
Subcommittee Meeting

of

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ABBOTT SUBCOMMITTEE

*"Issues pertaining to the articulation and transfer coordination
among New Jersey's community colleges and four-year institutions"*

LOCATION: Middlesex County Vocational and
Technical School
457 High Street
Perth Amboy, New Jersey

DATE: July 20, 2005
9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF SUBCOMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman Joseph Vas, Co-Chair
Senator Ronald L. Rice
Assemblyman Craig A. Stanley
Assemblywoman Joan M. Voss

ALSO PRESENT:

Melanie M. Schulz
Executive Director

Sharon Benesta
Chief of Staff



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ASSEMBLYMAN JOSEPH VAS (Co-Chair): Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. We're going to get ready to get started.

I apologize for the microphone. (referring to PA microphone)
Let me just see. Can you hear me without this? Can you? Can everyone hear me? No. Okay. We'll use the microphone then.

Good morning, and thank you all for joining us today. I'd like to call to order the Joint Committee on the Public Schools, Abbott Subcommittee meeting today. Thank you all for taking time out during your Summer schedules to join us today. As you all know, this is the fourth meeting that we've actually had in the last eight months. Starting last September, we initiated the Subcommittee meetings -- actually here, also, in Perth Amboy at the opening of one of our new preschools at the Ignacio Cruz School on Hall Avenue. Then in June, we held a meeting at another one of the early childhood schools in Elizabeth. We then followed that with a meeting in June, as well, at the Hudson County Community College in Jersey City. And this is a fourth meeting.

And particularly, over the last two meetings, we've talked specifically about the issue of preschool teachers, preservice, and professional development. These meetings were highlighted by a report that was coauthored by the Rutgers Graduate School of Education and the Association for Children of New Jersey. The Subcommittee listened to various accounts of existing problems with New Jersey's articulation system between our community colleges and institutions of higher education, specifically for students wishing to become preschool teachers. While we understand the various articulation agreements exist between these schools, they are negotiated institution by institution. The same sending institution

may have a variety of agreements with different receiving institutions, with different requirements.

The result is that, while New Jersey is a national model for requiring our teachers in State-supported preschools to obtain a degree and an appropriate certification, barriers continue to exist in the system that provides that higher level of education.

During the discussions that occurred between the members and the audience, a significant issue emerged, and that was the articulation and transfer coordination that is oftentimes difficult and sometimes results in time and money lost for both the student and the State. The lack of a comprehensive, coordinated system has impacted many perspective preschool teachers, who are often nontraditional and began their education at our community colleges. We have heard that many of them experience great difficulty with this transfer process. We also learned that the lack of a system is costing New Jersey taxpayers more money than it should. When students receiving State aid need to repeat courses that are virtually the same, that's a problem.

Doing the research in preparation for today's discussion, we've been made aware that New Jersey's higher education communities are also concerned about the transfer process, and we look forward to hearing about the progress that is being made, as well as looking for ways where the Legislature may be helpful, if necessary.

It is the intention of the members to have a good, healthy, and productive meeting, to move forward, and to help both those in charge of the process of government and those affected at the student level. Our goal is to see that these issues are addressed in an intelligent and thoughtful

manner, so that the transfer process will be risk free for the students and that the quality and autonomy of the academic departments at the receiving universities is protected. Why hasn't this already happened, you may ask.

Other states have been far more successful in reforming the system. The problem may be that our state -- no one seems to have the authority to bring about the type of change that is needed for systematic reform. The members of our Committee would like to see that reform takes place, but we realize that you in the audience are the experts. That is why we've called this meeting. Today's goal is to talk about these issues and then develop a plan for how we can move forward. And quite frankly, we would like the people who are directly involved in this issue to really formulate the answer. This is not something that the Joint Committee or the members of this Committee, as members of either the Assembly or the Senate, would like to legislate about, but rather really bring about the discussion and see this dialogue result in a positive reform.

I'd like to, first of all, acknowledge the members of the Committee who are here today. There will be others that will be joining us today. First and foremost, let me acknowledge the Chairperson of the Joint Committee on the Public Schools, State Senator Ron Rice is here today. I know Senator Rice will say a few words in a couple of moments. I also would like to acknowledge the presence of Joan Voss, who is a member of the General Assembly and the Assembly Education Committee, and is a career educator and knows a lot about this subject matter. And I'm very happy that she's joined us here today as a member of our caucus.

Before I ask our members to say a few words, I'd like our host this morning to say a few words. And this is, as you all can see, a

magnificent school. This is a school that is just barely a year old. It's in its infancy. And there's a little story I want to tell you about this school, because it's very personal to me. I grew up about a half a block away from here, and this particular site was abandoned for almost 35 years. It was an old industrial site. For part of the time, it was owned by the DuPont Paint Company. There were 21 abandoned buildings on this site. And to the south of the site, to the corner, the General Cable Works, actually, had their first site here.

Now, when all these buildings were abandoned, many of us, as youngsters in the neighborhood -- 8 and 10 years old -- would come to the parking lot, and we would play stickball on the parking lot. And the rule was that if we were successful in launching a ball and breaking a window on the first floor, that was a single. (laughter) If we broke a window on the second floor, it was a double -- and we didn't have to go around the bases. And if we cleared all the buildings, it was a homerun. So, for me, it's really a personal story and one that I think, when you come to this site and you really appreciate the transformation of this site and this magnificent school, it speaks volumes about what we can do as an educational community throughout this state to bring about state-of-the-art learning facilities.

So without any further ado, I'd like to acknowledge and have her say a few words, Dr. Karen McCloud-Hjازه, who is the Superintendent of the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School. And I also want to thank the President, Jay Jimenez, who is the President of the County Vocational Board, for his help both as a member of the Board, as a member of my staff in the past, and as a resident of this city. He has been enormously supportive of public education and vocational education,

and someone who is very actively involved now as a chief of staff for Dr. Jacobs, who is the Commissioner for the Department of Health and Senior Services.

So without any further ado, Dr. Karen McCloud-Hjازه.

KAREN MC CLOUD - HJAZEH, Ed.D.: Thank you. Thank you very much.

And good morning, the honorable members of the Abbott Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on public education, and to all of you who have joined us here today.

As Superintendent, as the Assemblyman just mentioned, this is the newest facility, and it is fantastic. It's fabulous. We just can't stop praising the hallways of this school. And the one thing I think should be noted is the difference in young people when they attend these big, beautiful, well-equipped, high-tech schools -- big change in behavior and achievement. We had an older school. Some may have referred to it as a factory looking school, and now we have this. And I'll tell you, it is just so fabulous for our youngsters to attend this school.

I wanted to just mention a couple of things, if I may? Your topic today, very timely for the youth of urban areas, the teacher training of the early childhood education. And of course, your topic today addresses the youngest students as they enter the public schools, and their teachers.

What I'd like to just mention, being an educator of just high school and post-secondary students, that if the Committee ever does expand to have a discussion about the end of formal education in the high school, especially as it may affect Abbott students, I would ask and request that you consider the promise of vocational technical education with respect to

career prep, as well as college preparation. And I'm mentioning that because there really is a very strong linkage between vocational education and the Abbott designation. We are an example of that.

This school has an enrollment of 76 percent of Abbott students, who attend this school. We're kind of not thought of that way, and yet we do a fabulous job with these youngsters. And I would just offer my expertise and my information as the school Superintendent and as also the Officer of the Council of County Vocational Schools. If you ever did want to expand the discussion, would like additional information for the consideration for my students to have the aid follow them to the county vocational schools, we would certainly appreciate that consideration. As you may not know at the present time, the aid for these Abbott students are just lost. It's not that our sister school, Perth Amboy Public Schools, gets the aid. No one gets the aid. And so, if you do consider that in the future, I would certainly make myself available and my staff available to give you that information.

Again, you're welcome here. Whatever we can do to make your stay enjoyable. Mr. Bohrer, the Principal, is the gentleman in the back -- the smart guy standing in the back. Anything you need today, he will be point person all day with your group, and I hope you enjoy your meeting with us.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, doctor. Thank you very much.

And I want to mention that the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical system is regarded as one of the elite vocational and technical

school systems nationally, throughout the entire nation; and in fact, was one of the very first vocational and technical schools that was established in the United States, and certainly has a tremendous reputation for doing an outstanding job. And we want to thank you. And we want to thank your Principal, Gerry Bohrer, for being a great host today as well, and always being accessible and helpful to all of us here in the city.

Next, I'd like to call on the Superintendent of the Perth Amboy Schools. The Perth Amboy Schools are one of the elite Abbott school districts; in fact, one of the top Abbott school districts in the State of New Jersey. They are a school district that is on the cutting edge both of school construction and school curriculum, and I'm very proud of the work that they're doing.

And I'd like to ask Jack Rodecker, the Superintendent, to say a few words, as well.

J O H N R O D E C K E R: Thank you, Mayor and Assemblyman, for that introduction, and welcome. On behalf of the Perth Amboy Public Schools, I'd like to welcome everyone to Perth Amboy -- not necessarily to the Vocational and Technical High School, I can't really take credit for that -- but it is a wonderful building. We're doing a lot of exciting things in Perth Amboy in terms of building schools. And the Committee, in your earlier visit to Perth Amboy, saw the Ignacio Cruz Early Childhood Center, and hope that you were impressed by that facility.

We are an Abbott district. We are heavily involved with the preschool movement in Perth Amboy. I'd like to -- for the purpose of the Committee, I'd like to introduce two of our preschool principals who are here today that are certainly able to serve as resources, answer any

questions you might have about the preschool program in Perth Amboy: Dr. Gerry Mast is here, and Mrs. Joan Maldony. They're both Principals of our preschools. (applause) And I've also asked our Director of Human Resources to be here: Mr. William Stratton. Mr. Stratton is very familiar with the credentials that are required for a preschool teacher and can speak to the Committee if they should have any questions about what he sees in terms of his recruitment of preschool staff. Mr. Stratton is here also, Bill.

Two things are impacting on the quality of preschool teachers in New Jersey. One is the Department of Education and their requirements for certification. A P-3 certificate is what all Abbott preschool teachers must have in order to teach an Abbott preschool class. That is a relatively new certification. It's only about five or six years old. And it follows requirements which are in administrative code, as far as what course work is required in order to achieve the certificate.

In addition to the New Jersey requirements, we are also bound by the No Child Left Behind requirements, which reaches out and defines what highly-qualified teachers are -- in that our teachers must be highly qualified in order to teach in their particular discipline. So we have two things that we are responding to, in terms of what our candidates need to have in order to teach not only in preschool, but throughout the entire Pre-K to grade 12 structure in the Perth Amboy Public Schools.

We have relationships with a lot of the universities in New Jersey, a close relationship with Kean University, and we also have relationships with New Jersey State (*sic*) University and Fairleigh Dickinson, who actually come to Perth Amboy and offer classes to our staff for continuing education credits, so that-- I believe if there is a question that

the Committee has, or a concern that the Committee might have, we can certainly serve as a resource to you to get you together with those institutions of higher learning in order to iron out any questions or problems that you might perceive.

In any event, I would like to thank you for inviting me this morning and the opportunity to speak to the Committee. And certainly, I stand ready to answer any questions that you might have.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Mr. Superintendent.
Thank you very much.

At this time, I'd like to ask our members if they'd like to make some comments. I'd like to begin with Senator Ron Rice.

SENATOR RICE: Good morning, once again.

Let me, first of all, commend Assemblyman Joseph Vas for the work he's doing in the Assembly on behalf of all New Jerseyans, but particularly the work he's doing with this Subcommittee, under the Joint Committee on the Public Schools. This is probably, as I've told him, the most important issue facing education right now if, in fact, we set aside school construction.

Every day you pick the paper up in America, in New Jersey, and in my city, there's another youngster killed through foolishness, gang activities, etc. We're going to legislate and do what we have to do to correct that. But I've always argued that if you want a society where young people are going to grow to be an asset to that society, that we have to start in the early, tender years. We know we need parental involvement very strongly, and we need those value systems back. But even with that, if the education

system is not functioning and our leaders aren't prepared to meet the mandate of the State Legislature, and the Federal Government in some cases, and the Courts under Abbott, we're just not going to get there. In fact, it would enhance the negative, rather than create positives.

So to have you here this morning, to us, to me, to the people we represent, is so very important -- your input. Let me assure you, as Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Public Schools and as a senator for a number of years, that when we conclude these hearings we will start to prepare legislation, and we will educate our colleagues about the rationale behind the legislation and the importance of it.

So once again, let me commend Assemblyman Vas for the leadership and what he's doing for all of us in New Jersey.

Thank you very much. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you very much, Senator.

And now, Assemblywoman Joan Voss, my sister. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: Good morning, everybody.

SENATOR RICE: Good morning.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: I want to thank my brother, Joe Vas. When we got elected to the Assembly, they were very, very confused, because he's Joe Vas and I'm Joan Voss. We certainly don't look alike, but we certainly think alike. So I want to thank him very much for giving me the opportunity to serve on this Committee.

Just by way of background and why I wanted to be on this Committee and on the Education Committee in Trenton, I spent 41 years in education as a teacher, for the most part; administrator. And when I got into politics, it was as a result of my students encouraging me to go and do

something. There are very few professional educators in Trenton. And it's very important that we in education have a voice and an input into what is going on.

I was particularly concerned about the Abbott districts, as I think we all are. When I was doing my doctoral dissertation, I was interested in teacher training and curriculum development. And when I go down and I see the criteria by which our school systems are rated-- Yes, we need good facilities; yes, we need good administrators; yes, we need good financial planners. But to me the most important component is the curriculum and the people who are presenting it -- the teachers. Okay? And as I said, I spent many years writing about what good teaching is all about and how we can stimulate our kids to learn. And so this is my focus.

I'm also very impressed with this building. I must tell you that in the school I taught -- Fort Lee High School for many, many years -- many of the students who were not academically oriented -- and everyone isn't academically oriented -- were given some of the finest vocational training. And I have two bills in now trying to get more vocational teachers and trying to encourage people to go into vocational ed. But unfortunately, in many of our colleges, the industrial arts, vocational ed programs have been phased out. So this is one of the things that I'm very concerned with, because we need to tell kids that it's wonderful to be an electrician, a plumber, a craftsman. And everybody doesn't need to go to a four-year college and come out with a degree and flip hamburgers at McDonalds. I mean, it's much more important to have a very, very good craft and be proud of that craft. And we need to encourage that.

