

State of Wisconsin
Higher Educational Aids Board

Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2003

Board Members Present: Steve Van Ess, Mary Jo Green, Ann Neviaser, Debra McKinney, Sandra Dercole, Khalaf Khalaf

HEAB Staff Present: Sherrie Nelson, John Whitt, Mary Lou Kuzdas, Sandy Thomas, Alice Winters, Nancy Wilkison, Connie Hutchison

Others Present: Rolf Wegenke, WAICU; Tom Heffron, WTCSB; Kristen Hendrickson, UW System Administration; Sharon Wilhelm, UW System Administration; Margaret Zitzer, Marquette University; Stephanie Hilton, United Council.

Chairman Steve Van Ess called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The motion was made by Ann Neviaser to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2003 Board meeting and was seconded by Sandra Dercole. The minutes were approved.

Board Secretary, Mary Jo Green, took a moment to thank Nancy Wilkison for preparing the Board minutes and Chairman, Steve Van Ess, thanked the outgoing student members of the Board; Andre Jacque, Nicole Nelson, and James Jordon for their years of service and the perspective they lent to Board. The Board also thanked Sherrie Nelson for her role as the Interim Administrative Director.

REPORT OF THE ACTING ADMINISTRATOR:

HEAB's website has received almost 74,000 hits for the month of June, an average of 2,400 Home Page Hits per day. HEAB is currently working to add a new section to the website that will be directed toward students and parents who are just beginning the application process. It is hoped it will answer some of their most basic questions and lead them step by step through the process.

On October 7, 2003 Sherrie Nelson represented the agency at a hearing at the Law Revision Committee regarding some changes in obsolete statutory language. The Committee voted to introduce the statutory language changes (as directed in the 1997 budget) that were submitted by HEAB. These changes update the various program names to coincide with their actual working names. The numbering in the statute has also been updated. It will be submitted as Senate Bill 294 and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Higher Education and Tourism

The two Assembly bills previously discussed at the July 18, 2003 Board meeting, Assembly Bill 342 and Assembly Bill 422, remain in committee with no further action. Assembly Bill 342 mirrors a Federal law stating that students who are convicted of state or federal crimes involving the use or sale of drugs are ineligible for federal student assistance. Assembly Bill 342 asks that the same rule apply to students applying for state assistance. Assembly Bill 422 increases the maximum amount of an Indian Student Assistance Grant that is funded from Indian gaming receipts to \$3,200 per year and eliminates tribal matching contributions

The Wisconsin Student Support Information System (WISSIS) forms have been sent out to the schools and are due November 14, 2003. The results will be in the February Board Report.

Reconciliation forms have also been sent out and are due October 31, 2003. The information collected gives HEAB an idea how much money will be needed for the second semester of the current academic year. It makes HEAB aware of changes needed in certain programs and helps in setting formulas for the 2004-2005 academic year.

The High School Guidance Counselor Workshops are set up for November 11-18 at various locations around the state. There will be an internet-based meeting set for November 18th.

BOARD REPORT #04-04 2003 HEAB SURVEY RESULTS

In July 2003 HEAB sent a survey to all financial aid offices. Overall participation in the survey was 78%. It was asked how often the financial aid offices would like to receive the notification list, is voucher processing received in a timely manner, are checks received in a timely manner, are questions to the grant specialist's answered, and is the HEAB website useful? The majority of the responses were favorable and very helpful. Several changes will be made to improve the process.

BOARD REPORT #04-05 STUDENT AID EXPENDITURES FOR 2002-2003

Particular statistics of interest were highlighted. There has been a 2% increase in dollars from 2002-03 for the Academic Excellence Scholarship compared to dollars spent in 2001-02. Numbers of awards given out have increased which decreases the overall amount given to each student only by \$3. The total dollars for the Handicapped Student Grant have decreased by 10.5% compared to 2001-02 and the number of recipients has decreased. HEAB plans to make extra efforts to make students aware that this grant is available by highlighting it at the High School Guidance Counselor workshops. The Independent Student Grant has not been awarded because the funding has ended. HEAB is doing well in the collection of the funds from this program. The majority are either forgiven or paid in full. Indian Student Assistant Grant total dollars expended has increased by 6.7% and the recipients have increased by 7%, however, the average award has decreased from \$915 to \$912. There is some legislation in the works to increase this amount that is tied to the Tribal community increasing funding. The Minority Undergraduate Retention Grant dollars expended has increased by 2% and the number of recipients increased by almost 1%. The majority of recipients continue to be African Americans. Minority Teacher Loan dollars have increased 1% and the average award increased from \$2,190 in 2001-02 to \$2,222. Under the forgiveness component of this program over 41% are either forgiven or paid in full. An additional 31% are either in forgiveness or repayment. The total dollars expended for first year of the Nursing Student Loan was \$449,499 with 327 awards given out. The average award was \$1,375 with the majority of the recipients attending Wisconsin Technical Colleges (52.44%). The Nursing Student Stipend Loan is another program that is no longer funded. Eighty-six percent of the recipients are currently in forgiveness status or paid in full. The Paul Douglas Scholarship is no longer funded and more than 72% of recipients are currently in forgiveness status, or paid in full. The Teacher Education Loan expenditures increased by 13% from 2001-02 and the total number of awards increased by 9%. In its third year of existence, the Teacher of the Visually Impaired Loan Program made 13 awards totaling \$85,946. This is an increase from seven awards for \$30,880 in 2001-02. Eight awards were made to students at an in-state school and five were made to an out-of-state school. The total dollars expended for the WHEG-UW System increased by over 14% compared to 2001-02 and 1 % for the WHEG-WTC System and for WHEG-Tribal Colleges. Total funds spent under the Wisconsin Tuition Grant Program increased by 6% from 2001-02 to 2002-03. In summary, the total dollars that were appropriated to HEAB in 2002-03 was \$71,009,927. With \$500,072 in funds carried forward from 2001-02 and refunds in the amount of \$2,979,782 the net spent is \$71,140,447.

