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# *Committee Meeting*

of

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ABBOTT SUBCOMMITTEE

*"Testimony concerning the articulation and transfer coordination  
among New Jersey's community colleges and four-year institutions"*

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**LOCATION:** Committee Room 16  
State House Annex  
Trenton, New Jersey

**DATE:** September 15, 2005  
10:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS OF SUBCOMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Joseph Vas, Co-Chair  
Senator Ronald L. Rice  
Senator Martha W. Bark  
Assemblyman Craig A. Stanley

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Melanie M. Schulz  
*Executive Director*

Sharon Benesta  
*Chief of Staff*



*Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by*  
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Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey

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**ASSEMBLYMAN JOSEPH VAS (Co-Chair):** Could everybody take their seat, please? We're going to get started. We have a couple other members that are going to be joining us in a few moments.

But in the interest of time and moving the agenda forward, we'd like to get started.

First of all, I'd like to welcome all of you back. I'll try to bring everyone up to date.

Good morning and welcome to what is our fourth meeting of the Abbott Subcommittee that centers on the issues of articulation and transfer coordination.

For those of you who are present here today who have not been part of this discussion from the beginning, please indulge me while I recap how we have come together today.

On June 1 of this year, the Abbott Subcommittee met in Elizabeth to hear from Cynthia Rice -- and, Cynthia, we know you had a tough ride down here -- thank you for joining us today, from the Association for the Children of New Jersey; and Dr. Carrie Lobman and her colleagues from the Rutgers Graduate School of Education. Their co-authored report mapped the system of preschool teacher preparation and professional development that takes place in New Jersey's institutions of higher learning.

There were many interesting and valuable research findings in this report. However, one issue stood out above all the rest. And it actually came in, in the form of what we might call an *unintended consequence*. What was found lacking was a seamless transition for many students to go from two- to four-year institutions.

This information became the basis for our next Abbott Subcommittee meeting on June 17, at Hudson County Community College, where the presenters -- many of whom were our faculty and deans of education at our colleges and universities -- expanded our understanding of this issue. It has also made us recognize that this is a problem that needs immediate resolution. And there's an urgency in dealing with this issue.

The legislators present at this meeting agreed, unanimously, that this issue had to be addressed either by the higher education community, or the Legislature, or both. On July 20, close to 75 college and university leaders came together at the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School in Perth Amboy to specifically address the articulation and transfer coordination issue, and what action had been taken to resolve this matter in a positive way for students.

The Subcommittee also learned that the higher education system that trains our preschool teachers is often a barrier to those college students attempting to attain their dream. We have heard testimony that the traditional higher education system of articulation does not meet with the needs of a population that is considered nontraditional. We have learned that it has often caused confusion, frustration, and a loss of time for students, as well as resulting in State scholarship dollars spent unwisely.

We understand this is a complex issue, and developing an articulation system that will work in our state will not happen overnight. However, we must have assurances that plans are underway for a voluntary solution. Absent a voluntary resolution, we legislators have an obligation and a responsibility to fix this problem through legislation.

So, again, thank you and welcome. We look forward to hearing about your progress.

And I'd like to, first of all, welcome Senator Bark, Senator Rice, and shortly we will be -- have, in attendance Assemblyman Craig Stanley and Assemblywoman Joan Voss.

Senator Rice, would you like to make some comments at this time before we open it up?

SENATOR RICE: Just to commend you for the job you've been doing all Summer. It's not easy to take the Summer months and bring people together. But it's that important.

And I just want to reemphasize, as Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Public Schools, I support the Committee Chairs. If we can't get this process expeditiously -- from a voluntary basis -- we will compel it through legislation.

I read the document that was presented to us, in terms of the series of meetings that the higher education groups and community colleges were holding. I look at those time frames. I read the statements made, and I would hope that you could pick those time frames up. Because it seems, through that document, it will take us into March, April, maybe -- in the budget year -- and then we break again. Another year is lost in the process. And I don't intend to see a year lost in the process.

For those that are part of that 62-member group that came together, let me say it again, I don't intend to wait until the end of another year and go into the 2007 session before something is done. So look at your time frames in the document. In fact, I think you've got different groups reporting to you in March and some in February. Everybody has a

different reporting date. It seems to me that if they're really committed, a lot of this stuff -- with the exception of the survey -- even the surveys, I think, could be done a lot quicker if you really want to do surveys.

But, anyway, just expedite it. Because the Chair is right. We're going to do something. If that upsets people, I understand. Some people said they were a little nervous about what we're trying to do. Well, if you think your nervous now, don't get through this and we'll really make you nervous. At least I am.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Senator Bark.

SENATOR BARK: Thank you and good morning.

It's a pleasure to be here. And I too read the -- what was given to me -- synopsis of the August 29 meeting. And I have to say that the time frames were extremely disappointing. And I honestly believe that if there is a true commitment to accomplish this, that the time frames could, in fact, be shortened. And I will certainly be with Senator Rice on that issue -- that if it's not accomplished by the higher education and the two- and four-year institutions in some manner, I would certainly be happy to look forward to some type of legislation.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Senator.

Our Assembly Chair of the Education Committee,  
Assemblyman Craig Stanley.

Welcome. Some comments?

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: Thank you very much.

I appreciate, again, Assemblyman Vas, your leadership on this issue. I think it's an important issue, an issue being talked about. And, of course, it's a very-- We're just dealing with a small part of issues concerning articulation and making sure that the people are -- that we provide a seamless education program in the State of New Jersey.

I know it's a very complicated issue. It's not a simple issue, not an easy issue. But, again, we want to do it right. But we also want to do it as expeditiously as possible.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

Our timetable is to get it done by the end of this session, this year. And we've got the time to do it now, since we're not in session. At least the Assembly is not in session. I know that some of the Senate Committees are actually meeting. The Judiciary Committee is actually meeting next Monday. But we have the time. And we're going to continue to convene meetings and work through the differences of opinion and not allow bureaucracy to be an obstacle for the education of young people.

So let's start with the program.

Our first presenter today will be Cynthia Rice, from the Association of Children of New Jersey. Cynthia has been a strong advocate of articulation. And we want to hear from her today.

Cynthia, if you would, come forward.

**CYNTHIA C. RICE, ESQ.:** Good morning, everyone.

Assemblyman Vas, members of the Subcommittee, it is, more than you know, very nice to be -- finally be here.

Thank you, again, for providing yet another opportunity to continue the important conversation around developing a seamless system of articulation for teacher candidates wishing to become preschool teachers.

Having been at all of these meetings, it is amazing how far we have come, and how much this conversation has grown since our first meeting in Elizabeth on June 1.

For the first time, a substantive dialogue is taking place between those parties who can bring about reform in the area of articulation. For us advocates who have been talking about this for what seems to -- what has been years, it is a long time in coming. And we are very, very grateful for the time, the energy, and support that this Subcommittee has given this important topic.

Our conversations over the last few meetings that we've had have focused on this articulation transfer problem, both on institutional and on personal levels. From the testimony of witnesses over the last few -- of our last few meetings -- at the previous hearings, the parties were charged with developing a meaningful solution. And I know that we're anxious to hear about that solution today.