I think several of us have been involved in the New Jersey STAR program, because the community colleges are very, very, very important. Many of our kids cannot afford to go to a four-year college. The community colleges I have come in contact with have been outstanding. And I think that when we were down in Jersey City -- and I have gotten many requests in my office from people who have gone to the community colleges -- that the four-year colleges are not taking their courses. Okay? They're not giving them credit for this. So the kids are paying twice. And so we have to, kind of, figure out how we can make the transition of credits from the junior colleges to the four-year colleges better.

As I said, I am thrilled to pieces to be a voice for education on these committees, and it's been my passion for my whole life. So feel free to contact me for anything I can do, because my mantra is *have mouth, will travel*. (laughter) I want to be a spokesman for education, so thanks. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Assemblywoman.

Okay, we're going to get started, and we do have a number of speakers who are going to be making presentations today. And we're going to try to keep to our schedule today. One of the things that I want to make clear is that, again, we'd like for this presentation to occur in the form of a discussion between the members and the presenters. We are very mindful of the fact that you are the experts in the area of the topic that we are speaking today, and we'd like to really get all of you to work together on this subject matter.

So we're going to start today with Cynthia Rice, who has been helpful in really guiding part of this discussion today. Cynthia is a Senior Policy Analyst for the Association for Children of New Jersey.

Cynthia, thank you very much for being here, again, today.

CYNTHIA C. RICE, ESQ.: Thank you, Assemblyman Vas, Senator Rice, Assemblywoman Voss. Thank you for continuing the conversation on the articulation system between New Jersey's institutions of higher education that currently prepare our preschool teachers.

In the 2004-2005 school year, nearly 40,000 3- and 4-year-old children received high quality, intensive preschool in our 31 Abbott districts. Over 7,300 4-year-olds received half-day, for 4-year-olds, preschool programs in our non-Abbott Early Childhood program aid districts. And this past year, nearly 1,000 additional 4-year-olds benefited from quality preschool programs in our Early Launch to Learning districts. Each of these three State-supported, Early Childhood programs have the benefit of a well-educated preschool teacher. This benefit -- whether it was because of the *Abbott VI* decision, which required all teachers, regardless of where they were, to have a bachelor's degree and appropriate endorsement; or through the regulations -- placed these nearly 50,000 of our -- New Jersey's youngest citizens in a quality environment that children in other states can only imagine.

New Jersey's preschool programs are nationally considered at the cutting edge, largely because of our requirement for qualified, educated teachers. This high standard, along with appropriate funding, makes New Jersey apart from the rest of the other 49 states.

I had an opportunity, just on Monday, to speak at a national conference at Yale. The comments were, “You are so far ahead of the other states.” So this is something that we have to be proud of. And even in these difficult times, my organization, the Association for Children, along with many other early childhood advocates, believe that providing access to quality early learning environments for all preschoolers is critical to ensure that every child, regardless of the district in which they live in, enter kindergarten prepared and ready to learn. So it is our hope that, in the future, that will be New Jersey’s policy -- that all children receive quality preschool.

If that is to happen, however, we need to ensure an adequate supply of qualified preschool teachers, and that means looking at the system closely that trains these teachers. Since the preschool through third grade endorsement, in 2000, was developed, we have learned a lot about this system. We’re going to hear a little bit from my colleague, Dr. Sharon Ryan, from the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers, about a little bit of what’s going on in articulation in our state. And also, through interviews and conversations with Early Childhood professors and their students, we have learned that while this system may work for our institutions, it does not always work for the students with whom it was designed to serve. These barriers are exacerbated because individuals wishing to be preschool teachers tend to be nontraditional students. They’re older and they often have to juggle family, work, and returning to school.

So the reality is that many of our prospective teachers begin at the community colleges. And many of these same students have experienced many problems when it comes time to transfer to a four-year

institution. I have heard from many administrators, both at the four-year universities and at our community colleges, “Well, we have articulation agreements.” And you do. But for those who have them, I ask you to honestly talk to the students who rely on those agreements and have to see how well they have worked. In many instances, the agreements are part of the problem.

So we’re here today because it just shouldn’t be this hard. While New Jersey is on the cutting edge in implementing quality preschool programs, we are far behind in other states in our institutions of higher education working together to ensure a qualified workforce.

As Assemblyman Vas said, we’ve met before on June 1 and June 17. We began this conversation about articulation, and we are very, very thankful that the legislators feel that this issue is so important that it needed a day of its own. While there will be opportunities to define the issues, today is not about airing complaints, but to work together to come up with concrete next steps in how to develop a better transfer process. Now, there is information out, that was on the table -- I’m happy to see it’s all gone -- from what other states are doing, to articles on this issue -- one of them coming from Ana Maria Schuhmann, the Dean of Education at Kean, saying the importance of better collaborations between our community colleges and our four-year institutions.

And frankly, we have a wonderful model right in Hudson County, between New Jersey City University and Hudson County Community College.

But I can’t tell you how many times during the last week, in preparing for today, I heard, “I just don’t think this can happen in New

Jersey.” And I think that it can, but it takes two things: It takes leadership and will. There’s been wonderful collaboratives going on throughout this state, since 2000, to fix pieces of the system. But while pockets of good work have existed, the change has been because individuals have brought it about, not because of systemic reform. When we’re talking about training a much larger workforce and we see that that is our future, in needing a much larger workforce, systemic reform is really the only answer.

So I invite you to -- let’s all roll up our sleeves and get to work.

Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you.

Any questions by any of our members for Cynthia? (no response)

If not, we’re going to move on to our next presenter. I’d like to welcome Dr. Sharon Ryan, from the Graduate School of Education of Rutgers University.

Dr. Ryan.

S H A R O N R Y A N, Ph.D.: Thank you for the chance to speak today. It’s always very exciting to see such a commitment from so many people to this important issue of articulation and, in general, to preschool teacher quality, and preparation, and professional development.

As most of you know by now -- I feel like I’ve been telling this story for a very long time now -- Carrie Lobman and I conducted a study, along with Jim McLaughlin, looking at the system of teacher preparation and professional development being acted in New Jersey’s Abbott and Early Childhood program aid districts during the 2003-2004 academic year.

The samples for that study include interviews with 12 of the 14 four-year colleges offering P-3 preparation programs, and 17 of the 18 community colleges offering preschool teacher training. Given the large number of nontraditional students seeking preschool teacher certification, one of the foci of this study -- but I must say very small foci of this study -- was on outreach and partnerships. We wanted to find out if there were programmatic collaborations occurring across institutions concerned with preschool teacher learning, and where these partnerships were occurring.

In order for preschool teachers to improve their qualifications, when they've never really been required until a few years ago to do so, and when we think about going to scales, we're not just talking about Abbott and (indiscernible), but thinking about all preschool teachers in the State of New Jersey. We want -- it's very important to think about how do you help people move from being in a state with, say, something as limited as some high school or a high school diploma, or a GED, and then moving through a system to get towards a bachelor's degree. And while there is no longer this major court mandate that you have to be qualified by a particular time for some teachers in this state, because they're not in certain districts, we certainly want to continue to encourage the presence of qualified teachers in all of our preschool classrooms, no matter where children are in this state.

So it's really important for us to find out what partnerships are occurring and how we might capitalize on those. So, in particular, as we know, the preschool teaching workforce is predominantly made up of women who often are from low-income backgrounds and are certainly often struggling to make ends meet, and then continue to go on to do college and everything, which is very complicated.

So when we interviewed all of these people -- many of you are here today -- we found that-- It's nothing really sort of revelatory. We found that eight of the 12 community colleges we talked with said that they had some kind of articulation agreement with four-year universities, to enable students to count some of their course work towards a Bachelor's degree with a P-3 certificate. However -- and this is where the caveat lies -- and it's already been said. There are limitations in terms of-- Institutions have their own individual agreements and no one really knows about them. If you talked to four-year and two-year people -- I'm the four-year person -- I don't really know what our articulation agreement is with Middlesex County College. Okay? I just get told what I'm supposed to say, I can accept, and what I can't accept. And part of that, maybe, because I've just been lazy. I don't think so, though.

One of the caveats I think we have to think about is, is students who intend to go to a four-year degree from a community college have to complete an Associate of Art degree, rather than an A.A.S. or Associate of Applied Science degree, which is a terminal degree in child care. So as the name of an Associate of Arts implies, the degree program requirements are focused more on the liberal arts with some course work in education, so the students can transfer much more easily into an education class. So what you have happening at community colleges are two kinds of degrees. One is A.A.S. and one is A.A. If you try to get into Rutgers with an A.A.S. degree, for example, it's much more complicated for you to get a lot of your credits accepted.

Most universities, like my own, will accept the liberal arts credits, but we do not accept the education credits. As a consequence,

students in A.A. degrees are also -- because they're doing much more focus on liberal arts work -- are also less likely to receive the depth and breadth of content in education that students completing the A.A.S. or terminal degree in child care and education are getting.

And as-- What we know from our study is that those students who are doing an A.A.S. degree are more likely to receive entire classes in curriculum development, literacy, math, science, art, and working with children with special needs -- content that national and state standards expect preschool teachers to know and be able to enact. Moreover, students in these programs get a lot more practical teaching experience. The assumption might be, "Well, that's okay once the A.A. students move onto the four-year colleges. She should be right, right?" Because we all do the great content in the four-year colleges and everything is fine. But our study found that the four-year institutions are also struggling to manage to get all of the content across, with a 30-credit cap, to preschool teachers.

And what we found is that while we're more likely to offer classes in child development and curriculum development and literacy, students are less likely to get enough content, particularly in addressing the needs of children with special needs and the needs of children who have English as a Second Language, and the needs of children in general -- how to address the issues of diversity in the class, and how to integrate that in a way that ensures that all children learn the kinds of literacy and numeracy skills that they need to continue on successfully into kindergarten and beyond.

So what does this all mean? Well, my comments I think need to be prefaced with the fact -- and I'm going to say this again -- we

collected our data in 2003-2004, and a lot may have changed since then. Moreover, we did not observe in classrooms or examine program syllabi, so that all of our data or evidence, if you like, is by talking to people. Most of them my colleagues in this room.

So even if you keep those limitations in mind, given the 30-credit cap that we're all struggling with to cover all -- that we're all struggling basically to cover all the content adequately and ensure that our Early Childhood students get the practical experiences they need, there seems to be a lost opportunity here to build on the work of what is happening in the two-year colleges, particularly with the A.A.S. degree, and what it is that we're doing in four-year institutions. And as long as we continue to say, "Well, we'll take your liberal arts, no problem, but the education credits are a problem," the more difficult I think it's going to continue to be for our students.

And at the same time we also, and I say this as a caveat, we also need to maintain high standards for preschool teachers. And just because someone says they're doing this, doesn't mean that they are necessarily doing this. And one of the things that we know about research -- and you have to forgive me, because I am a researcher as well as a teacher -- is that teacher education, in general, is a blackbox. We don't know what really works well and then produces ongoing outcomes for kids. So if we are going to begin these articulation agreements in a much more systematic way, then I would hope that we find ways to work together to also research what it is that we do, and show those ongoing outcomes, and find ways to bring people together from all spaces to talk about these, as we are today, to ensure that we do get the high standards. That means all of us having to

look critically at our own work and how we might try and use both the (indiscernible) arrangements of our degree programs, as well as our institutional arrangements, to ensure that all teachers who leave our programs lead the nation, in terms of educating young children.

Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Dr. Ryan.

Any member have a question? (no response)

If not, we'll move on, and our next presenter and speaker will be Dr. Jeanne Oswald, who is the Executive Director for the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education.

Welcome, Dr. Oswald.

J E A N N E M. O S W A L D, Ed.D.: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee. It's really a pleasure to be here today to talk with you about "A Blueprint for Excellence," New Jersey's long-range plan for higher education, and about how that plan is linked to your concerns and interests in the Abbott school districts and Early Childhood education. One of the Commission on Higher Education's primary statutory responsibilities is the development of a master plan for higher education and the facilitation of the implementation of that plan. It was one of our first initiatives when we were formed in the early '90s. We adopted the long-range plan in 1996 and updated it in '99.

But more recently, in November 2003, the Commission on Higher Education adopted a new long-range plan, "A Blueprint for Excellence," which looks to 2010 and beyond -- a plan that was established and developed with the input of over 500 stakeholders from education,

business, other private sector organizations, government. And it is an evolving and living plan, and we intend to keep it that way.

Now, after close to two years of initial implementation, we are updating that plan. And in this coming September, we will have a draft update for review and input from the general public and the Legislature, other interested parties. And we encourage your input in that.

The Blueprint itself is organized around seven key objectives. And one of those objectives is focused on articulation across educational institutions. The purpose: Articulation to improve teacher quality and articulation to improve student outcomes. Specifically, Objective V of the plan calls for enhanced coordination and collaboration between and among all educational institutions in the state, including P-12 schools, associate degree granting institutions, and baccalaureate degree granting institutions. The purpose, one, to facilitate transition from one educational level onto the next, to develop mutually beneficial partnerships among institutions, and to improve the quality of teaching and learning at all levels.

This objective of the plan focuses on four components. I left you a sheet at the table -- a brief overview of what I'm saying -- and the four components are listed there. The first is alignment of P-12 and higher education. The smooth transition of students between high school and college requires alignment between higher education admission-related requirements, and things like P-12 curriculum framework standards and assessments. Failure to develop such alignments has an impact on student decisions to attend college, on the need for remediation, on retention rates, time to degree, and of course, potential duplication of courses.

This component of the plan is focused on things like the 12th grade option that the Department of Education established a few years back, dual enrollment opportunities, and several other initiatives that are underway; all in which our colleges and universities across the state are deeply involved.

We've been working, also, with the Governor's Office, most recently, and other stakeholders on the American Diploma Project, and trying to secure a National Governors Association Grant that will support development of a systemic P-20 effort here in New Jersey.

The second component under this objective is teacher preparation, retention, and recruitment. Teacher quality, of course, is the primary influence on student outcomes, as the Assemblywoman mentioned earlier. We need to prepare substantially more teachers in this state, to systemically work to retain teachers in the profession, to ensure that teachers have the skills necessary to improve achievement -- particularly with the increasingly diverse population in which they work -- and to ensure that sufficient teachers are prepared in particular fields and for different types of districts. And the plan specifically stresses the needs for hundreds more early childhood preschool teachers, as well as teachers in math and science, and particularly in areas that are urban areas.

