second year of college and they earned 3.5 to nearly...more than 70 percent earned 3.5 to 4.0 during their freshman year. So we're giving this money to deserving and succeeding students, and I think it's just wonderful to be able to show you some results.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Are the college credits earned you're talking about AP courses or dual-enrollment courses or what?

BARBARA McCUEN: No, they are actually courses from the institution, like Southeast Community College. They take a course from Southeast. They get credit at high school.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: As a high school student.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes, they get high school credit and they get credit at Southeast. Some of these students go to school with almost, what, 30? Some have nearly a freshman year completed by the time they're finished with high school. So that's a great way of jump-starting them, because obviously this is much less expensive to take the student's classes as...

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Sure. But that doesn't count other academies or other situations around the state or students earning AP credit or international baccalaureate credit.

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BARBARA McCUEN: Right.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: That's all outside of this. This is in ACE Program only.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah, this is ACE.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Do you gather that other data anywhere as far as national?

BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah, AP provides reports for Nebraska. We have very low numbers.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: But you don't tie that together with this in any way.

BARBARA McCUEN: No. No. No, that's...yeah. These are just the results from the ACE Scholarship recipients. Now an ACE Scholarship recipient could be taking an AP course, I mean in addition...

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: I'm thinking from the...

BARBARA McCUEN: ...to their...

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Right.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: I'm thinking from the rigorous side of knowing what high schools are doing, setting the standard for students, and would that be helpful to also blend in the AP...

BARBARA McCUEN: We could try to kind of...

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: ...and international baccalaureate and academies that are out there?

BARBARA McCUEN: We don't have any of that data. I get...and we get AP from the college board. And we don't have many...it's not a lot of students participating, relative to the general population, that finish the tests. There's students taking AP classes but they're not taking the tests. Yeah.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: I got you.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah. Now you mentioned freshmen retention and graduation rates. In general, progress toward improved freshmen retention and graduation rates is

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disappointingly slow. Over the past seven or eight years, freshmen retention rates have not improved significantly or consistently. Graduation rates have increased slightly within some sectors but decreased within others, and Hispanics, blacks, and Natives continue to graduate at lower rates than whites and Asians. These are two...the next charts, which you can look at more closely outside the hearing, are two that I put together specifically for the presentation today. They are not in the report. But they show you the full-time, first-time freshmen retention rates by sector from '04 to 2011. This is 2004 is 2003 freshmen, how many...what percent return to college in '04. That's what these are a measure of. So the 2011 rate is the number of freshmen in 2010 who returned in '11. They didn't drop out. If you look at this chart, what we did is we used Excel to insert a linear trend line on the data, so the black straight lines are a linear trend of the data that you see for each sector. And as you can see, those trend lines are pretty flat or, in the case of the Nebraska State College System, going down. That's the trends. They're flat or decreasing, which isn't very encouraging. The graduation, same thing, but we do see some more increased trend. And those black lines, again, give you a real I think quick and easy way to see where that data is headed. And you can see that the independents and the university, their graduation rates have been on the rise; the state college system, level; and the community colleges, down, partly because probably of transferring students, which we'll talk about a little bit later. Another point, to illustrate the last major conclusion from this analysis, is that the graduation rates for Hispanics, Native Americans, and blacks are simply continuing to be significantly lower than the rates for whites and Asians. And if Jason would go to the next slide, this slide is a summary. We've never had it in our presentation before but I think it is very significant. To recap: Compared to white and Asian classmates going to school in Nebraska, Hispanics, black non-Hispanics, and Native Americans have lower high school graduation rates, lower percentages prepared for college, lower college-going rates, and lower college graduation rates. So if you put it all together, it's a downward slide. Now the result of this, consequence of these ongoing discrepancies--and we've been documenting them for nine years so they're pretty ongoing--is a gap in educational attainment in our state between whites and minorities that's larger than in other states. According to NCHEMS and as shown in the next slide I'll show you, Nebraska has the second-largest difference in college attainment between whites and minorities. And there is the chart provided by NCHEMS in a report that they have provided for the state this year through the Platte Institute. And what this slide shows, the consequence of this problem. We have a minority population, not only in terms of color but I mean the population has been a minority. The state high school students just ten years ago, you know, nearly 90 percent were white. But this group has been here and it's growing, and this slide shows you that continuing to ignore this discrepancy and not trying to resolve it is...this is the result. We're the second worst in the nation. Now some new information...I get excited about stuff like this. This is some new stuff. We've never had this before. A report came out in February, right before I was finishing this report. It's been a long weekend getting this in the report because I felt it was important that you guys see this. It's a six-year study by the National Student Clearinghouse. And, Jason, if