But I think, though, that in discussing and developing a substantive solution is really just a first step. And I want to, kind of, keep us on task, because such a system will not work without a process in place to implement it. This is adding yet another wrinkle to what we came here to do.

But as the plan unfolds, we also need to be thinking about what entity is going to ensure compliance in monitoring the implementation of a new system. So there is no State entity, right now, that currently has the

legislative or regulatory authority to take that task on. So we need to keep thinking about that.

So it becomes apparent, right here, at a minimum, we need a legislative remedy to address the process issue. Now, whether we need a legislative remedy for the development of an articulation system is still up in the air. I, too, was concerned about the timelines. The timelines were not part of the plan, but part of the Commission's Blue Print on Excellence. So that was my concern, that there was no timeline at all having to do with the plan.

But as we move forward in this collaborative process, I urge each of the stakeholders to remember the following things. First, right now, this is a collaborative process. The stakeholders in higher education really are the experts. And this plan would be better if it's developed -- if all sides are working cooperatively. And that also means that there has to be give and take. That is a big concern -- that each of the parties need to come together with some room for flexibility.

But while this is difficult work, it shouldn't take forever. And I urge you -- I urge these people to develop an action plan and a realistic timeline to get this job done.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Cynthia.

We want to hear from the committee that's been working on this. And I'd like to call up-- I think they're going to come up and make a presentation collectively. Dr. Jeanne Oswald, the Executive Director for the Commission on Higher Education; Dr. Peter Contini, the President of Salem County Community College; and Dr. Arnold Speert, the President of

William Paterson University. And I believe the batting is going to be Mr. Contini -- Dr. Contini's going to speak first, and then we'll hear from Dr. Oswald. And the clean-up hitter, in the third batting position, is going to be Dr. Speert.

Dr. Contini.

**P E T E R B. C O N T I N I, Ed.D.:** Good morning, and thank you very much, Assemblyman Vas and members of the Committee. It's a pleasure to be here and to rejoin you again. I had the opportunity to be with you on July 20.

My role, this morning, is to provide a little bit of background as to where we've been since that meeting and where we are going, and the direction we're taking.

I also want to mention that it's certainly symbolic that the three of us are here together. But it's important that the Committee understand that this is a collaboration among the higher ed community. To my left, certainly -- Dr. Oswald is the Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education -- plays a key role in the policy establishment and coordination. And certainly Dr. Speert and I, co-chairing the Articulation Transfer Coordinating Committee of the New Jersey's Presidents Council -- so obviously we represent our individual sectors. But that Committee represents all sectors of the higher education community. And so I want you to know that we take very seriously these roles, not only for our own institutions, but certainly for the role and the important position we hold for the statewide group -- the New Jersey Presidents Council.

I can tell you that listening very closely on July 20, and having the opportunity because of the sharing of information by Melanie Schulz, we shared with the planning committee for our August 29 meeting. And I want to emphasize that, on August 8, the presidents of the Articulation and Transfer Coordinating Committee met, along with Dr. Oswald and her staff, to plan the process. Because if you recall at your meeting, there was even somewhat of a conversation about what size table we would use and how would we bring about this coordination. And we thought that was very important.

That meeting was very insightful. It gave us a direction for the method that we would use on August 29. We also, as Senator Rice has eluded, knew this was a difficult time -- Summer vacations, opening of the collegiate year -- but we were delighted to see the response in having 62 individuals come that day at Rutgers. And I use that as an illustration of just one step, and it's certainly a multistep process that we're going to be following.

With regard to the meeting and what we decided we would do, is we thought it was important, first, to certainly provide the entire group with a knowledge of what took place -- has taken place, with regard to the work of the Subcommittee; the importance and, what I would describe as, a sense of urgency that has been created by the Committee's insightful look at what's occurred; and also the challenge that the Committee has provided.

I used -- and I shared this with Assemblyman Vas prior to the meeting -- I used, very clearly, statements that were part of the Committee report of July 20. I actually went through it -- certain pages to alert, refer to -- certainly, the challenges that Senator Rice put forward, the reaffirmation

by other members of the Committee. And, certainly, what I described as a summary statement on Pages 92 and 93 of the document, by Assemblyman Vas, that really said to the group, “We understand that this is a challenging issue. We certainly don’t want to lose the autonomy and creativity of the institutions, but we also need the work to be done. And this sense of urgency is created not as a threat, but an awareness that if the higher ed community can deal with this on a voluntary, collaborative way, that’s certainly desirable. But if that doesn’t happen, what are the other solutions?”

We also share the concern about balancing autonomy and prescription. And so we want to make sure that what we’re dealing with truly represents the higher education community and our ability to deliver, because that’s very, very important.

Coming out of that prep meeting on August 9, and what occurred on August 29, was what, we think -- a forum that allowed an opportunity for open and candid discussion. These are not new issues in New Jersey. They’ve been certainly around in some form since the creation of the community college sector in the 1960s. But as the colleges have grown, as the programs have grown, and particularly in this area of teacher education, it has become very complex because of national standards, State standards, and so forth.

And so what we wanted to do at that meeting, initially, was to provide the backdrop of why we were there in the first place -- continuing a dialogue and, secondly, to make sure that there was a consensus on what were the barriers. And so for the first portion of the meeting, we basically

met by sector -- two-year colleges, four-year colleges -- to ensure that that discussion would lead us in the right direction.

As you can imagine, as any meeting, there's a certain element of ice-breaking and what I might call *war stories*. But the bottom line is, we wanted to get away from anecdotal. We wanted to deal with the real issues and what are those barriers they're confronting.

Out of that discussion, we then came back as a total group, solidified what we saw as the barriers, and then moved into cross groups -- four groups broken into two- and four-year representation. And the next hour or so of that meeting was talking about solutions. And what you'll be hearing, from Dr. Oswald in particular, are the solutions that were born out of that meeting.

There's been some previous discussion, as the meeting opened this morning, about the timelines that are in our response to you. I want to let you know that those timelines are illustrative of the work that's been going on overall in articulation transfer and already appeared in the blueprint. Those are not the timelines that came out of the discussion on the 29th. Effectively, those timelines have not been finalized, because we're working to ensure that we have consensus on the report itself, and are these the barriers and these the solutions that these 62 individuals, representing a large number of the two- and four-year colleges--

I have to tell you, not every college, because of their schedule, was able to be in attendance. So we've been communicating, statewide, through the luxury of e-mail, to make sure that everyone knows what the discussions are -- have been -- and what the direction--

So what you are seeing today is what I call a very first step in the process. And you'll be hearing about that first step in more detail. But we know a lot of work has to be done. And I can assure you that it was well-understood at the meeting, and well-understood by, I'm certain, the presidents groups by sector, that there is a sense of urgency to the Committee's work, and that we want to do it with creativity. We don't want a cookie-cutter approach. We want to certainly be sensitive to all the populations. This particular focus is on P-3. But as Assemblyman Stanley said, this is not only about P-3 teacher education, this is about probably all teacher education, and certainly all articulation and transfer.

So as we move ahead in the presentation, we want you to know that we are sensitive to the timeline. We are sensitive to the issues that will be emerging. And we think with, certainly, the goodwill-- And we often use these terms *win-win*, *territorial*, *turf*-- All those things aside, our primary goal is to ensure the students are successful; that the efficiencies that we can have, and that seamless transition, will affect their lives; and that, where possible, we certainly will not have people repeating or unnecessarily spending funds that have been either provided by the State or by the individual. So I think we're on point, in terms of the need.