A number of efforts have been undertaken by the Department of Education and colleges and universities to advance these goals, and the Commission continues to facilitate these efforts. Back in the late '90s, the Commission, in response to an *Abbott* decision, brought together New Jersey's colleges and universities to work on the P-3 certificate, associated curriculum, and we provided funds to enhance Early Childhood programs at

our institutions. The colleges made great strides in a very short time frame, rising to the demand, and it was truly a collaborative effort across institutions and State agencies.

We have seen some extraordinary progress in efforts to prepare preschool teachers since that 1998 start. And I must mention that as I work with my counterparts -- the heads of higher education across the nation -- New Jersey is consistently held up as a model. But there clearly are some additional areas that need to be addressed and areas and issues that stand in the way of serving our preschool students as we wish to.

A third component of this objective is stimulating partnerships. There is a wealth of partnerships between P-12 and higher education institutions across this state. Some of them are institutionalized, but more often they're dependent on the goodwill and continuing dedication of a few interested individuals. Those that provide simultaneous renewal, both of the schools and the teacher education programs, are the most effective. The plan calls for the State to capitalize and stimulate local and regional and statewide partnerships that are the most highly successful to address the long-standing problems, such as those that you are grappling with on this Committee in regard to progress in the Abbott districts and in Early Childhood education.

Consistent with the plan this past year, the Commission on Higher Ed developed an inventory of P-12 in higher education partnerships. That inventory is now available on our Web site. There's a wealth of information there for others who are interested in doing similar things and to finding out what's really working. There are hundreds of remarkable collaborations underway.

For example, we have a lot of professional development schools that have sprung up across the state between our colleges and universities, in schools or school districts. An additional State incentive should recognize and assist those that are the most effective, that have data that have proven to be effective with students and improving student learning -- partnerships that prepare new educators, partnerships that provide professional development opportunities for existing educators in areas of greatest need. One being, of course, Early Childhood education.

The very last component in the plan under Objective V is articulation and transfer -- an area in which I know you have such a strong interest. Student transfer is an important issue that requires collaboration between educational institutions, and has cost and capacity implications for students, the institutions, and the State, as the Chairman mentioned at the opening. Seamless student transfer from associate to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions is critical to student mobility and to goal completion. We have interinstitutional articulation agreements that are essential components of the smooth progress of students among institutions with little or no loss of credit or status. Such programs shorten the time to degree completion and the application of skills and knowledge in the workplace.

For the past several years, the Commission on Higher Education and the Presidents' Council have been overseeing a New Jersey statewide transfer initiative, called New Jersey Transfer, to promote the development and implementation of several things: One, articulation agreements between community colleges and baccalaureate degree institutions; two, transfer standards including standards regarding general

education; and three, mechanisms for enhanced communication about program changes and other issues affecting seamless transfer among institutions. This initiative is one of several areas within the long-range plan that we are particularly proud. And in September, the update will provide a tally of detailed progress on this plan since November of 2003.

The smooth articulation and transfer has been a long-standing concern in this state and across the entire nation. For years, New Jersey had a policy called Full Faith and Credit. It sounded good, and it was intended to provide that smooth transfer that we all seek. But it was never really fully actualized in this state. I believe that we're truly on the right path now with New Jersey Transfer.

There's still critical work to be done. Increased collaboration is necessary in order to achieve the really seamless student transfer that we envision. But New Jersey Transfer is a great example of collaboration, persistence, and fortitude, and the results are already gratifying. I know that this is an area in which you would like to focus today's comments, and I know that following me, Drs. Contini and Scott will be providing some of the specific results and more information about New Jersey Transfer for you.

I would be happy to respond to any questions you might have.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Dr. Oswald.

Any questions by anyone? (no response)

And you said that some of our speakers that are coming up will be speaking specifically about some of these issues on articulation?

DR. OSWALD: In great detail.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

DR. OSWALD: You're going to learn all you ever would want to know about New Jersey Transfer today.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: I think we really want to get to the heart of that issue, because it is one that has really been talked about over the last month by many who are questioning whether or not there is an efficient transfer of these two-year credits to the four-year colleges. Quite frankly, one where we believe there is both inefficiency for the students and for the taxpayers of this state, and one that we can't wait until next year, or two years from now, or 2010, to resolve; one that has to be dealt with right now with a demand for new teachers in all of our schools, particularly in our Abbott school districts where there is a mandate for Early Childhood education.

And quite frankly, we talk about Early Childhood education and sometimes we use the term *preschool*, and there is a very big distinction and a difference between Early Childhood education, which is really the foundation for elementary education, to preschool. And I think we have to acknowledge that in the articulation agreements; we have to acknowledge that in the teacher endorsement and certification process that the State is undertaking today. And I think we have to do everything possible to facilitate the transfer of those credits, whether we have an umbrella or not. The New Jersey Transfer umbrella that currently exists may not be sufficient to provide the mobility of students from two-year colleges to four-year institutions. So I'm very eager to hear the very specifics about this topic today.

DR. OSWALD: We definitely aren't there yet, Assemblyman. We have a lot more work to do, but we have made great strides in the past

three or four years, as you'll hear. And there's a lot more to do. It's a -- as you say, something we need to do now. And we're very close to being where you want to be.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

Assemblywoman Voss has a question, also.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: I just wanted to ask Dr. Sharon Ryan, as well as Dr. Jeanne Oswald, is there a difference in the education courses that one takes at the community college level? Because it seems to me that you said you needed to enhance whatever education courses they had had at the community college. And if one is taking an education course, shouldn't that be consistent in terms of its requirements, whether it was at a community college or at a four-year college?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Ryan, if you wouldn't mind using the microphone. (referring to PA microphone) Just come up to the podium.

DR. RYAN: The assumption is -- sorry, I'm a teacher. I just don't use these. (laughter) The assumption is that, at the moment -- is that, it seems to me, the assumption is that if you have -- even if you do education at the community college, unless it's a very specific articulation agreement like the one between Hudson Community College and Jersey City -- and I'm only talking about Early Childhood here, P-3, and my own experience at Rutgers -- that that education class does not count. Right? The liberal arts we consider are similar, but the education classes we're assuming are not. So when I say enhance, what I mean is, we're losing opportunities, because students who choose an Early Childhood degree and start at a community college, what they do is they have to take an A.A.

degree, not an A.A.S. degree, if they're going to transfer in as many credits as they can into, say, a Rutgers College or a Douglas College. So because of that, they may miss out. Because the A.A.S. degree, we found, is the one that's offering a lot of the content that's staying the same.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: I'm sorry to interrupt you, but this is what is confusing me. Because it would seem to me that if I'm going to be offering a course, let's say teaching children with special needs, shouldn't the syllabus for that course be consistent, regardless of where-- Having been in education for a long time, I have written many, many courses of study. And so when I train a new teacher to teach, say a humanities course, that's a very ambiguous term -- what is going to be part of that humanities course? I want to make sure that everyone who teaches that course is going to give the kids the same wealth of knowledge.

And so why can't we -- and I don't mean to interrupt you, again -- but why can't we have a course that is offered at the community college level, say in preschool training, whatever the course title may be, and then have a syllabus that, regardless of where you're going to the community college, that the young person, or whoever is taking the course, is going to learn exactly the same thing at Bergen Community College as he does at Middlesex Community College? And therefore, what would be the problem of transferring those credits to Paterson or Montclair or Jersey City? And this would be, to me, the most logical thing to do.

Okay, thank you.

DR. OSWALD: Well, I think you have your finger on the problem. That that's why articulation is so important. If you have a four-year college that has a program that is -- the program that they take in

students as freshmen and go through to become a teacher. If they want to take someone in as a junior, we want to make sure that that person coming in is going to know what they need to do to go to the college. So if there is such a course, as you've described, and it's offered at a community college, but the four-year college has a similar course that may be half of it and contains all, exactly, the same things that were in this course down here, you're going to find the student repeating. So that's why the articulation is so critical between the two-year college and the four-year college.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: But what I don't understand is, we know that that's a problem. We know that we have articulation agreements that work in Hudson County. Why is it that we don't have articulation agreements throughout the state that resolve this problem? Because if not, what we're really creating is a moving target type of curriculum. You're going to take part of this course at a two-year college. You're going to go to a four-year college. You're going to say, "Well, it doesn't meet with all the requirements that we've set forth." Why haven't those requirements been set forth in an articulation agreement so that the student that's taking that course at the two-year college knows that when they take that course, it's going to meet the requirement at a four-year college? Isn't that the purpose of an articulation agreement?

DR. OSWALD: And that is exactly what NJ Transfer does. And you'll learn about that when Dr. Contini and--

Well, Cynthia, I see you're shaking your head. It's got a lot more to do. It's not done, but that is the purpose. Every four-year college here -- and Muriel Rand, and other deans that are here, can tell you -- does not have the same program, and every community college does not have the

same program. And it's true not in just teacher education. It's true in every major across the entire higher ed system. And that's a much greater problem than what you're talking about here with just for early childhood. But I think it might be healthy to have this conversation after you learn a little more about NJ Transfer.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: We will.

There's a speaker from the audience that has a question.

Sir?

J O H N G U T O W S K I, Ed.S.: (speaking from audience) John Gutowski, Middlesex County College.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

DR. GUTOWSKI: Should I use the microphone?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Yes, please.

DR. GUTOWSKI: I'm a very plain speaking man, and I think the answer is a little bit simpler, to Dr. Voss's question. Rutgers has placed the training of early childhood educators at the graduate level, so an undergraduate course in education of any sort wouldn't match what they accept. That's my understanding.

DR. RYAN: (indiscernible)

DR. GUTOWSKI: That's why he said that's in Rutgers.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Voss.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: As I said, education is my passion. So pardon me for-- It would seem to me, though, that if we're going to train people-- When I was an undergraduate, I was a history/English major, and the curriculum was very clearly defined -- what I needed to take as a freshman, what I needed to take as a sophomore, what I

needed to take as a junior, so on, and so forth. And it seems to me that this is not being done on a consistent basis. Because if I were going to a State college or a State university at this point, and let's say I decided to move and say Montclair was closer than Paterson, or whatever, shouldn't I be in the same kind of curriculum and not miss a beat? And I think that when you go to Europe, the curriculum is consistent -- France, Germany. If you're going to get a baccalaureate degree, this is what -- everybody takes the same course. And you can go all over Europe and be in a program, and you don't miss any of the course work, where there isn't a change in the title of the course.

And I think that New Jersey is a relatively small state. Why can't we sit down and formulate curriculum for higher education? And of course, that would encompass preschool -- all kinds of education. We need a standardized curriculum. Because why should somebody come out of one college and say, "Well, I got a better education at Montclair than you got at Paterson?" I mean, that to me is absolutely ludicrous. Okay?

I'll shut up at this point.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay. We'll move on with the agenda. We're going to hear from Dr. Peter Contini, who is the President of Salem County Community College, next.

Dr. Contini, welcome to Perth Amboy, and congratulations on your new project in Salem County.

P E T E R B. C O N T I N I, Ed.D.: Thank you very much, Assemblyman Vas. We had the pleasure of hosting you once, and we are always pleased to see you in Salem County.

And to the other members of the Committee, it's my pleasure to see a good friend from the past, Senator Rice. And it's a pleasure to meet you for the first time, Assemblywoman Voss. I say that because I spent 31 years of my career in K-12 education and the last eight years in higher education in community college, and I have that same passion you have for teacher education and certainly across the board in terms of articulation and transfer.

Although I am President of Salem Community College, I am actually here in a role that I play with the New Jersey Presidents' Council. And just to remind you that that is the legislative body that's been empowered as a result of 1994 -- the restructuring of higher education -- to really have a great deal of influence in terms of what is going on in higher education, certainly in partnership with the Commission on Higher Education. So we see the role as a very important role.

Our current chair of the New Jersey Presidents' Council, Dr. George Pruitt, of Thomas Edison College, could not be here today, but he did ask that the co-chairs of the Articulation and Transfer Coordinating Committee be in attendance if at all possible. The two co-chairs are Dr. Arnold Speert, of William Paterson University-- Dr. Speert is in Canada. So, as the case may be, I'm here representing the Council, as well as the Coordinating Committee. The Committee is made up of representatives of all two-year and four-year public and private institutions, as well as the Commission on Higher Education. And we have, certainly, a broad-based representation.

We take very seriously the role of articulation and transfer, and it's a critical topic. And it's one, honestly, that is not an easy one. And it's

one that has brought great passion, I guess is the best way to describe it. Another term that I'd like to describe is, it creates a lot of professional tension. And I don't think that's bad. It think it's good. And I think the kind of forum that you're hosting today is one that's necessary, because you're looking at it in the context of the impact it has on Abbott schools and certainly on the P-3 initiative that you have, but it's a broader issue. It's the issue of full faith and credit -- the relationships of articulated programs between two- and four-year colleges, no matter what the major in teacher education and no matter what the major in other fields. So it's a very critical issue.

And we've made great progress in what I would describe as information gathering, and some great progress on an individual basis in collaboration. But we are moving in that direction. And that has come as a best result -- is because of an initiative that was really started by Rutgers University, and supported by the State Legislature and the Governor, to do a pilot program to find out what was really happening in articulation and transfer with Rutgers and the community colleges. And when they started, they only wanted to look at maybe six or seven community colleges. But what they found is, we work very well together, as a sector. And so we asked all 19 community colleges to become involved.

And what we looked to was a system that was already in place in Maryland, called ARTSYS. It was a Web-based system that would allow students, counselors, individuals, parents to go literally online, if you will, through the Web, to determine what courses would transfer to which institutions in the majors in which they were interested. So they could be doing this as a high school student in preparation, they could be doing it as

a college student at a community college, they could even be doing it as a four-year college student looking to see if they could make transfers through a community college. So it provided a great deal of opportunity.