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you want to show, what we've got here is six-year success rates for students. This is a study of students. Really, a lot we do here, like the graduation rates I just presented, the retention rate, those are for institutions: the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, what percentage of their freshmen continue? And a lot of IPEDS data is collected by institution, all of it is. It's submitted by institutions. This is by the Clearinghouse, who has records of the students, has national...all...nearly 90 percent of the students in the country have files submitted for them by colleges in the country. So Clearinghouse looked at this and they said, okay, going back to 2006, students that were in the Clearinghouse records at that time, followed them for six years and found out what happened. And this is the first time we've ever been able to see this kind of data compared for Nebraska to the country. And this is looking at students who started college in Nebraska, if they started at a two-year school or a four-year school. Most of our two-year schools are included. I would say 80 percent of our community college students at the time were registered or were files at the Clearinghouse. All of our public four-year institutions are included and most of our private four-year. So this is a very good sample, is what I'm saying, of students. And as you can see, the students who started at two-year colleges or four-year colleges in Nebraska, those students within six years graduated at rates that were as good or better than national. So we're on track as far as a national comparison. If you look at the next slide, this is really new information. This shows the percentage of students who started at two-year or four-year public or private, what percentage graduated from the starting institution. In other words, they started at Southeast Community College and they graduated from Southeast Community College. But also it shows the percentage of students who started at the college who transferred to another college and graduated from there. So this now we can see the percentage; that 14 percent and 16 percent of the students who started at our two-year or four-year public institutions went on and graduated somewhere else, and we've never had that number. For four-year private, many more graduate from...a higher percentage graduate from the institution that they start at and a lower percentage transfer and graduate elsewhere. Their total is higher than our public four-year, among this sample. Now we hope this Clearinghouse will continue to do this. Only the Clearinghouse can do this because they have the records for the entire country. Now another stat that we just learned from the study that we've never been able to get ourselves and that is that this study shows that almost 13 percent of the students in the sample who started college at our Nebraska community colleges went on and earned degrees at four-year institutions within six years. We've known it's been about 10 percent to 15 percent, but we didn't have the stats, so here we have evidence. Finally, this study, if we look at what I think, and most of us would agree, is very important, this study shows that students who are most likely to earn degrees, and I didn't give you all the charts because it's just consuming, they attend college full-time, they start at a four-year school, and they start college before they're 25. The Clearinghouse used that 25 break, but they start out of high school. The students who enroll part-time simply are less likely to persist in their studies. They are less likely to earn degrees and they are more likely to just drop out. So just again the data just, over and over the years, it's just

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consistent. If you can start college full-time, that is a better option, although sometimes it's...you hear many, well, I don't know what I'm going to major in or my son or daughter doesn't know; maybe we'll just start part-time. The records...the chance of that student succeeding with a degree or certificate is much less. So even if they don't know, even if they're not sure, it's better to enmesh them, get them into college full-time, concentrating focus. That seems to be a major factor. Life just gets in the way too often when they go part-time.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Barb, do you have any information on GI Bill usage as far as use?

BARBARA McCUEN: No, but IPEDS is, for the first time, going to start collecting that specific information.