And it's my pleasure, at this time, to ask Dr. Oswald to pick up at that point and to discuss the substance of what occurred at the meeting. And then Dr. Speert will finalize and wrap up for us.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you.

**J E A N N E M. O S W A L D, Ed.D.:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee.

I, too, would like to extend my thanks for bringing this together, again, at this point. And I'd like to follow up on Dr. Contini's remarks, and zero in, more specifically, on the strategies that came out of the August 29 forum.

I think it's important for me to reiterate, also, that it's clear to the higher education community that articulation and transfer has to be a priority across the board. But we did, as Dr. Contini indicated, zero in just on early childhood programs as an initial step, recognizing that the three key strategies that I'm going to mention now will certainly have implications across the board for all programs down the line.

First of all, based on the current Department of Education regulations that I know you're familiar with, our four-year institutions are only allowed to accept six professional education courses from community colleges. And the four-year programs are also held to national accreditation standards, which examine competencies. The Department of Education's regulations and the accreditation issues are not applicable to the community colleges. And yet the community colleges have a role in producing the degree for the student.

While some or all of these regulations certainly may change over time, we felt it was important to deal with the circumstances as they are now, so that we can develop a solution for students now. So we're working under those existing regulations with our comments today.

As the working group addresses, over the next two months -- and I will throw that in as the first timeline. Over the next two months, they will be trying to develop a means -- and I'm sure they will be successful -- to ensure that early childhood courses that are taught by the community

colleges do meet the same standards that the four-year colleges are held to and the national standards, as well.

In addition, that working group -- on this first issue -- will be given consideration to making the six community college credits that are available consistent across the community colleges and acceptable at all of the four-year colleges, by agreeing on what should be taught in the first two years in this program. Consideration will be given -- strong consideration will be given to reviewing specific competencies, rather than course equivalencies, which has been the past practice.

So the critical first step, and one which we hope to have addressed within two months, would be to bring the education deans together in those areas where they have early childhood programs -- with the deans, faculty members, the appropriate people at the two- and four-year colleges -- to resolve just the education courses aspect of transfer in early education programs. That's the six-credit issue.

You know that the second issue -- requirements for gen ed and requirements for academic majors -- presents a very significant challenge, as well -- perhaps a much more difficult challenge -- because of the varying programs, approaches, timelines at the two- and four-year institutions across the board. So in order to grapple with this challenge, discussions need to be held regarding the further development of a statewide general education agreement, something that was started many years back, maybe in '96, '97, and has been in place but needs to be improved upon -- great work that was done by the Presidents Council at that time. And we need to rely on the use of competencies, possibly, in this area, as well. And that will be explored at length.

These discussions, unlike the first that I talked about, are going to require a far broader array of participants. We need to move well beyond early childhood educators. We need to deal with the folks that are responsible for the gen ed courses, the folks that are responsible for the academic major courses, and have a much broader conversation. And, of course, while it's always good to have more people involved, you know it always takes a little more work to get a larger group and a more diverse group on the same page. We are absolutely committed to doing that. And we would honor your suggestion that all of these things be resolved by the end of this legislative session.

The third and last key area that we thought we needed to address-- We believe that the community college students need immediate and ongoing advisement about transferring to community -- from community colleges to a four-year institution. And we believe that it's critical that the four-year colleges ensure that any changes that they are anticipating in their program are communicated in a consistent and a timely manner so that there would be no disruption of students in a program -- in an articulated program.

We all know that students tend to change their mind as they're finding themselves. Even some of the students that are the nontraditional students have a change of mind. We also know that there are circumstances -- life circumstances -- that cause people to change their direction, even though they may not wish to do that. This is true not only for students in the community colleges, it's just as true for those students who begin their programs at the four-year institutions. And these kinds of changes -- whether they be just a change of mind, or whether they be from a

life circumstance, often lengthen the time to completion. And they sometimes impede completion.

But with the added issue that students face of having to, sort of, negotiate the transfer between one institution to another, we believe it's particularly critical to improve the community college advisement if we're going to improve the transfer experience. So when we know that a student is fixing him- or herself on an early childhood career, it is essential that the advisement through those first two years makes sure that that person stays on track and stays on the path of requirements that will allow for a smooth transfer.

I will reiterate again what Dr. Contini said. The higher education community is committed to identifying and implementing strategies that will address these three key areas. And we're committed to making sure that we do that collaboratively to improve the transfer process first in early childhood education programs, but then on to other areas that need articulation and transfer improved, as well.

We are convinced that the urgency that this Committee has brought to the issue will lead to the real results that we all seek.

At this point, I am happy to turn the microphone over to Dr. Arnold Speert, who will wrap up our comments.

**ARNOLD SPEERT, Ph.D.:** Thank you, Assemblyman Vas and Committee members. I too want to thank you for putting the degree of urgency on this issue.

I wear a gold pin in commemoration of the fact that William Paterson University is 150 years old. In 1855, we were created as the school for teachers in the city of Paterson to teach the children of the mill

workers. It was recognized in Paterson; it was recognized as well in Newark, and Newark State -- which is now Kean University -- was created in 1855, as was Trenton State College, which is now The College of New Jersey.

So the roots of actually six of the 12 senior public institutions in the State of New Jersey are education bound and education based. And in 1855, it was a much simpler world. And regulations surrounding educational institutions and higher educational institutions were not necessary. But it was the wisdom of public agencies and legislators over the course of the years to make sure that the educational programs that are offered within the State meet certain requirements. And all of the senior institutions are accredited by either NCADE or TEAC, and have requirements that we meet for that. We are also regulated by the State of New Jersey. And in teacher education, the Department of Education has some very strict rules, and rules that have become more strict over the past dozen years or so.

The rules are there for a good reason. There were programs that did not give proper attention to the preparation of teachers that could teach English or mathematics skills, etc. The certification that we're talking about is P through 3. It is not just preK through 12, but is P through 3. And there are requirements in place. For instance, the student cannot major in early childhood education. The student at the four-year institution must major in an accepted program by the Department of Education.

With all that understood, the urgency that you've underscored is one that we need to accept, because it is the public interest that we're

talking about. We must deal with issues of quality, as well as issues of quantity -- providing individuals.

We believe that, in the course of our discussion, we've discovered that the concentration on talking about the competencies necessary would fulfill the needs that the Department of Education has put forward. And, in fact, the Department of Education and the colleges use that rubric to deal with the alternate preparation of teachers, and the differences that were present between institutions and what kinds of courses they put in place for the alternate route. But by dealing with competencies, the Department and the institutions were able to reach means of dealing with the issue.

Competencies also permit us to center our attention on what is needed within the classroom, what is needed within the classrooms in Abbott districts and throughout the state. And I think it should be helpful to all, in continued discussions and your continued oversight in what we do.

All of us are convinced that this is an issue that needs to be solved very quickly. But all of us are also convinced that whatever we do, we must ensure that what is -- that individuals who are prepared to teach in P through 3 classrooms are among the very best. It's at that point in this child's education that the future success in K through 12, and in college, and in life is established. So we're all very serious about it.