That model, that pilot, was initiated by Rutgers and moved along very well and very quickly. And as a result, through the support of the Presidents' Council and the Commission on Higher Education, there was then the request to make a permanent line, if you will, in the budget that would allow for this New Jersey State Transfer initiative. And with that, also the determination that it needed to have a home. It needed to be in a place where it could be continued. And therefore, as a result, an RFP was put out, and Burlington County College was the recipient of that RFP. And now, for the last four, four-and-a-half years, that program has been in place, posted at Burlington County College -- great leadership from President Robert Messina, great leadership from the team that's been assembled. Initially, the Executive Director was Nancy Hazelgrove. Nancy is with us, still working with the project. But as of this year, John Scott has taken over. You're going to hear the progress that's been made with NJ Transfer. It's a very vital project.

How did I get involved? Well, I got involved about four years ago, because the issue of teacher education was on the docket and about articulation and transfer. You heard, from Dr. Oswald, the key words -- *seamless transition*. We have another word, too -- *mirror* the first two years. And also to indicate that we felt there was a great opportunity to expand not only the basic preparations programs, undergraduate, but also the linkages with other projects and opportunities for teacher preparation, which is the alternative route. And so we looked at those issues, and as a

result, I can tell you, on one very positive, the alternative route through the community college is alive and well. And we now have in place, and we'll be starting for the third year, the new Pathways to Teaching, a New Jersey program, a great articulation among the community colleges and currently in partnership with New Jersey City University. And Muriel Rand was intimately involved in that process.

I should just mention to you that prior to that we were told community colleges couldn't do the alternative route. We asked the basic question, why? And what we found out is, they can, and they're doing it very well.

We also have asked the question, "What do we need to do to ensure that there's a better and smoother transition between two- and four-year colleges for teacher education, but also certainly for all the other majors?" We saw the best way to do that was to get away from the anecdotal, the war stories, but to really look at the information -- what is really happening out there in articulation and transfer? And we felt the best way to do that was to use the system that had been piloted by Rutgers, ARTSYS, and now is moving into NJ Transfer. And so we put a lot of emphasis, and you're going to see that information. And there's a folder before you that's going to tell you a little bit about it, and then John's going to prepare you and give a little presentation on it.

But I want to just give you one document that we've used. And this is a collaborative process. Other states have mandated this through legislation. And I have to tell you, talking to people at the Federal level, it is not necessarily the cure-all. Even though it's legislated, they may have course code numbers similar -- they don't necessarily have a better

articulation system of transfer. What's really more important is to make sure that what's happening in our two-year colleges and our four-year colleges is articulation to the best degree. Right now this system is primarily driven by a course-by-course and a program review.

We would hope the day would come -- what really would happen is, if you have finished your associate degree at a community college, the fact that we mirror what's going on, you should transfer right in. There shouldn't have to be a look at the course-by-course. It should be based on what you have been prepared to do. And we're certainly working there.

But I use this as an example. Do you see this form? (indicating) We've used this at a monthly meeting of the New Jersey Presidents' Council, and I'm going to tell you why. It was to create what I call the sense of urgency. Because what Dr. Speert and I concluded is that we had a lot of good faith collaboration, people wanted to work together. But until they saw where they stood, it really made no difference. And so through this creating a sense of urgency, we've created a partnership, a collaboration, saying that we need -- the first thing to know, what courses, what programs will you accept in transfer from a two-year college to a four-year college? What the green tells you is that those colleges have reviewed every community college course that's offered in New Jersey.

Now, if I asked you to judge how many courses that might be, what might you think -- 2,000, 3,000, 5,000? Well, it's 14,000 -- 14,000 different courses. That's been reviewed by these four-year schools that have a green block. The ones that are white haven't finished, and the ones that are yellow are in the process. We've made great progress. When this form

started, it was mostly white, and it got a little yellow, and now it's become very green.

But as important as that step has been, the real proof is what's behind it. And what we are now looking at, very closely, is what courses are being accepted in major, what courses are only being accepted as electives, and what courses aren't being accepted at all. Now, you might say, "Well, how can that be?" Well, it's very logical. There are some programs that are A.A.S. programs, that we consider those to be terminal degree programs at the associate level, and so there was never an intention for them to be transferred. But even that's changed. Rutgers University-Camden, Georgian Court University are now working articulation to have A.A.S. degrees transferable into baccalaureate degrees. So we see great opportunity.

And I think that's some of the challenge that we're having with the early childhood, because many of those A.A.S. programs in early childhood were viewed initially as terminal degrees. There wasn't an expectation for them to go on. And so we're now looking at the world differently. And so what we are now engaged in is, this is great getting this information, and we've made great progress in this collaboration. But now we need to know where the proof is and where the rubber meets the road. And so, whether it's P-3 teacher preparation, whether it's articulation for a student transferring into a business program, for accounting or whatever, the major may be -- because you know what? Two years ago we probably would have looked at this differently.

We have New Jersey STARS now. We're asking the students who are the brightest and the best top 20 percent to stay here in New

Jersey, to get your first two years of education at a community college, because we're going to give you that financial help. We want to make sure that what they move into is certainly articulated and transferred.

We have great partnerships with our four-year colleges and universities. This is not finger-pointing. This is an initiative that we have to look at in a collaboration, find a solution. Because let me tell you, you can't transfer right now from a four-year college to a four-year college midstream in teacher education. The Department of Education approves these programs. They approve them based on standards, but they are looking at it at the conclusion of the program, not what happens after year one, year two, year three, or year four. So it doesn't fit when you're trying to say, "Mirror the first two years." So we have to look at it.

We also have heard the limitation -- the 30-credit limitation on professional studies. Well, if you know in the code, it also says only six of those can come from a community college. But why is that? And we thought that that was going to be removed in the last iteration, but it didn't get removed. First, we were told it was an oversight; second, then it continued to be there. So we need to get away from the idea. If we truly believe that it's about performance, then is it really about course credit counting, or is it about the performance and the proficiency of the individuals? If we believe things like PRACSYS (phonetic spelling) II are good measures, use those measures if you want that to be a gatekeeper for students transferring. But let's make sure that we know why we're doing it.

So we think we've made great strides. We think NJ Transfer is a tremendous tool. It's a tool for both the colleges and universities, because now we can compare and see what the data really tells us, and that's what

we're doing. More importantly, it's an information tool for judgment. And students and parents and others, counselors and so forth, can direct students and give them an opportunity. What you will see when you deal with the data is that we're all over the waterfront, in terms of what's transferable and isn't transferable, because of what's happening. So what we're dealing with is partnerships on an individual basis, which is fine. It's a start. But that's not going to solve the Statewide initiative that we need.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Contini, let me just ask the \$64,000 question--

DR. CONTINI: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: --and get around all this smoke and mirrors. It sounds like we've done a nice review of all the curriculum. It's extensive. There's 14,000 courses that have to be reviewed. We also have a great query system, which is the New Jersey Transfer, which basically allows students to go on and to find out what courses are going to be permitted to be transferred from the two-year to the four-year, or even from a four-year to a four-year. The real issue here is, are we having difficulty getting faculty from your two-year schools and faculty from the four-year schools to agree on the content of the curriculum that's going to be transferred? Is that the issue?

DR. CONTINI: Well, I think it's one of the many issues that are associated with it. It's who makes the judgment in the final analysis.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: So either we allow the faculty to do this over the next six or nine months, or two or three years, at millions of dollars of cost to the taxpayers of the State; or the Legislature looks at some

of the models that are out there -- including the one in Maryland -- and we create a statewide model for articulation.

And so the point today is, are we going to have the cooperation -- not the collaboration to review the information and let us know what the problem is -- but are we going to have the cooperation between the two-year and the four-year schools to get this done in short order, or are we going to be required to do it legislatively? That's the issue at hand today.

DR. CONTINI: And let me just provide this little quick-- Maryland mandated-- Maryland marvels at the success we've had with our transfer system, in terms of data collection, the information. So we know that just legislative isn't necessarily the solution. Can we learn things from other states like Florida and Texas and California? And so the answer is, yes, we can learn things from them.

We, at this point -- and this is a tough issue on a policy level, I have to tell you. It's a tough issue. Even among the 19 community colleges, if I surveyed them right now -- and Larry Nespoli, our President of the Council of County Colleges is here -- I would suggest to you that some people would say, "Get it into law right now and do it, automatically." There are others who would say, "I think we can form relationships and partnerships in collaboration that are going to make this thing work." Because we also know that mandating it will not necessarily develop the partnership that we want for the students, in the final analysis. So it's a tough issue.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: We appreciate that. We understand that, and that's our preference. But the clock is ticking. Dollars are being spent. Again, you pointed to the New Jersey STARS program where the

taxpayers of the state are now scholarshiping the best students in the state, asking them to stay in the state at the two-year schools. We can't allow, nor can we afford to have those dollars wasted in the curriculum dispute, if you will, between two-year or four-year universities. Okay?

I know Senator Rice has a question or a comment that he wants to make, as well.

Senator Rice.

SENATOR RICE: Thank you very much.

We all have different views on how this should move forward. I want the record to be clear as to what my view is. It's based on experience. First of all, and I have some concerns that we can look at. I have an associate degree, a bachelor's, a master's -- 20 credits toward a law degree I'll probably never get. So I've been to a lot of different institutions and everything worked differently. The reason I'm raising this is because some of these courses aren't, as we said, not academically -- well, as heavy as others. And when you tell me that the institution that did the pilot and the experiment is Rutgers, and then prior to you saying that someone tells me that Rutgers put the course at the graduate level and not here, that in itself creates a problem.

And then when you come from a background of discrimination, and I understand how the world is made, you kind of know when people want you in or want you out. I get a little concerned -- why a course at the graduate level, that could very well be handled at this level by the mindset of the students, and the type of information being provided is not that difficult to absorb; and we need it at this level.

Then we -- and I supported the program -- but when you started talking about the STARS program and we want the best and brightest to go to school here, I'm always concerned about the best and brightest going to school here, because I certainly want them. But that tells me that those who may not be top-notch, as we classify the best and brightest, have got to look outside the state for an opportunity of higher education. And I'm saying the best and brightest that I supported will not be a trade-off at the expense of the devolution and demise of those others who are getting that.

I just gave seven book scholarships to high school students. And I made it very clear -- don't give me the best and brightest. Give me the ones who are probably the best and brightest, but it wasn't picked up in the academic system; but they're still going to college and may graduate number one in their class, when the best and brightest, as we know them, may come someplace behind them.

And so what I'm saying for the record, I think Assemblyman Vas is correct. I think in his own nice, kind, and gentle way he's implying that those who are responsible need to move forthwith, as we both need processes and to collaborate to fix some of these things that are not fixed. Patience is a virtue, I understand that, but patience is not what I have any more, and we go back a lot of years.

And so I want to say, again, there will be legislation. And what comes first, the chicken or the egg, I don't care. But there will be legislation. At least, whether you pass or not, for me (indiscernible), primarily because, as you said, legislation may not be the solution to make things perfect. But the one thing I've found out, and going on 19, 20 years

as a State Legislator, legislation gives me the foundation, the security I need to at least know we are starting at this level. It gives me the floor I need. Because what happens in collaboration, we agree collectively on where we are going and, as life has it, people change. Some people pass on. Some people get frustrated and leave systems. Some never wanted to go in that direction in the first place. And as we continue to change the human resource piece and new people come in, through their experience and relationship they convince them to go another way.

And so I want something that's fixed into law. If it's going to get changed, as related to the floor where we should be, it is changed by the Legislature to come. And so -- because I see a lot of barriers in the way that can be fixed. I see some things that maybe look more difficult that have to be worked through. But if we don't move those immediate, nonsensible barriers right now, we're going to continue to lose generations. Because we're going to have teachers, in particular in the preschool systems, in early childhood education, that are not going to be getting all that they want to get. They want to get it right and all that they need to bring these generations up. And every generation that is not brought up correctly, I'm going to lose it to the streets. That's real. That's happening every day.

So I just want to be on the record with that. And I really believe that all these committees and task forces and agencies that we have put in place and we're spending dollars on need to find some time, as the Assemblyman has, to hold a few more meetings and really get to clicking. We've been laid-back in the Legislature. This Committee has been laid-back in the Joint Committee on the Public Schools because of the leadership of the Subcommittee and some sickness. This committee is

active now -- the Subcommittee. So we're going to forge ahead, and so is the Joint Committee.

So I just wanted to say that I am confused. And we need to -- make a note, Melanie -- we need to find out why certain curriculums -- certain courses are placed at a graduate level. I don't have a problem with courses at a graduate level. I went to grad school. As long as it's not what I can get here, and I'll repeat it here. I've had those courses, too. I got the A. No one knows why I got the A. "I already got the A down here, they're the same course. I kept telling you, it's the same course. Why do I have to take it again?" "You got to take it again." "I'm fine. It's a lot more money." "No problem." Okay? That's the experience we have growing up in urban communities. Because also the experience we have, those of us who have been blessed, we went to college. So we know how the system works inside, and we transferred. Okay? And we know how that works, too. And that's why we have to correct this.

DR. CONTINI: Could I just respond for a moment to something that Senator Rice said?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Sure.

DR. CONTINI: Senator, I have great respect for you personally, and I just wanted you to know that my statements about NJ STARS and the sense of urgency was not to imply that it wasn't important for all students.

SENATOR RICE: I know that.

DR. CONTINI: I just wanted to say that. As a result, it puts even a bigger spotlight focus on it.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Assemblywoman Voss.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: It would seem that what we need in the Department of Education is a division on higher education, which I think is no longer there. I'm not too sure, but I think that I have heard this. And if we had a division in the Department of Education, maybe the articulation of creating standardized curriculum would be a more possible goal. We can talk the talk, but until some of us actually get down there and begin to really formalize some plans, it's just rhetoric. I think we all understand.

When I say certain things, I've seen heads nod in the audience that you're in concurrence with what I say. And so why don't we just get the show on the road, so to speak? I would assume that we would require legislation to create a division of higher education, and that shouldn't be any problem. And once that was put into place, then maybe some of the other pieces would fall into place as well.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: In addition to that, the other issue is that we can't allow the individual four-year colleges to make an arbitrary decision about the content of curriculum, whether or not it's going to be applied towards the area of the major or have it apply towards an elective. That's the other issue here, because that's not cost-effective. If we have a student who has decided at a two-year school that they want to go into teaching when -- specifically into early childhood education, they should know that when they take a course at a two-year college that that course is going to be applied towards their major at a four-year school. There should be no mystery about the course content and whether those credits are going to be transferred or not. That's the whole objective of NJ Transfer. It's not to give students an opportunity to make a query and determine whether or

not it is or isn't. They should know that if they're taking that course at Middlesex County College and they're going to finish off their education at Rutgers University, that that course is going to be applied towards their major. And that's all about being more efficient, in terms of course articulation -- curriculum articulation, if you will.