BOARD REPORT #04-06 2002-2003 ANNUAL ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM REPORT

Every year HEAB is required to report on the status of the Academic Excellence Scholarship to the Joint Finance Committee by August 1st. It was pointed out that not much changes year to year regarding this program. A cap was put on spending several years ago and as the statistics show, spending has been stabilized. There is a slight increase in spending due to increase use of alternates. This year HEAB met with DPI to see if the two agencies could consolidate enrollment data. Each year DPI sends out a letter requesting enrollment information. HEAB would like to add information requests with this letter in hopes we may be able to save money on postage. This should assure that we receive needed data in a timelier manner as well. We have also continued to upgrade our program by providing a notification list and a list available in a text file or a flat file which allows schools to put it in either a data base or on spreadsheets so they can readily obtain specific data they need.

BOARD REPORT #04-07 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SCHOLAR CASE

A specific Academic Excellence Scholarship eligibility case has come to the attention of HEAB. A particular student is enrolled in a two year Tool and Die program, however, the statute requires that students using this scholarship be enrolled in a program culminating in an Associate degree or a Bachelor degree program. Students must pursue a two, three or four year degree. The program this student is taking is a two year program, the course work required in the program does not include some of the liberal studies work usually included in a degree program, and it is a very intensive course of work where he will receive a technical diploma only. After some discussion it was decided this student could not receive the scholarship because of current language in the statues. It is clear that this is a question that may come up more in the future. It was agreed that HEAB staff collect more information before any recommendation can be made to change the language of the Academic Excellence Scholarship statute.

BOARD REPORT #04-08 2002-2003 ANNUAL MINORITY UNDERGRADUATE RETENTION GRANT PROGRAM REPORT AND SURVEY RESULTS

In the 1999-01 Budget Bill we were required to begin reporting yearly on the effectiveness of the Minority Undergraduate Retention Grant. In the third annual report given it was noted that among student recipients surveyed, 88.52 percent indicated that the grant positively affected their decision to return to or stay in school. One hundred percent of the respondents either have earned a degree/certificate or continue to work towards obtaining a degree/certificate. In addition, over 90 percent of the recipients plan on living and working in Wisconsin for their working career. As those numbers are approximately what they were the year before we continue to believe that this program is very effective.

BOARD REPORT #04-09 STATUS OF 2003-04 APPLICANTS AND PROGRAMS

In 2003-04 WHEG-UW has committed 131.90% (\$35,875,305) of its appropriation with 25,638 awards. This is 3119 more awards and 7.69% more committed than at this time last year. The final commitment for 2002-03 was 135.88%. WHEG-WTC has committed 167.66% (\$24,937,133) of its appropriation with 28,928 awards. This is 436 more awards and 2.09% less committed than at this time last year. The "W" and "Z" codes were used, again due to a dramatic increase in eligible applicants. The final commitment for 2002-03 was 169.75%. WTG has committed 112.27% (\$24,815,204) of its appropriation with 10,757 awards. This is 970 less awards and 3.62% less committed than at this time last year. "W" and "Z" codes were implemented on August 27, 2003. The final commitment for 2001-02 was 116.73%. The number of applicants through October 21, 2003, for the 2003-04 academic year was 200,227. That number last year at this time was 186,042. The increased number can be attributed to the online FAFSA filing and the state of the economy.

BOARD REPORT #04-10 2001-2003 BIENNIAL REPORT

The Board was given the 2001-2003 Biennial Report compiled every two years. It includes a brief overview of the agency's history, structure, and functions. It describes the agency's performance and operations during 2001-2003 and provides major program goals and objectives for the 2003-05 biennium.

NEW BUSINESS

Steve asked if there is anything new regarding a change in status in the Minnesota-Wisconsin Reciprocity program as he had been asked more questions regarding this program. Because the program is discussed yearly by the Minnesota legislature it is normal for students and parents to make more inquiries at this time of year. There has been nothing new regarding this program.

It was also asked that the HEAB staff be aware of new things coming regarding e-business and privacy issues that may have some impact on our information gathering in the future.

The date of the April meeting was changed from April 30, 2004 to April 23, 2004.

Mary Jo Green moved that the meeting be adjourned, second by Khalaf Khalaf, and Chairman Steve Van Ess adjourned the meeting.