And, again, we want to thank the Committee in underscoring the urgency.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you very much for your presentation.

Senator Rice or Assemblyman Stanley, do you have any questions or any comments you'd like to make of the presentation?

SENATOR RICE: Where do we go from here, in terms of the time frame? What's the next step, from your perspective?

DR. OSWALD: I think, Senator Rice, that Dr. Speert, Dr. Contini, and I will continue to facilitate the coming together of these groups. It is our intention to establish a second meeting, one group, to work on the first strategy that I talked about, the education six-credit component; and a much broader group. Both of these need to come together simultaneously if we're going to do this in an expeditious way. And that would be our next step, to pull those groups together to begin addressing those two issues.

SENATOR RICE: In terms of moving forward, what do you see the impediments to what we're trying to accomplish?

DR. CONTINI: They are challenges. We believe that challenges might bring opportunities. But I think the major challenges are laid out very well in this presentation. And that is that there needs to be consistency within the two-year community colleges of the education courses that are moving forward for our transfer to the four-year colleges, and that the four-year colleges agree that those meet a seamless -- or mirror that -- what they would occur in their program at the four-year level. And I believe that can be done quickly.

The second piece is the major challenge, and that is the general education requirements. As Dr. Oswald indicated, dating back to 1997, the higher ed community acknowledged the principles for general education. And basically what they say, in some detail, is that there are 45 credits that

ought to be accomplished in the first two years for an associate of arts degree, and 30 credits that should be accomplished for an associate degree in science, that should then be able to be transferred on to a four-year school. We know that with all the good intentions of that document, and the efforts that have been made statewide, we haven't realized that fully, both within the two-year community colleges, as well as transferring to the four-year. So that needs an immediate focus. And we believe that has at least a structure to certainly have reaction.

The third component -- and that is the coordinate major issue that Dr. Speert spoke about -- and that is that you don't major in education in New Jersey, you seek certification in fields. And those fields then have with it a required major. And those required majors vary according to the certification that you're seeking. And they may vary according to the institution you seek to attend as a four-year school. So when the Department of Ed gives approval to a teacher prep program, it's giving approval to possibly a menu of options. And how that menu links then to the specific or respective community college may vary.

And so what we're talking about is, rather than looking course by course, credit by credit, there seems to be wisdom in what was presented to the Committee -- I know for sure, on July 20 -- and that is both in the teacher prep area -- the teacher preparation courses in the general education area -- and in the curricular areas for majors, of really focusing on, what are the expectations in those first two years of competencies and performances.

And, obviously, New Jersey Transfer has given us a lot of data. We now know, specifically on a course level, what's being accepted within major, what's being accepted only as electives, and what's not being

accepted at all. That information is out there, and will be part of the database that we'll be using when we talk to these individual groups.

But we also want to emphasize something else that Dr. Oswald mentioned. And that is the currency -- keeping that file, if you will, up to date, because there are changes that occur both at the two- and four-year schools that need to be maintained as current as possible. So using the data, using the work that's been done in the past that's been summarized, and certainly using the sense of urgency that's been created by this Committee, and I guess the implications of legislation, and what Cynthia Rice spoke about earlier -- not only developing the plan, but ensuring that the plan is executed and accountability is there.

All those are drivers, Senator Rice, to move this as quickly as possible.

SENATOR RICE: If we move towards, through the Chair, a competency-based system where we're capping six credits-- If we move towards competency-based, what sense does it make to cap at six?

DR. SPEERT: That is, certainly, Senator Rice, a difficulty that we're going to have to wrestle with. But from the standpoint of the Department of Education-- I'm not authorized to speak for them, but I'll take a guess at it.

The concern was, from the Department of Education point of view -- is that the student would attend the community college, load up on a number of applied courses, and then go into a four-year institution and expect to receive credit for all of that. We're restricted to 30 credits total in the education courses. So if two courses come in from the community college, and student teaching is -- at William Paterson, that's 15 credits.

We have, actually, three courses in education that we offer at William Paterson.

I think the advantage of dealing with competencies is, it says the course problem is a bookkeeping problem. And that's something that you have to deal with -- colleges and community colleges deal with.

The competency issue is, I think, what we're all interested in. And that is the quality of the teacher that goes into our classrooms across the state. By centering attention on the competency, it's up to the institutions to make that fit within whatever the requirement is, whether it's six, or it's nine, or whatever. We certainly will entertain discussions with the Department of Education and see if there might be a way to cooperate and make that easier. But it is something I think that we can deal with and we can accomplish.

SENATOR RICE: The final thing, Mr. Chairman, through you, is, what area do you perceive legislation will be needed or maybe envisioned on your part, thus far?

DR. SPEERT: The beauty of our system -- of higher education across this country -- is that there is -- there are distinctions within systems. So in New Jersey, even among four-year institutions-- We have research institutions, we have regional and traditional State colleges and universities, we have independent institutions, we have proprietary institutions. And there are reasons why they are encouraged, both in terms of cost, but certainly in terms of generally serving the population of the state.

We have accrediting bodies. We have regional accrediting bodies that oversee what we do. And we have accrediting bodies within

specific disciplines. And on top of that, we have regional -- we have State requirements, such as -- put in place by the Department of Education.

That's something that we comply with. And in meeting the needs as asserted by the different public agencies, we've created institutions that I do think serve the public interest. The benefit of having us come together and work together to come up with a solution is that we'll be prepared to meet other matters that you place before us in the public interest in the future. I think we can do that without legislation. If not, then we certainly will deal with whatever legislation you put forward and comply with the needs, both of our external crediting bodies and the State requirements.

DR. OSWALD: I would--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: If I may--

I, first of all, want to thank you for the work that's been put forth over these last couple of months.

I haven't been down in Trenton for a long time, so I must say that I don't subscribe to the culture of Trenton in getting things done. And, quite frankly, I don't see the task at hand as complicated as it's been presented today, or the discussion has lead us to believe. I think the objective here -- and I'll try to outline it the way I see it -- is that we're looking for a way to maximize the number of credits at the two-year schools that would be transferred into the four-year schools, both because it's of a benefit to the educational community and it is an economic benefit to the State.

I believe that the members of this Committee have said that we are a receptive body of legislators that would look to clear, through

legislation, any regulatory impediments that would be present. Most of what I've heard today is that there are regulatory issues that would impede or facilitate the transfer of credits. I think it's within our ability to overcome those for you. And I think the plan of action has to address the ideal situation for creating that opportunity to happen, and not look at it in the vacuum of Trenton and the regulations that create those impediments. Because if that were the case, I don't think we would resolve this issue, in the same fashion we don't resolve a lot of other issues down here in Trenton.

So I think this is a breath of fresh air, that you're hearing from members of this Committee to clear those hurdles for you without altering the quality or the competency of the product that is going to be the final product that we're seeking. And so I don't see it as complicated. I understand the complications, but I don't see the solutions as complicated as they've been presented.

And so I hear the sense of urgency that's been articulated, but I don't see it in the plan of action. What I'm seeing in the plan of action is the identification of the usual bureaucratic, regulatory issues that prevent us from finding solutions. And this is an issue that has to be resolved. We cannot allow another school year to go by and have students subsidized scholarships by the State, believing that they're going to have all their credits in their intended area -- particularly in the preschool education area -- transferred out to the four-year colleges.