Dr. Contini, do you have some more you want to--

DR. CONTINI: I just want-- Certainly, there's nothing you said I could disagree with. I just want you also to know that one of the other values is -- that you probably find this hard to believe -- but our students make changes in their decisions about career.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Yes.

DR. CONTINI: And so having options like that to know where things are going, it really is very helpful.

And I also wanted just to give a little plug for another collaboration that's going on -- addresses something that Assemblywoman Voss spoke about a moment ago, and that was the student who may not necessarily believe they want to go to college initially and are going into the workforce and vocational career education. We just formulated a great partnership with apprenticeship training that will allow students who enter apprenticeship training to go on for an associate degree at their local community college and, hopefully, onto a four-year degree, if they choose to. So I just wanted to give that. That's called NJ PLACE, and you'll be hearing more about that one.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: NJ what?

DR. CONTINI: PLACE -- P-L-A-C-E -- Pathway Leading Apprentices to College Education. Okay? And the gentleman who borne that idea is right there -- Raymond Yannuzzi.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Dr. Contini.

Our next speaker is Muriel Rand, from the College of Education, Jersey City College -- New Jersey City University.

MURIEL K. RAND, Ed.D.: New Jersey, yes. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Yes. I'm sorry.

DR. RAND: Thank you. The name is problematic.

I'm very pleased to be speaking, again, with you all. And since we last met, I've had some time to talk with a lot of people and think very deeply about what's wrong and how we can fix it. And certainly, we've already talked about a lot of issues.

Let me just first begin, because I know there are people in the audience who don't know the history of the collaboration between New Jersey City University and Hudson County Community College. Between our institutions right now, we not only have an articulation agreement, we have a joint admissions agreement. So that in their first year at Hudson County Community College, a student can declare that they would like to be admitted to New Jersey City University. They follow a specific curriculum, maintain a specific grade point average, and they are automatically admitted into New Jersey City University.

We do not -- we do not do a course by course transfer analysis. I think that is critical for everyone in this room to hear. As good as I think New Jersey Transfer is -- as important as I think it is and as much as I think

it has helped our gen ed transfer -- I don't think that will work. The only way we got to where we have this seamless transition is to stop looking at individual courses and look at programs. So that the A.A. degree -- now, this articulation is only with the A.A. degree at Hudson County Community College. When they come in with the A.A. degree, we don't look at the gen ed courses they have. We give them credit for our general studies program. On the transfer evaluation sheet is a big *X*. We don't even look at the courses.

We have done a similar thing with our education program. I need to make it clear, also, that to be a teacher requires three parts to your program. There's a general education part -- this is all mandated by State code. There's a gen ed requirement -- general education requirement; there's a major in arts and sciences requirement; and then there are 30 credits of education courses. So when we talk about articulating, it's important to realize that we're talking about not just the education piece, but the entire program.

And we have been able to make the professional education piece very similar. We divided the program into phases. And the first phase can be done at either a community college or at New Jersey City University. So that when they come in we don't say, "What did you get, what were these courses?" We just know what courses they're going to take.

I think, in order to move forward, we have to get away from comparing syllabi to comparing outcomes. Let me just give you a quick practical experience of this. I'm a sailor, and the American Sailing Association has an unbelievably well-defined set of competencies that you

get different levels and certificates for. I just took the basic keel boating course. And I looked at about 10 different sailing schools in New Jersey that offer this ASA 101 course. Some of them were 60 hours over five days; some of them were four days; some of them were two weekends; some of them were two days. Some of them had eight hours of on-the-boat training and two hours of classroom training; some had three and seven. Every one of them was different. But you open up the ASA book and it lists the competencies that you have to meet to get that basic keel boat license. And they are very specific. You need to be able to tack, and you need to be able to jibe, and need to be able to do the man-overboard drill, and you need to know what the parts of the boat are. It's very specific.

We have done that in early childhood education. We have identified those same levels of competencies, but we haven't yet used them. And I think if we were to push this forward, what needs to be done is to identify two levels of competencies. The levels of competencies, or abilities -- whatever you want to call them -- the levels of abilities that one gets in the first phase of their program that can be done at a two-year school; and the levels of competencies that one gets at the second phase, which would presumably happen at a four-year school.

The reason why the competencies are so important -- and I'm going to be somewhat direct and honest about this -- is because there's a lot of status involved in the tension between our institutions. And those of us at four-year schools say, "How could a community college teach a course as well as we do? We have doctorates and they don't all have doctorates. And we suffer to get that doctorate, so it should mean something." We have to be open and honest about the institutional climates that we're dealing with.

The four-year schools are very concerned about quality because, you know what, we're the ones who are held to accreditation standards. We're the ones – and I just went through an NCATE accreditation process, and the amount of work was unbelievable. And I'm going to be held responsible for the courses that they took at Hudson County Community College. So we're very concerned about quality.

If you focus on competencies, on these abilities, then you can't say, "I did it better than you." Right? It takes that out because you either learned the competency and can demonstrate it or you didn't. And it doesn't matter whether it came from an elite four-year school, that only accepts people with 1400 SATs, or at New Jersey City University that gives everybody a chance.

Because we're looking at competencies, not courses. And that way, we can't say, "This course is better than my course." Either you got the competencies or you didn't. And that's the general direction that education is moving in right now, anyway. In our NCATE accreditation, they did not even look at our course syllabi – they didn't want to see the course syllabi. What that wanted to see is, "Show me your assessment data that says your teacher candidates can perform these competencies in the classroom."

So we're all, in the state, required to do this now. So I don't think it's a stretch for us to get there. Now, the bigger question is how do we get people to want to do this. I'm going to also be direct -- the four-year schools don't have a lot of incentive to do this. Why should we want to do it? We have our programs, we've figured them all out, we get our tuition, and there's really not an incentive. Except, maybe, social justice -- the fact

that there are people who don't get an opportunity to be teachers because they can't get into our schools, or because they can't transfer into our schools. For me that's an enormous issue. That was my motivation for working this hard; and the passion of Adriana Flores Kuhn, that I wanted to recognize, as my colleague at Hudson County Community College. We believe so strongly that everyone should have an opportunity to be a teacher. Even poor people, even people who can't speak English very well, even people who haven't been educated in the best high schools -- that everybody should have an opportunity. Because in the end, that's going to make our preschools better. Having people from the community is going to make our preschools better.

But I recognize that the social justice motivation is not enough for everybody. I wish it was -- I wish it was. There are a couple ways that I've seen in higher ed that you can make things happen. One, of course, is regulation. We could get the New Jersey Department of Ed to put in regulation -- these different levels. We were all just reviewed by the NJ DOE to see if we meet code. But the code is written in very generic topics. So they have to have study in child development, and study in curriculum, and study in special needs. But it doesn't say what the competencies are, and it doesn't say what order they have to be done in. We have to, now, make an order for them. You're absolutely right, it's crazy that we don't have some kind of standardization. But I don't think it's the courses that should be standardized, it's the competencies that should be standardized.

So we could do it through regulation. We could do it through legislation where you legislate that this has to happen, and then we would have to do. But then you have the whole bit about taking ownership. Or

another option that I want to throw out here is grants. The government has the ability to use grants as a bribe to get people to do what the government thinks they should be doing -- to be good citizens, and do what's right and morally just. And I will admit that most of the work that we did with Hudson County Community College to get this done was done with grants. We had an enormous grant from the Commission on Higher Ed that was focused on articulation, in which we developed this model with State funding.

The reason why the funding was important is two reasons. One is because it allowed us to have the time to talk to each other. Adriana and I have spent so much time together, with our colleagues, developing the program. But it also gave me what I call *institutional leverage*. When I wanted something done, for example, getting a course changed through the Provost's office, when I go and I say, "I have to do this because of the grant," it gets done. If I go to the Provost and just say, "Oh, this has to get done because I think it's a good idea," it sits there for another six months and we have a committee that analyzes it. But when you have a grant, you have accountability to the funders, so you make things happen that wouldn't happen otherwise.

The other grant that we have is a Title V -- a U.S. Department of Education Title V grant for Hispanic-serving institutions. We are both Hispanic-serving institutions. And that has developed a rather large and impressive, I think, transfer center at New Jersey City University. We call it the University Advisement Center. So we have full-time transfer counselors that work on the counseling piece. That again would not have

happened without the incentive of this grant making it happen, because we had to do what the funder wanted us to do.

So I offer that as another possibility -- is to offer financial incentive in terms of grants. There are only 23 institutions that prepare teachers in New Jersey -- 23. So you're right, it's a small school and it's conceivable that you could get 23 institutions together to do this work. And I think that could happen, but I don't think it's going to happen just from goodwill alone, because there's not enough motivation for the four-year schools to change.

And I think I'm going to end there. If you have any questions, I'd be glad to answer them.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you. Thank you for your honesty and your passion (laughter). Thank you.

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Senator Rice.

SENATOR RICE: I know we're going to try to move the agenda, but I-- You mentioned something about-- Another reason I want to do legislation is I'm concerned about attitudes, as well. And you're right. I'd like to think if I applied myself, given my background academically and my life experiences -- I thoroughly believe you're right -- I could teach as well as anyone. Now, I talk that way, but I have a problem with this Ph.D. versus something else. And the reason I have a problem with that is because I never knew -- and I believe this is the California system -- that when people were getting Ph.D.s, when I had completed my Bachelor's and my Master's program -- I found out they didn't have to do a Master's program. And I don't know if that's changed, but I'm saying, "Wait a

minute, now. So if I get a Ph.D. in New Jersey, I'm going to have to do another layer. So what makes those people at Berkeley brighter than me?" So I've gotten smarter because, I mean, that was my attitude back then when I heard that.

I think you'd have a credential in competency in what it is you're teaching at a certain level. The grant situation, I think, is very wonderful. The only problem I have with grants -- we should do them when they are necessary, but I think we should compel people to do what is their responsibility to meet that without the grants and things like that. The grants should be going to books or some other type of curriculum, and that's what we're going to have to do with legislation.

Now, you don't have all this discretion anymore.

DR. RAND: You may need both.

SENATOR RICE: You may need both, depending. But where we don't need it, and folks just think they're going to play games and delay things, then we're going to have to hold them accountable. I mean, it's just that simple.

(indiscernible) when I said that we waste dollars trying to get people that are responsible to do things they should do anyway, I said remove the people and start over. But we're going to look at all that. And that's why I think these hearings are terrific, because we do have honesty coming out of those who are committed to doing the kinds of things me and others here are committed to doing. And that's what we need. Because with that, we can tighten the system up and make it work.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, very much.

Our next presenter is Barbara Karpinski. She's a professor of Early Childhood Education at the County College of Morris.

Barbara.

B A R B A R A K A R P I N S K I, M.S.W.: Mine is relatively short.

And actually, I've prepared a statement regarding several of my student's experiences. And I'm covering almost everything that you've talked about, so I'm going to reiterate and confirm.

First, I'd like to start with a paraphrase from a study that was done by the National Center for Early Development and Learning. And it says, "Access to bachelor's degree programs upon the completion of an associate degree has continued to be a problem because of articulation challenges."

As the coordinator for early childhood education programs at County College of Morris, I see this during each of my counseling sessions. I would like to spend some time discussing this subject of articulation challenges as they apply to some individual students. And I know these barriers exist in other majors, because I also counsel students in the social work major at my college, since I have an M.S.W., and I'm an L.C.S.W. in the State of New Jersey.

But the Early Childhood majors appear to be particularly vulnerable to this problem. Now, the majority of students at County College of Morris come in directly out of high school into the Early Childhood program. For the most part, our students in this program are full-time, although we do have a growing number of nontraditional students who are seeking a degree on a part-time basis. Therefore, I have a lot of my

Early Childhood courses now running in the later part of the afternoon and into the evening.

Most of these students are also female, so the demographics are fairly skewed. They are diverse in their makeup, representing many cultures -- and that is increasing. When they enter our college I usually have an opportunity to meet with them during the first semester, because I want to make sure they're on track with the curriculum check sheet. Most of them are not certain of the educational path they want to take at that time. In this way they are much like four-year college students.

Most of my students are entering the major because, number one, this is -- number one reason: They love children. They haven't had many, most of them. I think that's probably why -- I'm kidding. (laughter) They also may already work in an early childhood setting, and they have been directed to take courses in order to meet a group teacher standard for the State; or they are looking for an associate's degree in Early Childhood in order to have a better position within their early childhood setting.

Some of them are changing careers. They may be middle-aged people in a cycle of life where they are rethinking what they want to do. I can identify with that, since I did the same thing. They may have already taken courses in high school, especially our technical high school in Morris County, and it has affirmed their decision to be an early childhood teacher. And some of them are simply investigating this as an option.

I've left off the last one, which is because their girlfriend or boyfriend might be in the field and taking those courses.

By the time they reach the third semester at my school, I would say the majority of them are seriously considering transferring into a four-

year institution. They're hooked in this field. Most of them are receiving some financial aid, as well as moneys from other sources. And I had one student this semester who was receiving money from a family member who agreed to fund anybody within the family that was getting an education degree. She had no children of her own, and apparently had enough money to do this, so she had a little independent resource.

Some of these students are commuting long distances to go to our college, which surprised me, actually. A lot of them are working full-time, most of them are working at least part-time. Some of them are living independently, and some of them are responsible for their own families at this time. I have many single mothers in my program.

They are busy students. Attending college is a luxury for them. They cannot afford to waste their time nor their money. Barriers to articulation can do both. I would like to offer you a typical scenario that occurs in the process of my academic counseling. A student is advised, by me, to follow the curriculum for Early Childhood Education associate degree. I have created this curriculum myself, and I work very hard to accommodate the four-year colleges that my students typically go to. When applying for acceptance into a four-year college, my student is frequently told that most of -- many of the courses they have taken at our college will not fill those colleges' requirements in such areas as history, sociology, and math, among others. They are told that they will "take" the course, but these courses will go into elective. And I carefully instruct them to ask that question when they are applying to a four-year college. "Where are you putting that course? You tell me you are taking it, but where is it going?" I've had students come to me after they've graduated from the four-college

and informing me they've had to take as many as 140, 145 credits -- which is absolutely ridiculous -- in order to graduate from that feeder institution.