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: I'd like to know that. Thank you.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes. Just went to the national conference two weeks ago and one of the announcements was that there will be veterans' related questions beginning, I'm sorry to say, I think it's year after next surveys.

SENATOR COOK: And IPEDS is an acronym for?

BARBARA McCUEN: I'm sorry. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, and it's the big system of data collection at the National Center for Education Statistics in the Department of Education at the national level.

SENATOR COOK: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: For those of you who are not, I don't even think of explaining that, but this is the process which we're going through right now. We have 54 institutions in the state of Nebraska, from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is the largest, to a hairstyling school, has 35 students--54 institutions. They all report via on-line surveys to the department through the IPEDS system. That's what it's called. And we...our agency, one of the responsibilities of our agency is to monitor all of those surveys. I check every one of those surveys as they're coming through. There are about...I think there are 11 surveys that these...ranging from enrollment to finance to student aid, and they are due at three different times of the year. We are now finishing up five surveys. The minute I'm done with this, I'm running back and checking surveys. That data then is all committed in Washington. We then download Nebraska, and after a certain point in time we can download data from any other state. So this is the primary source of data. Since the state of Nebraska does not have a longitudinal data system and not even approaching what you would need to do this kind of work, we rely almost exclusively on IPEDS data and now the Student Clearinghouse. Those are our major sources of data. I apologize

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deeply for not explaining that, where this data comes from.

MARSHALL HILL: Finish us out.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah. Now...pardon?

MARSHALL HILL: Finish us out.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah. The conclusions, they're all written out for you, but we have them at three levels here. Given all the findings of this report, at the high school level we believe these things say that there should be...increase the percentage of students who stay in school and earn diplomas; increase the percentage of students who are prepared academically for college and who take dual-enrollment courses; increase the percentage of high school graduates who go to college; encouraging as many as possible to enroll full-time in the most appropriate program and not delay enrollment. At the high school level again, for males, minorities, low-income students especially, exert more effort to increase the percentage who are prepared academically for college, who take dual enrollment, who graduate from college and go on to college. At the postsecondary level, we think these findings tell us that we should increase awareness of the range of higher education opportunities, especially at the community colleges, to encourage more students to go. Reach out to adults with college credit but who have not earned their degree. Central Community College has been very successful in doing this and increasing the number of degrees and certificates awarded. Increase efforts to improve retention and persistence rates--they can't graduate if they don't stay in school. At postsecondary level again, increase efforts to improve graduation rates for all students across all sectors in Nebraska and especially at the community colleges and for minority students in all institutions. Finally, at the state government level what we can do: continue to support increased funding for the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Program and the ACE Program; develop and build support for clear completion targets for Nebraska's public-funded colleges and universities. We've been saying for years increase the rates, but let's try setting some targets--we want you to get to here by then, so that there's goals. We've noticed that every time we set goals we tend to work toward them, but if we don't set them nobody acts. At the state government level also, initiate incentives for the state's public-funded colleges and the universities. Right now it really doesn't have a consequence, except increasing the numbers of alumni, if you can graduate students or not. So let's...maybe we could think of some incentives to get these students through, and then increase the number of degrees and awards. That's...

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Thank you, Barbara. Thank you.

BARBARA McCUEN: I hope I haven't kept you too long.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Any questions?

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SENATOR HAAR: Yeah.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Yes.

SENATOR HAAR: Is there any...right now we see an increased emphasis on getting young people into careers who may not be going on to four-year colleges. Is that anywhere reflected in this data, this gap between high school and postsecondary and the young people and so on who are going on to careers without a four-year degree?

BARBARA McCUEN: No, we do not. In this work we do not do any program, what I would call program level, you know, that was looking at students who are going into technical programs versus students who are going into, say, transfer the liberal arts programs or other...

SENATOR HAAR: But with the junior colleges, that might be a big factor...

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes.

SENATOR HAAR: ...in those...in that set of data.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yes. Yes. Yes.