This is not territorial. This is not about pitting two-years versus four-years. This is about bringing two-years closer to the four-years.

And I don't care who gets it done, whether it's the four-years or the two-years, it's something that has to get done.

And so with all due respect -- and thanks to all of you for your work -- I'm not seeing the plan of action that's necessary to get this done in the short-term. What I'm sensing is a plan of action that's going to drag this out into the long-term. And if my interpretation of what's been presented is incorrect, please correct me.

DR. OSWALD: Assemblyman Vas, perhaps my mentioning of the DOE regulations led you to that conclusion.

I mentioned them because they are a reality that we're dealing with now. If they were not there -- if you were to remove those regulations -- I do not believe the job would be easier. In fact, on behalf of students, what the two communities have to do is come to grips with who is going to do what, rather than saying, "Any of us can do whatever we want," because then it would be a horrible mess for students. We have to have a plan. How can a student best navigate this degree when you start at one institution and go on to another? And to have that plan, there has to be agreement between the two-year institutions and the four-year institutions, and more agreement than there is now. And how can that be done smoothly? How can we take student *A* and say, "Here's what will work. Start here, and you do this, and you go here, they'll accept it all, and you're done."

So whether there's a Department of Education regulation that says, "You can only do six here, or you can do nine here, or you can do as many as you want," the institutions themselves -- and, hopefully, collectively -- will all agree to the same plan, whether it be, "Do your first

six here, and here's what you ought to learn as a freshman and sophomore, and do the remainder." Whether there's 30 or whether that expands to 50, there still needs to be that coming to grips with, who is going to do it and when? And if you do it all at a four-year college, it would come in these packages. And if you do the first two years here and the second two here, the packages still work.

So I think that's-- I say all this to say that's why it's difficult. Because, right now, we have a large number of colleges who all have individual programs. They're all meeting standards established -- the four-year colleges are meeting standards established by the Department, but they're doing it in different ways. So we have to deal with that. How can we not stifle that creativity and still have the wonderful diversity of programs, but make it right for the students so they don't have to know what to do at -- "This is different than that school, and it would be different if I go there, and it would be different if I go there." We have to come up with a better solution. And that's what I think will take some time, but not an inordinate amount of time.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: As I said before, we're not looking to destroy the autonomy or the creativity of the institutions. But I don't believe collegial courtesy should be the objective. I don't think that we're going to ever achieve collegial courtesy. I mean, in the Senate, they get away with. But I don't think we can get away with it in the higher education community. (laughter) We don't get away with it in the Assembly.

So I think the objective is to develop a working plan. Not necessarily one that has everyone's total agreement, but one that will

achieve the objective at hand. And, again, I want to stress that, because we would much prefer to have that come from within the educational community than have to come from the Legislature. But we are absolutely -- I'll use the term politely -- *hell-bent* on seeing this happen quickly. And there's a good reason for it.

Yes, Dr. Contini.

DR. CONTINI: Assemblyman, I can tell you, we get the message. And if the presentation this morning didn't present to you that sense of urgency, then I apologize for that.

I also concur with what Dr. Oswald indicated. As important the role -- and we think the DOE needs to be part of this discussion, and dialogue, and certainly working with Acting Commissioner Davy -- she gets it too. She understands what the issues are here. And so teacher preparation, P-3, that became the focus, because that's what you brought forward. But when you peel back that onion to resolve that issue, you have to discuss general education and you have to discuss major. And that is really the heart of articulation and transfer. So what you have done-- You have created the impetus, you have created the forum, you have created that sense of urgency that has taken things that we've been talking about for seven or eight years -- and good, collegial collaboration -- documenting it now with the system called New Jersey Transfer, which is a tool that now takes all those anecdotal stories and puts it into data.

And now, what we need to do is, not only talk to the education deans, education community in two and four-- But we can't go any farther unless we talk to the arts and science people so that, when we are talking to people who have a major and a coordinate major, that we know what's

happening in those first two years of community college -- whether they're an education major or a major in psychology -- it is going to transfer, and that full faith and credit really is going to occur in New Jersey. That is the discussion. And it is going to be a tough discussion, but it has to be done.

And back to Senator Rice's question, the issue is, if it becomes legislative -- the question in the Legislature is going to be, what is directed through the legislation, how it will be executed, and what are the consequences if it's not executed? We would like to deal with this in what we think is the best collaborative way. Because right now, in the law, the Presidents Council has the authority to approve new programs -- in effect is describing what should be occurring in those. And in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education, we ought to be able to resolve this.

And I can tell you, on behalf of the two-year colleges -- because we've had extensive discussion -- there isn't consensus about whether the role of the legislative action is going to do the job either. The more important part is, how do we balance what you've described: autonomy, creativity, but not losing the eye on the ball? And the ball is the student -- that the student is served well. And if we have a few faculty members who are on -- who are discouraged because courses that they used to teach in the third and fourth year are now being accepted at the first and second year, that's the consequences of having articulated -- whether we call it *transparent, seamless, mirror*, whatever it may be -- it's the student who benefits.

So I can assure you, we get it.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Anyone else? (no response)

If not, we're going to open it to the--

Thank you very much.

We'll open it to the audience.

I'm sorry, Assemblyman Stanley.

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: Just a couple of quick questions.

One is, when you deal with the issue of competency, are you talking about the competency of the institutions and the programs that the institutions are providing? Or are you talking about the ability to go into that early childhood education classroom and be able to perform? And are there things that we need to be looking at?

And, to be honest, your task is already complicated enough. I don't need to make it any more complicated. But I'd like to know if what we currently are prescribing, or what are current requirements for the P-3 certificate, and what we're ending up with is teachers who are going into those environments-- Are they getting everything that we think we need to be giving them? Because I would venture to say, in some -- in the classrooms, some of the teaching needs to be -- some of our teaching requirements need to be addressed, in terms of making sure that when a teacher leaves our four-year institutions with a teacher degree, that they're able to perform up to a certain standard and have the success and the outcomes that are needed for these kids to be successful. And I just want to know what the conversation is with regard to that.

DR. SPEERT: Assemblyman Stanley, when we talk about competencies, what the accrediting agencies have recognized is that working with education programs across the country -- the languages are different, the courses are different, even among four-year institutions. And so what they've developed are expectations for different areas to be treated, and

different accomplishments to occur, through the curriculum. Those are the competencies.

And so what the discussion is, is what is actually being taught, and what is the outcome? What does the student come away with? What does the practitioner who is going to go into the classroom bring with them? So competencies cut aside what we call the course, how many credits we assign to the course. But it allows us to talk about what the expectation is, in terms of completion.

I would only add to my colleague's comments by saying the concerns always are that the individuals are accorded an education that prepares them to meet with the needs of our citizenry. And there are differences in the preparation of individuals at the four-year institutions. The two-year institutions are now paying attention to that. And I believe that across the board, they have dealt with competency discussions with the Department of Education requirements for all 19 community colleges. The senior institutions comply with accrediting bodies as well.