The students need to retake these courses, and the fact is it's expensive and it's time-consuming. Yesterday I met with several of my colleagues from county college and picked their brains for some ideas that they would like me to discuss here. They are all teaching in liberal arts departments. One of my colleagues had an issue just this year with a four-year State university. And on behalf of her student, she said I think you should report this. It was with liberal arts courses.

The student was told that they needed to take another 15 credits of liberal arts for graduation from that four-year institution. This faculty member took it upon herself to get on the phone, and advocated for this student for quite a while with many people within that four-year institution. She was successful on behalf of that student, but she reiterated that this is not a typical scenario. Most students are not this successful, simply because either they can't find somebody to advocate for them, or they don't have the wherewithal to do it themselves. They're intimidated frequently by people in higher ed. And why should they fight for these credits that they took in good faith with the assumption that they would be accepted in transfer?

As it was already stated, only six credits called *education* courses are transferable. So any courses in excess of this number could go into the electives, making those courses meaningless, and they are paying twice, often, for the same course. Time and money can be wasted, and for the nontraditional student this is often enough reason to discourage them from pursuing further education.

I have had many students come to me and say they just don't have the time, money, nor the energy to retake courses. They become very discouraged.

Another barrier in the articulation process is the inconsistency of transcript evaluations within the same receiving institution. My students come to me, frequently, complaining that another student had courses accepted by a four-year college that they were denied. They were the same schools, and the same majors. The difference lies in the evaluator, and sometimes a parent or a teacher who's advocating for that particular student.

Some students find that private colleges in New Jersey will offer them a better deal in accepting more credits. This is very attractive, but often these schools don't have Early Childhood majors, and so the student gives up their dream of being an early childhood educator. This is most unfortunate, considering the fact that New Jersey is in great need of teachers with a P-3 certification.

Another alternative for CCM students -- to apply to colleges outside of New Jersey. This is becoming a more frequent occurrence. I encourage those students with GPAs of 3.0 or better to try colleges in other states when they have become frustrated by the in-state institutions. Many of my students are going into Pennsylvania, for example, and have had great success in articulation.

As I see it, it is too bad that we are subsidizing students going into colleges into other states because our own State institutions are unwilling to make changes in policies and guidelines about accepting credits.

The College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station has signed an articulation agreement with the Early Childhood Education Department at CCM. They worked closely with us to create a program that is acceptable to both institutions, and offers a smooth transition into the junior year. There are also many grants, scholarships and financial aid available to those students at that college who require it. It is a customized curriculum which works fine for the student who is making this choice early, but this is not typical of most students.

I encourage students to decide as soon as possible where they intend to transfer, so that I can advise them appropriately. This involves customizing individual plans for each student to match the requirements of the individual college that they are interested in. This process takes a great deal of time for me and for the student. It is not practical for this reason, and yet it is the best way, at this time, for me to help a student accomplish a smooth transition into a four-year college without loss of credit.

We really need to have more transfer agreements in similar content. We need also to work toward eliminating the roadblocks in articulation or transfer of credit issues. It would save time and money, encourage more students to remain in school, and create a larger pool of much-needed early childhood educators for the State of New Jersey.

Practically speaking, the county college offers a wonderful beginning to many students. We're a low-cost provider of an excellent education. We know that the transfer student who begins at a county college is more likely to graduate from a four-year institution than that native student. Minority and immigrant populations are more likely to begin their education at a community or a county college, and then seek

transfer. Statistics state that last year, one-third of all babies born in the State of New Jersey were born to immigrant mothers. This will translate to an increase in the community college population. And if the four-year colleges rethink their positions and work to eliminate these barriers, they too will profit.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Barbara. (applause)

Any questions? If not, we'll move to our next speaker, John Gutowski, the Chair of the Psychology and Education Department, from Middlesex County College.

John.

And just to let everyone know, that when we conclude here there are going to be some sandwiches and some refreshments that are being provided; so please don't rush out of here. We would like to continue a networking opportunity with many of you. You have a lot to offer, and we certainly want to glean as much as possible from all of you.

John, please.

DR. GUTOWSKI: Thank you so much, Assemblyman.

Thank you all for hearing me out today. Yeah -- county colleges, we are super-affordable because we're half the price of the next cheapest upper-division institution. That's why we get the underprivileged, the minorities, and everybody else who needs a break and a really good start.

My job, as the chairman of the psychology and education department, has many different responsibilities. However, I spend almost -- I would say -- 80 to 90 percent of my time trying to ease the transition of

students, and to do the right things for students transferring in education, especially in early childhood education. All the upper-division institutions provide us with is a moving target. We wind up dancing on eggshells, and doing our darnedest to try to give them the student with the right background of courses. And I really agree with what's been said before. If we keep doing a course-by-course articulation, we'll never get it perfect, we'll never get it right. There has to be some sense of reasonableness because, ladies and gentlemen, I think Davy Crockett, when he was in the Senate, said it best: "It don't even make good nonsense what we have in place now."

All right. I'll have some handouts available at the end, if anybody cares. I have four areas that I want to talk about. And I think I'm going to give you the concrete rather than the abstract, and you can make any judgments from those.

We have one concrete, wonderful transfer agreement, and it was because of the cultive personality that developed between me and my contacts at Kean University in early childhood education. I will give you a copy of that. It works because we have an Associate of Applied Science, which theoretically is not a transfer degree, except that degree has five approved electives which can be custom-tailored for the receiving institution, and one humanities elective. And everything else makes it look like a liberal arts degree. So it has general ed components, and if a student comes in with the, "No, no, no. I want to go to work, so give me the practical and applied course in introduction to early childhood education; give me hands-on creative activities for young children," I tell them you can take those, they will not transfer.

So I will allow you to pick this up and see what we advise based on a course-by-course area. For example, however, to be very precise, in early childhood education, Kean says, "Give us one History of Western Civilization course and we'll transfer it." Well, I find that's wonderful because I precisely can advise a student. However, what's the downside? A kid that decides, "I want to find out more about United States history because I'm an immigrant," winds up losing the course that's so meaningful because it's not the History of Western Civ. Again, maybe that doesn't make good nonsense, because everything has to be done on a precise, course-by-course basis.

Anyway, some of our students who are not fresh out of high school, who come to us with CDA -- that's Child Development Associate credential, nationwide credential -- and that might have up to 15 college credits, will find out that, for the most part, they don't transfer. They may have the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services, Bureau of Licensing -- catch my breath here, I'm asthmatic-- They have a group teacher approval, and that requires 15 credits of college course work that generally will not transfer, because they are very specific to training somebody in early childhood education.

So ladies and gentlemen, it's a mess. And what we have to do is figure out a way to get everybody not just talking, but accomplishing. I'm a great believer in two things. You know, there's been an awful lot of process going on in New Jersey. I'd like to see some results; I'd like to see the product. Because there is a time to stop playing ball and to find out who won the game. And let's get this game won.

And I think, if there is legislation, good. Because I understand that attitudes always follow regulation. It's absolutely the truth in social psychology.

Okay, second major point. Nontraditional students have taken that group teacher approval or child development associate's. Why can't there be some flexibility in allowing some of those credits, or even all of those 15 credits, count towards an early childhood degree, since they are still -- those credits are still 50 percent or less than a professional component of 30 or more credits in education.

Three. A specific example. This is my third point. Montclair University and I had a bit of a go-around once upon a time because of a student who almost graduated from Middlesex with the -- oh God forbid -- the Associate of Applied Science, but who took every course correctly for transfer to Kean, and at the last moment said, "Umm, no, I want to go to Montclair." I think friends or a boyfriend was the reason, as was mentioned before. Montclair's transfer advisor was going over the courses, and was very impressed with how this girl, who started as a very weak student, turned herself around and got all A's and B's by the end of her stay in Middlesex, and had a very respectable above-B average, above a 3.0 average. And was saying, "Oh good, this is a good liberal arts type course: general ed, humanities," taking everything. And then said, "Now, this is an Associate of Arts degree, isn't it?" And the student said, "I don't think so. I think it's an Associate of Applied Science. But does that matter? Because you're looking at each of these courses." And Montclair's representative said, "Yes, it does matter, because we're not taking anything if it's an Associate of Applied Science."

Ladies and gentlemen, Associate of Applied Science degrees are not all the same. If you take a look at what we advise, it looks like a liberal arts degree with an education capstone course for sophomore year field placement in an early childhood setting, with criterion that are measurable, that are evaluated, and that are very high class.

Anyway, that's number three. Pardon me, anybody from Montclair. But we've got to talk. (laughter)

And I'd like to say, even to the Montclair people, especially in this case, the best and the brightest in New Jersey are very often developed in the two-year institution. And the people at the four-year institution should be super happy to get those who survive us, because they're getting the best and the brightest, and the ones who are most well-developed. We've done the weeding out for them.

And that's my fourth point, because Kean University had a little proposal for us. And I think they're kind of saying, "We want to make sure that these students that you're sending us really can get into the education by passing the entry level test that we have available" -- the APT test, the Academic Profile Test. And it's at their cutoff score. So we ran a pilot this year -- I thought you'd like to know about it -- about 60 percent of the students in the capstone course, but who were not yet graduated, passed it. Turns out that's approximately the same percentage of people who take it at Kean University who pass it on the first try. So our students have equivalent academic preparation to Kean University, and they can prove it with a standardized, valid test. There should be very little question. And that goes right back to issues presented earlier about let's look at competencies even more than individual courses.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm done. Thanks for your time; thanks for hearing me.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you John. Thank you very much.

Okay, we have two final speakers we're going to hear from today. One is a student -- I believe, Robert Mays. Is Robert Mays here?

Robert, please come forward. And thank you for joining us today.

R O B E R T E. M A Y S: No problem.

Thank you for having me.

I am a student, currently at NJCU. As some people call me, I am a career student. I've been in college forever.

I did complete a bachelor's program before, but my greatest accomplishments were the associate's programs -- degrees I completed at Hudson County Community. I'm currently at NJCU to complete another bachelor's program. I graduated from Hudson County Community College with a degree in Early Childhood Education.

The thing is that, what I want to talk about is, as far as the articulation program that I have been through. It was very difficult for me to actually complete school or just to go to a college, because of my personal experiences, my personal life. Just to share something with you, presently, even though with me being successful in college, I would share it to say that both my parents are incarcerated, and I did not have the advocacy that someone has spoke about, which most students do not have. Do not feel sorry for me. I do not share that with you, because I maintained a 3.9

G.P.A. throughout my college career. The 0.1 was the professor's fault.
(applause)

And, as with many other people in my community, many friends that I have shared, that I have, part of the problem is that -- the things that we face, the situations we face in life -- to first going to college. There are a lot of barriers; there are a lot of trials and tribulations; there are a lot of obstacles to over-go. And when anyone has gone over those obstacles and has endured whatever it is that prevented them from going to college and receive an associate's degree, the second set of obstacles is exactly the articulation process. I didn't have much problem with it because I was my own advocate, but I know many people who do.

I graduated with one young lady who currently works at CVS, who did graduate from Hudson County Community College. When she learned that she had to take at least 15 credits at New Jersey City University, due to them not being accepted, she was very discouraged. If she had completed -- or if the articulation process was much smoother, she would possibly have been, by next semester, earning \$45,200 as a teacher in Jersey City, rather than \$14,500 at CVS. That's really the reality of it.

I know that -- we are talking about the articulation process, but I still feel that part of -- that's not just the only issue. Many of the issues are the lack of community support, the lack of family support, and the lack of knowledge that students have before entering into college. Not that they don't want to. Because we know, and I know, and many of my peers know that education is the way to go. Earning a Bachelor's degree is the way go. We know. But the associate's degree is just when you're on the way to the event. The bachelor's is when you have arrived. The master's is when

you've arrived in style. The doctorate is when you're on your way out, I guess. (laughter) It depends on your age.

But, nevertheless, there are problems that many of my peers face, and many people like myself. I cannot stand up here and say that the minority population is more affected by this articulation process. It's like, you know, really a blow to the ribs when you learn that after you overcome your personal problems and obstacles, now you have to face another set of obstacles. And this set of obstacles is a different bureaucracy; there are new bureaucracies, there are new challenges. And it's scary, it really is. And therefore, they get discouraged. And I think that it's up to the New Jersey Higher Education Commission to really do something about that, to be the advocate for the students -- where they could ensure a smooth transition process.

One of the other things that I would like to speak about is that not only is it a blow to them, when they know that they put in all this work, to just say that it was not good enough, try again -- and not only are you going to try it again, but you are going to try it again at sometimes double or triple the tuition cost. But that's not it, because we're not finished hurting you yet. Then they're going to say that you're going to do it again, but not just at a higher, sometimes triple cost, but I'm going to give you the same professor. Because many professors are both adjunct or instructors at two-year colleges and four-year colleges. I know five at Hudson County Community College teach at NJCU, and they -- it's the same curriculum, same materials, and they babble about the same thing. No pun intended for the professors in the room, but they really do.

So, therefore, it's very discouraging. And I cannot forget Melissa who, in fact, once again, she would be a highly qualified teacher in early childhood, if she did not get discouraged by the articulation process. I know that there are some things set in place, such as NJ Transfer, but I think that there needs to be a three-credit course offered just to know how to navigate that, (laughter) that particular site. I was on it, and with my persistence -- with my, as I would like to think, intellect, and computer literacy, I had a hard time to navigate this site. And it's ridiculous. And in fact, if it is set in place to encourage and to help and assist, I think it does the complete opposite. It discourages, it deters any student to want to go on to a four-year program.

Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Mr. Mays. Thank you.

I'd like to hear from Mr. Michael Searson, who's the executive assistant to the president, and also the acting dean of the College of Education at Kean University.

And I just would like to let anyone know that if you've signed up to speak, please turn in your note so that we know that you're here to speak today, please.

M I C H A E L S E A R S O N, P h . D . : Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for indulging me. I have to leave a bit early, and I'll explain why, because it is connected with today's discussion.