SENATOR HAAR: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: In general, there are many studies that could be done, especially at the college level, and that you could ask.

SENATOR HAAR: Uh-huh.

BARBARA McCUEN: I mean that's how this data started getting collected; this committee asked. So you could start requesting some of those studies.

SENATOR HAAR: Okay.

BARBARA McCUEN: We don't do any work on remediation, for example. And if you ask for it, then we can get it done.

SENATOR HAAR: Okay.

SENATOR COOK: Well, I have a proposal that is my priority bill where I'm going to ask for it, so...

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BARBARA McCUEN: Good.

SENATOR COOK: ...thank you for the commercial.

BARBARA McCUEN: Yeah. Yes, exactly. In general...and I would like to say one more thing. Since...unless there's some unforeseen services, I will not be doing this report again because I'm retiring and immediately going to do something else, so. But I will say that part of the reason this is so thick and big is because it is cumulative. Every one of these supersedes the last one. All we know since '03 is here, and this has been a very efficient way for...as a reference. You know, you're not digging back in old volumes, looking for answers. If you want to know something about '04, it's right here. And it does make it larger, but I think it makes it more efficient. And what we do is we don't rewrite this. We update it and we correct any problems that we found in the past data. We have data...have had some data issues but we fix them, so the most accurate and best is in this report. And you can practically pitch the previous material. So while it looks like, wow, this is a huge report to produce every year, the actual new material is, what, you know, a small fraction of it. And I just kind of wanted to explain that process. And we really work on this all year and, as Marshall says, we...the data is still being processed and people asking. We never know what those questions are but we try to stay on top.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Any other questions for Barbara? Thank you very much for the report.

BARBARA McCUEN: Thank you.

SENATOR COOK: Congratulations on your retirement.

BARBARA McCUEN: What?

SENATOR COOK: Congratulations on your retirement.

BARBARA McCUEN: Oh. Well, it's not real retirement. They won't let me do that. (Laugh) No, I'm working on the ACT Pilot Project, very, very interesting work and that will be a wonderful opportunity to share with you the things of...the findings of that report.

SENATOR COOK: Okay. Just not doing this.

BARBARA McCUEN: So you won't see me, I'm behind the scenes, but I am working on that. Duncan and I are working on it and it's very, very, very good material.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Thank you very much.

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SENATOR HAAR: Thank you.

SENATOR COOK: Thank you.

SENATOR AVERY: When do you expect to have that data?

BARBARA McCUEN: The ACT?

SENATOR AVERY: Uh-huh.

BARBARA McCUEN: Our report is due November, and that's probably about when we'll be done with this (inaudible).

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Is there anyone else wishing to speak to this report?

MARSHALL HILL: I'm going to just make one final comment. As you look at this, if there are areas that...what do you want me to do, Tammy?

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Just so you're picked up by the mike.

MARSHALL HILL: Okay.

TAMMY BARRY: And you have to say your name.

MARSHALL HILL: I'm Marshall Hill, executive director of the Coordinating Commission, M-a-r-s-h-a-l-l H-i-l-l. If there are additional areas that you have questions about, data you'd like to see on certain issues, please let us know. We will do our best to provide that to you. We always present to you the best available data, whether it's, frankly, any good or not. And if it's not any good, we tell you that. But we will do that. We are also going to be more proactive about that and suggest areas of data that we think you ought to be interested in as possible inclusions in this report or in others going forward. We do this every day. You know what you're curious about. We have some strong opinions about what we think you ought to be curious about, so we'll be a little more proactive in telling you about that in the future.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Okay. Thank you. Any other questions?

SENATOR AVERY: I have one.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Yes.

SENATOR AVERY: Are you going to provide us with some ideas to answer those questions at the end of the report?

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MARSHALL HILL: Yes.

SENATOR AVERY: Good.

MARSHALL HILL: Thank you.

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Thank you very much. In the few minutes we have, just as soon as they leave, if you received the e-mail, I'd like us to go into Executive Session.