When we have a field experience-- When the student is in the public schools working with a teacher-- At four-year institutions, that teacher must be a certified teacher. That's not in place in all cases at the two-year institutions. So there are things that we must do to ensure that the quality of education is one that we can be proud of across the board. The belief is that if we're talking about competencies, we're talking about expectations, we don't get into the matter of whether it's a three-year -- three-credit course, four-credit course, which is really bureaucracy, and doesn't deal with the education that is required.

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: And just in respect to what we're putting out, in terms of -- at the end of the day, what we put out after the process is complete, and the teacher goes into the classroom. Are there things that we need to be doing differently? Are there things that they need to be getting at the institution level? Should we be doing a little more mentoring when they get to their actual education environment? The bottom line is what's going on in the classroom after the kid leaves the school.

DR. SPEERT: I would offer two responses. One, it is the student we're talking about. It is working with that student and making that student as strong as possible. Most of our institutions have adopted communities, are parts of communities. And we work with professional mentoring with our colleagues. And it isn't a matter of, "Here we are, from the four-year institutions, and we're going to solve your problems." That's not real. What is real is that the training of our students in our own classrooms and in the field has to be real. They have to be exposed to-- At William Paterson University, a student must have at least one external urban experience. So if their practicum is in an urban experience, they might be in a suburban experience student teaching. But if their practicum is in a suburban institution, they must be in an urban environment for student teaching.

And what we have also done is, we've linked professional enrichment programs within communities. In our case, we concentrated on Paterson, Passaic, Garfield, and Passaic County Tech as programs that we'll work with. It makes us more current in our understanding of the realities of

the classroom, as well as giving the best experience to our students. That's the first thing.

The second response is: What our goal -- what Dr. Contini, and my goal, and our Committee's goal has always been is to create a sense of seamless web. The student at college should be able to enter our institutions at any place and be able to move from one institution to another, depending upon their work assignment, where they're living, whatever. They are citizens of New Jersey, and we have a responsibility to serve their interest. It's very difficult to do that, because the environments are very different, and the curricula that we've created has a beginning and an end to it. And when people don't begin and don't end at the right point, it upsets us. But that's what we've been working on dealing with. We can be upset. The concern is that the student shouldn't be upset and that the student should be able to drop out and come back in. What we're facing is, we're losing very many students up front. The male population across the country attending college and finishing college is decreasing. There are-- There were not opportunities -- many opportunities for women previously. There are more opportunities for women. We've addressed those issues.

I think we know the problems ahead. They're not very simple. But in dealing with the needs, with respect to the schools and early childhood, they should be a lot simpler. And I agree with Assemblyman Vas, we have to get to the matter at hand.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: And that's the specific focus of this Subcommittee. And, quite frankly, I think there is a sense of urgency to get it underway, because it's a unique opportunity that Abbott school districts

have that's really going to turn around and establish the baseline and the foundation for future education in elementary schools.

And the reason why that P-3 certificate was created was for that specific purpose. So I don't think it's inappropriate to look at it myopically. I think we should. I think we should look at what are the needs of the Abbott districts as it relates to the early childhood requirement, the mandate, and how do we make the best opportunity out of that for the students and the teachers, and prepare those teachers to provide that opportunity?

DR. CONTINI: I just want to also amplify the issue of competencies. In the context of our discussion, in the response, we were speaking about that relationship to how a program can attain the competencies required to meet both the Department of Education's requirements for certification, but also have a well-prepared student.

The other level of competency is the performance of the students. And Middle States accreditation -- everyone else is focusing certainly on how the student performs, and how do we measure their ability to meet the challenges in that particular field. That's ingrained, obviously -- hopefully -- in every evaluation that we do of the student.

Some of it's gatekeeping, with practice testing and so forth, not unlike what happens in K-12, where you have core curriculum content standards. And then there's a gatekeeper called the *HSPA*. So there are other ways that we measure students. We have students that are prepared for registered nursing. They graduate with an associate degree. But unless they pass the licensing test, they're not in the field. So there are different

measures, certainly. And they give you feedback, certainly, on how your program and your courses are doing.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Before you leave, I'd just-- If you could just repeat for us, what are the next steps that you will be taking? What is the time frame when those steps will be taken?

DR. OSWALD: The first group will work on strategy -- the first strategy that I mentioned, which is about dealing with that education core. And we hope that over two months, that group will have a proposed solution that has the consensus of the community.

The second group, the larger group -- that is a more daunting task in reaching out to deal with the academic majors, as well as the gen ed courses -- would be started simultaneously. And we would hope that we could finish that work in three months.

The issue of advisement -- the third issue -- improving advisement. Advisement, of course, is important. And good advisement is important at all the colleges, but with a special emphasis on advisement at the community colleges, we believe it's something that should be dealt with by the community college community -- if that makes sense -- and should probably also start simultaneously. It's a different group of people, to some degree. And as a result, I think we can have these things going on in a parallel fashion.

DR. CONTINI: And with regard to that third group--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: And what's the time frame for that?

DR. CONTINI: That's already started. As a matter of fact, several of the representatives of that group are behind me, who have great experience in advisement and articulation and transfer of students. Part of

that, also, is back to one issue that was included in the report. And that is the current level of course exchange, and so forth, through equivalencies. So making sure that what we have on file, if you will, with the New Jersey Transfer system, tells us -- is really what's happening. So we're on board on that one, and that's moving rapidly. It's within the same time period.

As far as--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: When do you think that will be completed?

DR. CONTINI: It would have to be done simultaneously with the other two, because what are we advising and what direction are we taking? So I--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: So the outside window is three months on that.

DR. CONTINI: Three months.

But I'll turn right now, and say it's already started.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR RICE: How many joint degree programs do we presently have in existence?

DR. OSWALD: I could give you that number, checking back at the office. I don't have it with me.

You're talking about joint degree programs in one area or just in early childhood? What would you--

SENATOR RICE: Between the institutions.

DR. OSWALD: Overall between the institutions? I can get that to you this afternoon.

SENATOR RICE: Okay. Through the Chair, would you get it to Melanie? She can get it to us.

DR. CONTINI: Maybe he means in institutions that offer the P-3.

DR. OSWALD: No, I asked.

You don't mean just in P-3. You mean how many joint degree programs do we have existing among our institutions?

DR. CONTINI: In all fields?

SENATOR RICE: That's correct.

DR. OSWALD: Yes, I can get that for you this afternoon. I'll do that through Melanie Schulz.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: If there are no other questions from any other members--

Thank you very much.

I'd like to hear from other people in the audience today to continue this discussion. I think, at the conclusion, we'll lay out our plan of action, as well.

Thank you very much.

DR. CONTINI: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Is there anyone else in the audience that would like to be heard on this, have any comments, or would like to add to this discussion?

Yes or no.

Okay, Cindy.

MS. RICE: I'm so happy to hear that we're talking about setting up a time frame so that everyone knows.

I guess one of the things in listening was -- and this may be something the members would discuss -- what is it that you want to see at the end of two months or three months so that it's clear, as we move forward, what should the expectation be when we come together in December or whenever to say, "This is what we want to see at this point." Because I'm not sure if that's exactly clear, because we've heard urgency. But what point should we be at sometime in December?

