

COMMISSION FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION

STAFF NEWS

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Important Dates:

- March 31**
Commission Meeting
Howey-In-The-Hills
- April 17**
Renewals due for
July 2010 meeting

CIE Website Links:

- [CIE Home](#)
- [Institution Login](#)
- [Rules & Law](#)
- [Staff Directory](#)

Agenda Information

Location:	Date and Time:
Mission Inn Resort & Club 10400 County Road 48 Howey-In-The-Hills, FL 34737 (800) 874-9053 Map	March 31, 2010 Beginning at 9 a.m.
Webcast:	Webcast Requirements:
Go to http://www.fldoe.org/cie/agenda.asp the day of the meeting and click on the webcast link.	Windows Media Player version 9 or higher

NATIONAL GOVERNOR'S ASSOCIATION URGES STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF NONPUBLIC CAREER COLLEGES

The National Governor's Association (NGA) has released a report named "Increasing College Success: A Road Map for Governors." As reviewed in the January 2010 edition of *Career Education Review*, the report states that "...within five years 74 percent of jobs will require a postsecondary education or industry certification, and most of these job openings will require more than high school, but less than a four-year college degree."

However, the report found that "...barely half of first-time community college students continue on to a second year." Concerning the challenges of retention and graduation, the report goes on to state that community colleges "...have a lot to learn from private two-year colleges. Private two-year colleges have much higher graduation rates than public two-year colleges even though they have similar students. The private colleges realize that they have nontraditional students that need different types of support." The NGA also noted that the African-American and Hispanic students had much higher rates of graduation at nonpublic schools.

In order to help overcome some of these students' barriers to educational attainment (i.e. a lack of well developed plans, motivation and organization skills), the nonpublic institutions provide support in the following areas:

- A clear pathway to each program's goals and a clear timeframe;
- Information systems to track progress closely, which is then used to guide students' choices;
- Mandatory advising and peer cohorts that meet regularly;

- And active job placement assistance.”

Finally, the report stated that “...private two-year colleges rely on...evidence of degree completion to remain profitable [*by attracting other students, ed.*], so it is in their interest financially to provide these supports and ensure that their students attain degrees.” We might also add that it is our licensed institutions’ belief in their mission of providing educational opportunity to these segments of the population, coupled with the Commission’s demand for accountability (in terms of standards for retention and graduation) that has led to our continued success in serving Florida’s postsecondary students.

WHAT KIND OF STUDENT ENROLLS IN A FOR-PROFIT COLLEGE?

That same edition of *Career Education Review* (January 2010), carried an article by Mark Kantrowitz (Publisher of FinAid.org and FastWeb.com) that presented the results of a survey which compared the characteristics of high school seniors that enroll in for-profit colleges with those that enroll at public colleges or not-for-profit colleges. Some of the more interesting findings are:

- “1. Students who enroll at for-profit colleges focus on colleges that are close to home and that offer good job prospects after graduation.
2. Two-thirds of students who enroll at a for-profit college said that the college was their first choice.
3. To save on costs, students who enroll in for-profit colleges are more likely to live at home and commute, take a year off before college to earn money, and work full-time and study part-time.
4. Students who enroll at for-profit colleges are much less likely to have parents that graduated from college.
5. Students who enroll at for-profit colleges are more likely to come from low-income and minority families.
6. Students who enroll at for-profit colleges tend to have lower high school GPA and standardized test scores.”

The study then goes on to discuss one of the problems that is inherent with the at-risk populations that are often served by the for-profit sector. “There is a fundamental conflict between public policy goals of safeguarding taxpayer dollars (e.g. minimizing student loan defaults) and increasing the number of low-income, first generation and nontraditional students who graduate from college. Students from at-risk populations are more likely to default on their education loans because they are less likely to graduate and because jobs are less available in their home towns.”

Given these conclusions, we find it commendable that the for-profit colleges tend to produce a higher rate of graduation than the public sector (see previous article). And it is especially commendable given the

characteristics (outlined in the survey) of the student population that is served by for-profit colleges.

CHECKING CREDENTIALS

Questions regarding the “validity” of credentials that represent high school diplomas have been in the news during the past few months. The U.S. Department of Education has even begun to pursue the idea of rejecting financial aid (Pell Grants and Guaranteed Student Loans) for individuals that enter postsecondary education using a “bogus” high school diploma.

The main challenge with ascertaining the validity of any credential that represents a high school diploma is that there are no standards established by the state of Florida that speak to the authenticity of such credentials. Anyone can open up a secondary school and offer graduates a high school diploma. That could, and has, led to the production of fraudulent credentials.

While it is easy to verify the validity of a public high school through the county school district, private high schools may require additional research. There are certain steps that a licensed institution can take to ascertain the validity of these high school diplomas:

- 1) Ask to see a set of certified transcripts (usually containing a seal from the institution) in order to review the student’s coursework and grades at that school;
- 2) If the high school is accredited, review the website of the accrediting agency for authenticity; and
- 3) Visit the website of the high school and see if they offer a familiar academic curriculum.

The Florida Department of Education’s CHOICE office (850-245-0502 or www.floridaschoolchoice.org) is responsible for maintaining a registry of all of Florida’s private elementary and secondary schools. They can offer further information about any private secondary school located in Florida.

Calendar

COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS	➤ NEW INSTITUTION MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN:	➤ ANNUAL RENEWALS PROGRAM ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS AND ALL OTHER LICENSE RELATED MATTERS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN:
March 31, 2010 Howey-In-The-Hills	November 16, 2009	December 16, 2009
May 26, 2010 Howey-In-The-Hills	January 16, 2010	February 15, 2010
July 27, 2010 Lake Mary	March 29, 2010	April 17, 2010

How to Contact Us

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