A few years ago I was chairperson of the Early Childhood Department at Kean University. I'm the poor soul that John Gutowski came to speak with, and said, "I don't think we can work this out." And we did -- we did. I had some similar experiences with Adriana at Hudson

County; and Middlesex and Raritan, as well. The articulation agreements can be worked out. But here's my concern about today's meeting. If you have a paper cut on a finger, a Band Aid will fix it, but you've got to put it on the right finger.

I had to look at the agenda to make sure that this is not a committee on articulation transfer agreements and it's a committee about public schools, which I think is very important -- and which is also why I have to leave.

Dr. Rand indicated that to prepare teachers, in the State of New Jersey, there are several components. One are the professional education courses. And that has been, virtually, the entirety of today's discussion. The others are the general education courses. John mentioned that's a problem. That's the single problem he had.

Second is the academic major, which is required.

Third are the -- is the field work that they do in the school districts, which is dear to us. We've been heavily involved in the professional development schools. And I'm going to do some work in Perth Amboy right now.

The last one-- It says, in code, that students -- early childhood -- certified P-3 teachers must require -- pass an exam. We have yet to define what that exam is.

What we did at Kean -- and I think very many similar institutions did the same thing -- we have dual certification. Our students receive P-3 and what is now K-5. We did not want a bifurcated group of students. We did not want our black and Hispanic students as the only ones doing P-3, and the white kids doing the K-5. We didn't want that

environment. We wanted everybody working together, getting the dual certification.

John, what you just told us means that 40 percent of your students would not be accepted to our program. That means 40 percent of our students, first try, would not be accepted. And I can tell you right now, what's most said with our most recent practice exams-- The students who are struggling the most are the early childhood students. So many of them are going to, by default, end up where we wanted to avoid -- that they will graduate only with a P-3 certification.

As Senator Rice said, I do think this, in the end, is about empowerment. And I think that's critical. And we want people to be--

I'm not sure -- and I hope it's improved -- but for quite a while, there has been a very negative perception of the Abbott P-3 certification. In fact, Jeanne Oswald helped with this, when we first reached out to the Department of Education, people were being told that P-3 certification applies only in Abbott districts. So we want to be very careful, as we pursue this.

If we're talking about improving the quality of education in this state, and making sure that schools function as well as possible, we have to look at the entire picture. What I need to do with John -- we're working very hard on this -- is to say, "What can we do with these students who look like they're not going to pass the practice exam? What can we do to make sure that that happens?" And we've invested a tremendous amount of resources into that.

And we go through the same thing. One of the things I pointed out to my colleagues at the community colleges, we have the same

articulation problems with our own institutions. We have to make sure that they take the right GE courses. And I'm very surprised at that issue with American History. We need to talk about that. Because, indeed, American History is a course that better prepares you for the practice exam.

So we need to prepare students to meet all the criteria. If we're focusing only on the professional education courses-- If you think students are unhappy when they leave the community college, and come to a four-year institution, and don't get all the credits transferred, think about those kids who begin at the community college, finish at the four-year schools, and can't get certified because they haven't met the other requirements. And at some point in time, we will have an exam for early childhood for P-3. And we have to make sure we prepare them for every piece of this.

And I just urge us, as we talk about the articulation, it should not focus on courses alone. It should focus on the entirety of all of these components. And we have to address it. Right now, I'm working with Ocean County Community College. The professional ed part is fine. We have to work on that second academic major.

And the only thing I wanted to say -- why I need to leave in a moment is because we are working with Perth Amboy. It's the first time a university-- When I talk about our one-to-one initiative, everybody says, "That's great. Your college ed students are getting--" I'm almost embarrassed to say I didn't think about my teacher ed students. We're taking our one-to-one laptops, and we're putting them in the hands of the kids of Perth Amboy. And they're going to be doing some really cool stuff with it.

So the relationship between the university and the public schools is critical, because we do believe, in addition to everything else that we've been discussing, that the experiences our student teachers should have are in some of the best schools in the nation, which can also be great urban schools. And we're very much committed to that.

So I would just urge us, if this is really a subcommittee on-- And I really thank you for hosting this -- it's the fourth meeting -- working on it. But if it's a committee about relations and public school initiatives, we need to think of the grand picture, preparing the best educators to succeed in those environments.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Mr. Searson. (applause)

I don't think we believe that the articulation problem is mutually exclusive of the certification problem. And, in fact, at our last meeting, we actually had somebody in from the Department of Education to speak directly about that particular subject matter and, really, the State's backlog, and how it's been reduced, and some of the other issues that are affecting certification, which we deal with as legislators in our district offices on a regular basis. We get many calls about that. And we certainly want to focus more on that subject matter as we continue to talk about articulation.

So thank you very much.

I'd also like to welcome the Chairman of the Assembly Education Committee, Assemblyman Craig Stanley, who is here with us today.

Thank you very much, Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: Thank you, Chairman Vas.

I just really want to thank and commend Chairman Vas for even -- for convening this very important meeting on this very important issue.

As a matter of fact, I just came back from Denver, Colorado, where the Education Commission of the States were meeting, which is probably the premiere education conference in the country, unless, of course, you belong to a teachers' union. Then that conference is probably the premiere education conference in the country. (laughter)

But I do want to say that this is an issue that's very, very high on the agenda of all the states. And that is the -- I guess the articulation, the coordination, the integration of P through 16. And that's really what we're talking about here, today, Mayor. We're talking about how we make it so that students can go seamless from P through 16. And actually, some states are talking P through 20. And if we could-- That's really -- that's the goal. That is the goal, because it's all interrelated. If we don't have the right curriculum, if we don't have the proper integration, if we don't have articulation that allows a student to go from -- well, first of all, to graduate from high school without taking remedial courses. That's the first step. And we've got to align these curriculum so that we know, and a student that's dealing with the content standards for the high school will be able to go to college without having to take remedial courses.

But, again, I commend you. The testimony I've heard so far has been right on target. And I'm certainly going to be looking at all the transcripts from the previous testimony. And this is something that's very high on our agenda.

I'm going to certainly be talking to the current Governor, and the incoming Governor, hopefully, about how we make this happen.

Thank you, again, Mayor.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: I was just interested in looking at the speakers-- And I didn't see a speaker from our Department of Education. And it would seem to me that since we hold these meetings, and we are voicing our concerns--

Would it be possible, Chairman, to have somebody from the Department of Education at the meetings that we have in the future? Because I think they need to be aware of our concerns, and the concerns of our speakers. And there doesn't seem to be anyone. I don't know, I may be wrong. But I don't think there's -- anyone from the Department of Education is here.

SENATOR RICE: What I'd like to see is, at least, one more public meeting, maybe in Essex-- Some kind of way--

I've listened to, I believe, Mr. Mays -- the young man speaking -- the student-- And some kind of way, I need to figure out -- we need to figure out -- staff needs to figure out how to hold a meeting at a university, such as Essex County College, in that type of setting. And between the four-year institution students, and those in the colleges and-- I need to hear more testimony from them of their frustrations and problems in the navigation. As well as some of the counselors in those systems, etc.

Then we wrap up all the Subcommittee meetings. What I would like to do is, immediately after that, hold a full Joint Committee meeting and bring the Department -- share information with them, prepare a list of questions from this Subcommittee -- that when they come before

the full body they need to respond to. And, hopefully, we can get through all these processes between September and October. I really don't want to go into the new legislative session without having some questions answered here. And then, from there, we're going to do what we have to do.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Senator.

We're going to hear, now, from John Scott, who's the Executive Director of New Jersey Transfer, and also Nancy Hazelgrove, from New Jersey Transfer.

And I believe we're going to have two other speakers. And I'm going to try to see if we can conclude as close to 12:30 as possible, in the interest of being able to safely enjoy the many salads that we have, that have been prepared -- some of the sandwiches that we have that have been prepared for us today.

So, Mr. Scott.

J O H N S C O T T: Thank you, Assemblyman Vas, and thank you honorable members of the Subcommittee, for providing this opportunity.

Technology is a wonderful thing, but it does have its limitations. And with your permission, I'd like to sit at the laptop and do a demonstration.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: If you could take the mike -- the amplified microphone with you.

MR. SCOTT: There is one here. Is this working?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: That's just for the transcription. The amplified microphone you can take over.

MR. SCOTT: Before starting, I'd like to-- I know that there are a number of colleagues in the audience from the two- and four-year center who use New Jersey Transfer in their everyday work.

Would you please raise your hand?

And I would ask the committee to feel free-- I'm going to take this opportunity to suggest that you feel free to ask those users about their experience on using NJ Transfer, and its value in their everyday role. And they can certainly respond from a practical point of view.

In a nutshell, NJ Transfer takes the uncertainty out of the transfer process by providing accurate and consistent information about how to transfer a course from the two-year center to the four-year center.

Most of the attention this morning has focused on the disconnect between programs at the two-year level and those programs at the four-year level. I would suggest, however, there is a second problem. And that's why-- It's a basic problem, but it exists. Students do not always make the correct choice when selecting courses at their community college.

I've spoken to a number of the transfer counselors from the community college, and the actual number or percent -- either -- of students who see a counselor or an advisor while at the community college is remarkably low. And we would like to think that New Jersey Transfer, in addition to doing other things, provides an opportunity for those students -- those students who do not see an advisor or not seeing an advisor until very late in the process -- to have the information that they need at their fingertips to make intelligent and wise decisions.

I'd like to take a couple of minutes and just give you some background on New Jersey Transfer. New Jersey Transfer is an initiative of

the New Jersey Division on Higher Education and the New Jersey Presidents' Council. And we partner with 45 of the State's two- and four-year higher education institutions to provide a Web-based data information and electronic transfer system.

The word *partner* and the word *volunteer* is very important to note. I believe both Dr. Oswald and Dr. Contini mentioned the institutions that work with the NJ Transfer do so on a volunteer basis. There is no monetary incentive for them to do so. And I think Dr. Contini used the term--

What's the term?

Professional tension. Professional tension has played a large role in encouraging institutions to participate in the initiative.

This might be a good time to mention-- On the matrix that Dr. Contini referenced earlier, there are two institutions that have not completed the equivalencies. And I think I should say something about that. Both Drew University and Seton Hall University came to the initiative rather late. And so their faculty have not completed the equivalencies. It is not a reflection on the institutions, but just a reflection on their time frame within the initiative.

Currently, all 19 of the State's community colleges participate in the NJ Transfer, and 26 of the 28 four-year institutions participate. The two four-year institutions that do not participate are Stevens Institute, and Stevens accepts very few transfer students, and Princeton University. And many would argue that Princeton University is not a New Jersey institution.
(laughter)

Additionally, New Jersey -- NJ Transfer works in partnership with the Department of Education, the State Employment and Training Commission, and the Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stop Centers. And we did that to increase awareness, among New Jersey's workforce, of transfer opportunities within the State's higher education system, and to inform students of high-demand careers within the state. And Nancy Hazelgrove, my colleague, is going to talk a little bit more about that aspect of New Jersey Transfer, as well as partnerships.

The Web site and the URL, *www.njtransfer.org*, serves as a comprehensive college planning and career tool, providing students, parents, counselors, and advisors with current force equivalencies, recommended transfer programs, and career resources.

There are a number of things that users can do on New Jersey Transfer. They can learn which courses to select at a community college and how these courses will satisfy four-year degree program requirements, discover which four-year colleges offer equivalent courses and how to plan an academic program to facilitate a student's transfer; and link to information on all New Jersey colleges and universities, as well as the NJSTARS program, the educational opportunity fund, financial aid and scholarship information, and transfer and recruitment events around the state, and New Jersey career resource Web sites.

In Spring of last year -- Spring of 2004 -- New Jersey Transfer began the electronic transcript phase of the initiative. An electronic transcript will enable our institutions to send transcripts electronically to get away from paper documents. And currently, 24 of the institutions are up and running, are able to send and/or receive official electronic

transcripts. And six are sending and/or receiving electronic transcripts in test mode.

The system is only as good as its users. And we are currently in our fifth year. The Web site has been live for four years. And, to date, we have received over 22 million hits. We are approaching 23 million hits. And we have entertained over 500,000 visitors. And we would like to think that the information received by those users will empower them so they can form decisions as they make choices about continuing their education.

I think that you know that we feel New Jersey Transfer is a key component of the seamless transfer of community college students to a four-year public or private college in the state. And if you have not done so, I encourage you to visit the Web site and see for yourself the resources available.

This (indicating) is the welcome page of the Web site. And I wasn't planning on doing this, but I feel it might be useful. I'd like to comment on Mr. Mays remark about the difficulty of using the system. We have spent a great deal of time and a great deal of effort in meeting with our colleagues around the state -- the frontline people who work with students -- and conducting workshops, and going to their campuses, and meeting with campus presidents, deans, advisors, and faculty members to familiarize them with NJ Transfer and to ensure that they are able to sit down with their students and to help their students navigate the system.

We have gotten quite a bit of feedback over the four years the system has been live. And for the most part, it seems students find the use of the system to be very intuitive. It's fairly easy to go through the system without any instruction at all. But for those students who feel they need

additional information, we do provide resources on the Web site itself to assist them to navigate the system. There is a *How to Begin* page. And on the *How to Begin* page, students can go to the glossary of higher education terms -- Lower Division, for instance.

There is also a *Frequently Asked Questions* page -- a *FAQ* page -- *Who Should Use New Jersey Transfer*, for instance. We provide that answer.

And even more important, there is a tutorial on the system that will walk students through each step of usage and provide information about how to navigate the system, as well as the information on how to get the most and best use out of the system.

I'd like to mention one other aspect of the system. You will note the drop-down box provides a number of links -- transfer contacts, transfer recruitment events, a list of the State's colleges and universities, a link to the New Jersey STARS program, the HESA Web site, the EOF Web site, and a number of other uses.

I'd like to just click on Transfer *contact*, where we provide the name -- in some cases, more than one name -- of a person at each two- and four-year institution in the State who can be contacted by a user by clicking on the name -- by clicking on the hyperlink, I should say -- who can be contacted by the user, via e-mail. And if there's a question about a specific program at the institution, about -- on the deadlines for the application, the financial aid process, or anything else -- how a course will transfer or anything else. That person may or may not be able to answer the question, but if that person cannot answer the question, that person -- it has been identified as one who will know how to get the answer and who will respond to the student in a prompt manner.

I'd like to go back to the purpose of the Subcommittee hearing, which is to talk about how one might gain information about transferring courses from a two-year institution to a four-year institution.