And the other thing I was wondering is that some of the parts of the Blueprint for Excellence-- I was wondering-- Maybe Dr. Oswald could answer this. Are they going to continue? For example, will there be a survey on the barriers, since it seems like we've already talked about a lot of that? Granted, it's been anecdotal and not data driven. But seeing that we're moving at least in the area of early childhood towards a seamless system, is that -- is a survey going to continue? There are a few points in the Blueprint I was just wondering about.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Contini, would you like to respond? Or Dr. Oswald?

DR. OSWALD: Certainly the survey will continue. All of the long-range plan items will be continued. We are adopting that long-range plan update in October. So this month, we'll be talking about it, both at Presidents Council and at the Commission. And there will probably be some modifications to what's in the long-range plan update as a result of this work.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

Someone else had their hand up there. Please come forward.

**B A R B A R A K A R P I N S K I:** I'm Barbara Karpinski, from the County College of Morris. I'm the coordinator of the Early Childhood Programs at County College of Morris.

And I just would like to address the last area that is going to be worked on, and that's advisement. I could address all of them, but I'd just like to address that.

I would like it known for the record that every full-time student at County College of Morris needs to be seen by their advisor. That is an advisor that they see throughout their program there. And they may not register for courses without being cleared after being advised.

The problem we have of advisement -- and this is not just early childhood, this is every one of our majors -- is in fitting our students classes into the individual needs of the colleges that they're planning to go to. And most of our students, when they begin their coursework in the freshman year, do not really have an expectation of where they're going. So, frequently, it's into their sophomore year that they know where they're going. And at that point, they have already taken many courses that may not be accepted, as they stand, into some four-year colleges. And that, therein, lies our problem. And those are gen ed courses, pretty much.

Thank you.

**SENATOR RICE:** Through the Chair, it's obvious it's not a new problem. And it's obvious that if you raised it, you've been paying attention to it, which I like to think -- from there it's obvious that you've

had some thoughts about how to resolve it or how to at least put it into perspective. Could you share those thoughts with us?

MS. KARPINSKI: Could you repeat--

SENATOR RICE: Because that is going to happen.

MS. KARPINSKI: How am I going to resolve that? Is that--

SENATOR RICE: Well, why don't we do it this way, for the sake of timing? Go back and think about that problem. Take a few moments and see if you can jot down a few comments or recommendations that we should be looking at as to how to try to minimize that problem. It's going to always exist. But the question is, how do we minimize it? Because if-- We all--

Those of us who went to college -- the first year you kind of know where you want to go. And in our days, your parents told you where you were going. So I had it easier. Today it's not that way. You kind of know, and you don't know. So how do you get around that, because now we're talking about individuals rather than collective piece? And I think that's one of the issues that the previous speaker was raising. We do have those kinds of problems. But if there are suggestions--

MS. KARPINSKI: Well, we are aware of the fact that if a student, for example, begins a two-year program in horticulture studies, and then they switch over to graphic arts, the horticulture studies classes will not apply to that major. And we explain that to them, and they know they will not be able to use those in transfer.

I'm referring more to the courses such as English, psych, sociology, history, the types of courses that are included in the gen ed

programs at even a four-year college at the first two-year levels. The courses are frequently using the same textbooks.

By the way, I have the same issue with my social work class. I teach the social work class that I learned at a four-year college here in New Jersey. I teach it the same way, I use the same textbook. They do not accept it as it stands.

So that is-- I don't know how to answer that problem. I think probably the only way to do it is to insist that if a student is taking child psychology, and it meets certain competencies -- as I understand you're going to be setting up -- it should be transferred where that -- in a seamless way.

SENATOR RICE: I think, in listening to it from that perspective-- I may be wrong, but I thought, in reading this document and listening to the speakers, we're all aware of that. And that's one of the problems we're having with articulation agreements.

MS. KARPINSKI: Yes, I am aware of that.

SENATOR RICE: It seems that there was an implication -- summary had -- that they are working on that.

MS. KARPINSKI: Yes.

SENATOR RICE: Am I correct? Is that what was implied in those statements?

MS. KARPINSKI: Yes.

SENATOR RICE: And I think they understand, from our perspective, this is a priority, because we had discussions in the past -- and I used myself as an example -- where I went from a community college, to a four-year, to a university. And I was running around in circles with the

same books, the same everything. I had to take things over I got credit for. And so we've lived those experiences.

To be quite frank, if the people in higher board of ed, community college, presidents, and people-- If they really step back a moment, they probably went through the same thing, too. I always tell people, "Don't forget our history." History is supposed to make us -- help us to make things better.

So that's being worked on. How it's going to come up, we don't know. They're going to shape it, hopefully, from a volunteer perspective. If we don't like the way it's shaped, we're going to kind of tweak it, with the Chairman's wrenches, to fine tune it.

MS. KARPINSKI: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you.

Anyone else?

Yes, sir.

**WILLIAM J. MULKEEN, J.D.:** Good morning.

My name is Bill Mulkeen. I'm Director of Program and Curriculum Development at Essex County College, where our distinguished graduate, Senator Rice, hails from.

Several years ago, Dr. Zach Yamba, our President, asked myself and Brenda Grooms, our Transfer Coordinator, to establish a separate Transfer Center. So what we did at Essex is, we have a separate office, which is the Transfer Center. Within that Transfer Center, Brenda is the actual counselor, and I run the Transfer Center.

We went out to each one of the individual colleges. We called them the big six or seven that we deal with -- Kean, New Jersey City,

Montclair -- and we made sure that the individual agreements were reflective of the Essex County College curriculum. We then created equivalency sheets, which are on our Web site and are also on -- available in the Transfer Center.

What we do is -- we adopted a motto and had it put up on signs throughout the college that says, "Transfer begins with the first credit and not the last." And so what Brenda and I do is, we go to the (indiscernible) general orientations that are held, and we talk about transfer. We go through the orientations for a specific major. So we will go to the social science department and speak to the -- all the students who are interested in education, and we stress with them, as it stands now -- and hopefully this will be corrected by the good work of everyone in this room. But as it stands now, we start with Day 1 telling them, "If you want to have a degree from Montclair, then this is what you need to follow -- the equivalency." They have the sheets, they have it on the Web page. We can't help it, as the last speaker said, if they change their major. Of course they're going to lose courses.

But we've had the instances, too, whereas -- for those of you who know where Essex County College is in Newark, immediately adjacent to us is Rutgers and NJIT. And what happens is-- We have had instances in both English and in math, where courses at Rutgers, which were like English 101 or Math 101, were not accepted by Rutgers, even though they use the same textbook, even though our professors at Essex County College walked 500 feet down the road and taught the courses.

I can happily say that we resolved each one of those by individual negotiations. Sometimes we had to change or tweak the course a

little, or we had to do something like that. But we were able to resolve it. It would be nice if we didn't have to do that -- if, on a statewide basis, we didn't have to do that. But at this point, I think that that's the only way that we can do it. And it's been very successful, but it's a lot of work, and it's a commitment from our administration to fund this Transfer Center so that we can go out and do this work.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you.

Anyone else?

Okay.

**ANN TICKNER - JANKOWSKI:** Good morning.

I'm Ann Tickner-Jankowski. I'm the Director of Transfer Resources at Brookdale Community College, and the Chair of the New Jersey Transfer Coordinators Association.