I'm not going to go through the step-by-step process, but one component of the program will enable students to-- Actually, I will go back a step. Students plug in the name -- the user drop-down box to select a two-year institution and to select a corresponding four-year institution. For a demonstration this morning, I've selected Middlesex County College and New Jersey City University.

Students can -- or I should say users, because we know high school guidance counselors, certainly transfer counselors at the two-year institutions, faculty, a number of constituents use the site. Users can go to the listing that we see here, for each four-year institution, of the degree programs and select a degree program. And I'm going to select Early Childhood Education. Once again, the four-year program is New Jersey City University. And we are looking at the first two years of the Early Childhood Education program recommended by New Jersey City University for a student at Middlesex County College. And in the left column are the number of credits to be completed in each area. In the right column are the courses and/or general education areas.

We look at the first course, BIOL100 -- you'll see there's an asterisk next to the course. That asterisk indicates there's probably not an equivalent course to that course, to the General Biology course at Middlesex County College. That asterisk can indicate other things, but it probably means New Jersey City University feels there's not an equivalent course. By clicking on the *General Education* areas -- or hyperlinks -- students are able to

see the courses that will satisfy each general education area. And by clicking on a specific course within -- students are taken to a page where information about the course at the sending institution -- in this case, Middlesex County College -- is provided in the top box. And information about the equivalent course at the receiving institution -- once again, New Jersey City University -- is included in the lower box.

You might note--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Mr. Scott, I think we get the point about New Jersey Transfer. Is there something else that you could comment on, in terms of the overall topic that we're discussing today? That's articulation. I think your point about New Jersey Transfer in addressing the concerns of the student have been made. I don't necessarily believe that we have to go through the whole navigational process with the Web site.

MR. SCOTT: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: I think if you want to speak to Mr. Mays afterwards, you're welcome to do so.

MR. SCOTT: There is one point I do want to make. I'm going to go back to the screen that we saw earlier. Students are able to enter the courses completed at the two-year institution and view or learn how those courses will apply to the program at the four-year institution.

I've entered these courses, and these are the courses recommended by New Jersey City University for a student who is interested in early childhood education at Middlesex County College. And we'll see that the courses do, in fact, satisfy the requirements.

The point I want to make about this is-- I'm sure Dr. Gutowski might agree with this. The courses that you see certainly satisfy the requirements at New Jersey City University. However, these courses will not ensure, and probably the student will not be able to complete, the associate degree at Middlesex County College by taking these courses. And again, that speaks to the disconnect between the courses or the programs at the two-year -- in the two-year sector and the -- what are supposed to be the corresponding courses in the four-year sector.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Mr. Scott. Thank you very much.

MR. SCOTT: You're welcome.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Is there somebody who can turn the lights back on? We're going to hear from two other speakers before we break.

I'd like to ask Nancy Lauter, from Montclair State University, Professor and Chair there, to come forward, please.

She'll be followed by Leslie Agard-Jones, who is a Dean at William Paterson University.

And those are the only members of the audience that have asked to speak. At that time, we're going to take a break.

NANCY LAUTER, Ed.D.: Thank you very much. Thank you to the Committee, thank you to all those who gave comments this morning.

I know you began the day by saying -- I heard you say, with great energy and passion, "How can we move forward? What do we need to do?" And I know your focus, if I understand, is particularly on

articulation of students who are interested in coming into a P-3 early childhood certification program.

I would hope -- and a couple of people have mentioned this -- that the two-year and four-year colleges could sit down together. We all know, very clearly, what it is we need to do to prepare excellent early childhood educators. We know something about the competencies that Dr. Rand talked about. And I think she's absolutely right. We need to focus on those competencies. We know something about the sequence of both courses and practical experiences that students need to have over a four-year period.

So I would hope that someone -- and I'm not sure who that someone is -- could call such a meeting. And it should only be one meeting. It shouldn't take us longer than one meeting. I can give an example. In terms of our program at Montclair, in the first two years where they are doing a lot of their general studies, we do, during that time, expect them to get the foundations in development -- child development -- that is so critical to everything that builds after that. And we expect them to have some understanding of how the systems of early care and education work. So they've had some exposure, if you will, to programs and to some of the policies and issues in the field.

I know all of my colleagues at two-year colleges are doing those things, have courses such as that. The amount of time I think that colleges, both two-years and four-years, are spending -- again, as Dr. Rand talked about, as my colleagues have done at Montclair -- sitting down and going through this course, by course, by course is endless hours. I don't think we should have to do that. I think we say, we know what our two-year

community college students bring to us, in terms of those competencies -- some in general education, some in early childhood education, and in just what you've talked about. And we then facilitate and move them onward through the end of their program.

So, again, I think we know so clearly, if you will, what it is we need to do. I think the endless hours, as I say-- I mean, Montclair, in the last year or two years, has sat down with nine different two-year colleges. Again, endless hours ticking off the course-by-course. We have to, as someone said earlier, have a seamless program here. And I think, again, looking to the competencies and not the course-by-course at Montclair -- where we've worked very hard to have people from community colleges come-- They bring a richness that is different, if you will, often. They add to the diversity of our community. We need that, certainly as much as we need a course in *X* and a course in *Y*.

So we very much want them to come to Montclair. We want to work this out. And I just think we have real clarity now on what we need to do. And, as someone said earlier -- just shouldn't be so hard.

So who will call that meeting? And who will make sure--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: I believe the Higher Education Commission has offered to do that, and the Council also. And I think some of us -- the members of this commission -- would also like to participate in that meeting, or at least observe the discussion that occurs, as well.

Thank you very much.

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Yes, Senator.

SENATOR RICE: I just need to get clarity.

The type of meeting-- What kind of meeting is she looking for?
I want clarity of the meeting. What is the meeting to accomplish?

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: It's going to be similar to the Geneva Convention, (laughter) but it's going to be the two-year and the four-year institutions of New Jersey.

Is that correct? It's sort of like the Geneva Convention.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS FROM AUDIENCE:
(indiscernible)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: And provide seamless transition from the two-year to the four-year universities, is how I heard it.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE:
(indiscernible)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: We'll focus on the degree and not the course content.

SENATOR RICE: Is someone--

As Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Public Schools, I want to keep the record straight. Now, I saw some hands. Someone agreed to convene that meeting? Because I was going to convene one anyway.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE:
(indiscernible)

SENATOR RICE: Would you make written note, in case this thing doesn't work over here for the transcripts?

And would you report back to us when you intend to have that? This is not going to be one of these in-the-future type meetings, I hope. If you need assistance from us in the Legislature to get everybody to the table, let us know. (indiscernible) and the budget over there. And we'll

determine, from our Committee, who is going to participate. We don't want to be excluded and hear from you later, because we will chop up what you say and do anyway.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: We'll hear from our final speaker today, Leslie Agard-Jones, a Dean at William Paterson University.

Mr. Jones.

LESLIE AGARD - JONES: Standing between the audience and lunch. (laughter)

I just wanted to make certain things-- You should be aware that this whole idea of articulation-- Also Dr. Contini, Jeanne Oswald-- The Commission and the Presidents' Council did have a committee several years ago, in which I participated, which worked on some of these things. But I wanted to caution you about certain things about the articulation.

Yes, there is a course-by-course. But understand that courses change. And that has been-- I'm just going to speak to William Paterson University's perspective. And I'm not sure whether the speaker from the County College of Morris was referring to William Paterson. But I do know of an instance where I had to intercede, because the history department did not want to accept a course because they had changed their course. And the math department didn't want to because they had changed, the numbers had changed, etc., etc. So those things can become very, very problematic. So the point about competencies and looking at competencies is an excellent one, and one that we should understand.

Mirroring, that Dr. Contini talked about, was something that we discussed over and over again -- that the first two years of a student's experience should be -- in terms of mirroring in the -- what the four-year

institution would be. That is problematic, and had been problematic, and continues to be problematic because we were also discussing, at that time, the code changes, which took in effect two years ago.

And Dr. Contini is right. We talked about the elimination of the six credit maximum for the two-year institutions. There was a lot of discussion, dialogue about that. But tied with that was this statement that there should not be a 30-credit cap on professional education.

The idea was that the community college experience would be expanded and improved. The college -- the Higher Ed folks -- would have to do something better, bigger, more for the students to get the kind of education we think they needed to get. So the six-credit, 30-credit code--

I am also here to say that the practice exams that are currently being used in the State of New Jersey-- And I know there was talk about students going to another state. From one state to another, it's a different exam. So standardized -- looking at practice in the State of New Jersey -- it's only on content. It is not on your professional education. It's only on content. There is a move to include professional education. So whether it's P-3, whether it's elementary, whatever the case may be, there is a move to do that. Whether that will take place, I don't know. In Pennsylvania, they have both the content and professional education, as I understand it.

There is another thing that people often get confused about. You cannot major -- really major in education in the State of New Jersey. And students are often confused because -- "I want to major in elementary education." No, you major in a liberal arts area, which is the content which is tested on the practice test. So there are a number of areas and things that

I think we, and you as a Committee, have to be very cognizant of, as you proceed.

So talking about a standardized curriculum and uniformity, it's all good, but recognize that what is American History at William Paterson University-- They may go from 1920s to the 1950s in one course. At another institution, they may go from 1830 to 1950 and call that American History I, or whatever the case may be. So it might have the same title, but they might be different.

So if we talk about competencies, these are the things that we want those students to know -- then it's a little bit different.

So I didn't want to stand between you and lunch, and I wanted to get a number of things thrown on the table. So I thank you for your time. If there are any questions-- I'm going back to my seat. Lunchtime.

You had a question?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: I just had a question.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Assemblywoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: Just going back to what I said previously, I don't understand why, in the course of a few years, a course requirement changes, or you change the title of a course. Why is that -- why does that happen? Because I would think a core curriculum is a core curriculum. And it should stay in place, unless there are some catastrophic reasons.

MR. AGARD-JONES: What happens is, we're at an age where knowledge expands exponentially. That is, what we understood things to be today may not be what they are tomorrow, or the year after, or 10 years down the road. So what happens is, people begin to change emphasis in

particular areas. And when they start changing the emphasis, my core syllabus-- I used to teach African-American History to 1865 -- African-American History since 1865. I could not use -- although my wife and friends were saying -- I could not use the same core syllabus every semester. And you would say, "That's history. Why not? It's the same." No, there have been some changes. There's more data that comes in that we have to be cognizant of. There are more emphases that you have to make.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VOSS: I don't mean to interrupt you, but I understand what you're saying. A core curriculum is exactly what it implies. A core. I taught African-American History, I taught Asian History, I taught a lot of different histories. And they were electives. And it wasn't the core. I mean, if a kid wanted to learn ancient civilization, it was not part of the core. Do you understand what I'm saying? When we're talking about core curriculum, shouldn't that be standardized? And then you can take everything else you want in addition to the core.

MR. AGARD-JONES: Yes, but what I'm pointing out to you -- that within the core itself, changes occur. And we have to be cognizant of those changes and make accommodations to those changes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dean, thank you very, very much.

MR. AGARD-JONES: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: And I think the one thing we want to be careful about is that we don't take out the autonomy and the creativity, that enhances the quality of education that's being provided, by trying to find a cookie-cutter or a template that is so rigid, that doesn't allow education to grow. I think the objective today is to try to find a way to systematically coordinate the curriculum, specifically targeting the P-3

certification, early childhood education, between two-year universities and four-year universities. I think if we go beyond that, the task is going to be so large that we'll never be able to find the solution.

I think the problem that we're dealing with is not that complicated, and I want to be-- I want to express my thanks to Dr. Oswald for offering to have the two-year and four-year universities come together.

And what I'd like to suggest, with the approval of the Chairman of the Joint Commission, is that we reconvene -- because we've now had three meetings talking about this. We've probably spent close to 10 hours of public discussion. I think we pretty much know what the problem is. And I think, again, it is our preference to have the experts find the solutions to the problem. And those are the two-year and four-year universities. I would like to reconvene, if possible, before the summer is out -- possibly a month from today -- which would mean that we reconvene on August 18. We'll find a location. We'll notify all of you. I would like to see if the Higher Ed Commission can meet before that and submit a report to us in advance of that date, or by that date, so we can hopefully know that there's a solution to the problem.

I'm going to let you know that, on a parallel track, the Chairman of the Joint Commission and myself are going to meet with members of this Committee, and other members of both the Senate Education and Assembly Education Committee, to begin to draft legislation -- two pieces of legislation, one that's going to create a statewide articulation template, and one that's going to consider an appropriations bill to fund the grants that are necessary to provide the financial tools to do this. I can't assure you that either one of the bills is going to get through, but I think

we've got to keep the ball rolling. We've got to do our part. Our part is to try to find a legislative solution. That's not always the best way to go about this. We're not suggesting that it is. But absent a voluntary solution by the two-year and the four-year institutions, it is our obligation and our responsibility, as members, to do so. And I would suggest that that's really the only thing we can do at this point.

Mr. Contini.

DR. CONTINI: (indiscernible).

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Is it realistic to think that within the next 30 days there will be a date that everyone can agree to, to meet? Because it sounded like this is something that can happen over the course of several hours, if there's a clear understanding of what the objective is.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE:
(indiscernible)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Can we try to do that in the next 30 days? If that's not impossible, then we'll continue to meet in August. And if we have to meet again in September, we'll meet again in September. Most of us are on recess now until November. But I'm committed to this process. And I think if we take our eye off the ball we're going to lose site of what's important here. Those are the students that are going to miss the opportunity to take advantage of the opportunities that have been given to them through State grants, New Jersey STARS program. And, quite frankly, we have such a void in the state where there's a demand for early childhood education teachers. And we have to make sure that they're being properly prepared to go into the classroom. And that's the other objective here. Through this articulation agreement, we're going to ensure that the

curriculum that's in place is going to prepare these teachers for the task of teaching our students for the future.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE:
(indiscernible)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you very much.

And I want to thank all of you for coming out today. I want to ask you to please join us for lunch in the room next door.

I want to thank the staff of the Joint Commission: Sharon Benesta, Melanie Schulz for arranging this meeting today, for doing all the hard work behind the scenes.

And I want to thank my staff, those who are present here today, for all the work that they have done, as well.

Thank you very much. (applause)

(MEETING CONCLUDED)