And I just want to support the issues that have been brought forward from my colleague from the County College of Morris and from Essex, and support the plans of my colleagues here in the front row, as far as the approach to the general education committee agreement.

As Dr. Mulkeen mentioned, as it currently stands, there are a lot of differences between the models that the colleges have. And it isn't possible to stay on top of what every single difference is when there are unfocused students. So the most productive solution that we could reach would be to work together as a system, possibly in the way that Dr. Oswald, Dr. Contini, and Dr. Speert are planning, with objective two, to move forward on working with academic officers at the four-year and the two-year on that agreement, in a blanket form.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you.

Okay.

**A V E L A T T E:** Good morning.

I'm Ave Latte. I'm faculty at Brookdale Community College, in the Education department. And I'd like to shift just to one other issue, and that is field experience.

We have found, at the community college, that early access to quality field experience sites is mandatory for our students for them to make a decision about their career in a realistic fashion. What we have met with are barriers, because we are not a certifying institution. The four-year institutions often have access to the quality sites first. And our students are left with, sort of, picking up the pieces, particularly in our county.

So I'm asking that through the process of realigning the programs for the P-3 certificate, that field experience begin as early as possible for our students, and that access to quality sites be allowed for community colleges, as well as four-year institutions, and that the Abbott districts work collaboratively with the Department of Ed with our initiative to allow that to occur.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you very much.

Yes.

**D A N A B E R R Y:** Good morning.

I'm Dana Berry, from Starting Points for Children. And I have a slightly different segue.

Starting Points for Children is a private, nonprofit corporation that provides paraprofessionals with training opportunities. It started out as an older worker training program. It went into Welfare to Work, to

(indiscernible), and has just completed a two-year pilot in an (indiscernible) center -- the Kearny Board of Education -- and Paterson, at a community based center, where we graduated 42 out of 60 starts -- 42 apprentices.

During this process, we have become accredited through the ACE process that goes through Thomas Edison State College. Our apprentices, upon the successful completion, not only receive the United States Apprenticeship Child Development Specialist credential -- which let's them go anywhere -- they are also able to receive 14 college credits. And these college credits can be applied either for their elective, depending on their course of study, or it can be applied into early childhood education coursework. It is also being accepted as P-3 work at a private college.

What is happening with us is, we are going in and working with that group of people in our Abbott programs, in the cities, in our urban areas, who are already there as the assistant teachers, the teacher aides. And we're saying, "If you would like to continue with us, and then segue into either a community college or a four-year, we will give you rigorous coursework that will not only make you better as a viable worker in the center, but will enable you to be earning college credit."

We have been working very closely with a few of our community colleges and have had a great deal of -- we have been met with success in articulation, except that "Wow, we get into only six or nine credits. But here we've been qualified for 14." So then, as this wonderful country allows us to do in an entrepreneurial way, Starting Points has begun to reach out to the private colleges. And they look at us and say, "Give us your people. We are absolutely delighted to take them. These are the diamonds in the rough. And we will accept all 14 college credits. And

then we'll continue their teacher education training and their four-year college." And, you know, I don't have to hassle. I don't have to go through the struggle of worrying about six or nine credits. And it is wonderful.

Our students are-- As I said, we just finished in March. And we actually have a van from a college that's coming up to pick them up from their Board of Education in Kearny and Paterson. It's going to roll them right over into matriculating students in a private education.

I needed to make you aware of this, because--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Where is your school at?

MS. BERRY: We'll go anywhere. We're a traveling team.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: So you go out.

MS. BERRY: We will go out. But our training site is in Jersey City. And we are committed to working mostly with the urban areas. The second pilot that we're doing now is in Montclair, working with more -- a broader segment than just the Abbott districts.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Please leave me your business card.

MS. BERRY: I can't. I'll just write down my name. I gave my one card out. I'd be delighted.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Anyone else?

The final speaker, and then we're going to have a plan of action, and then lunch.

**I V A N W. B A N K S. Ed.D.:** Oh, okay. I didn't know you said we're going to have lunch. Otherwise, I may have withheld my comments.

I just want to--

First of all, I'm Ivan Banks.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Is the speaker on? (referring to PA microphone)

DR. BANKS: Ivan Banks. I'm the new Dean at New Jersey City University.

And I just want to sort of reiterate some things that were raised by my predecessor, and that's the whole issue of competencies.

When we get into this business of *bean counting* -- is what we call it -- trying to do this credit-by-credit business -- I think we end up spinning our wheels. And it's going to take forever if we do it like that. I think if-- Since universities -- the four-year universities, anyway -- have to identify those things that program completers know and are able to do at the end of four years, it seems reasonable to me to say that if you have a general studies curriculum, you should be able to identify what people who finished a program of general studies should know and be able to do.

Now, we have a successful agreement with New Jersey City University and Hudson Community College, where we don't even go course-by-course. If you come to us with an Associates degree -- and we have an advisement sheet that has all of our general studies requirements and all university requirements. If you come with the Associates degree, we literally put an X. That piece is taken care of, and you move into professional studies.

The other piece I want to deal with is this whole issue of institutional autonomy. Anyone who operates a certificate program, or certification program, will give up some autonomy. And we have to stop playing this game about-- We're not saying you're going to sacrifice the unique cultures of our institutions. That's not going to happen. But to

hold on to absolute institutional autonomy in the name of tradition, so to speak, I think is kind of ridiculous. If you have a certification program, there are national standards you have to meet. So there's some institutional autonomy that's going to be gone anyway.

But if we're going to move forward, I think we do have to kind of think about what is it that the person who walks in that classroom should know and be able to do, and how do you accomplish that.

And I also want to fully-- I was at the August 29 meeting. And I do want to fully support the presenters who came up before us. The problem is that it's not a simple problem. Certainly there's some complexity to it. But I think we can probably meet reasonable deadlines if we get away from this course-by-course piece.

The final piece-- There's no educator in this country who would minimize the importance of early field experiences. And it seems to me that's something that's easily resolved. At the four-year colleges, some field experiences are in day-to-day courses, so we don't have that issue of trying to give credit for a field experience. The experience is part of the course. It seems to me that that model can easily be applied to the community colleges, where they're imbedded into specific courses.

And I do applaud this Subcommittee's expression of urgency.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Intensity.

DR. BANKS: Intensity and the sense of urgency. And if anything is legislative -- or if anything puts feet to the fire, perhaps-- Maybe some timetables should be legislated. Because I've been in education now for 30 years. If we don't have a defined timetable, we will talk about it forever.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Well, we're going to define a timetable today.

I'm going to ask for everyone's cooperation, so that we can continue this process of trying to develop an articulation and transfer agreement that is statewide and addresses the concerns that have been articulated.

And I'm going to ask the college representatives that are here today, if they could shorten their timetables for the purposes of providing reports to this Committee in three-week intervals. We would like to monitor the progress that's being made in the three areas that you've expressed.

And I'd like to ask that we schedule meetings a day or two apart from three weeks from today, starting on the week of October 5, to the week of October 26, and November 7. And even if we get your written reports the day of the meeting, that would give you a full 21, 23 days if we need to -- if it's the following day or a couple days later. We'll make these Committee meetings working sessions.

And I would like to ask, through the Chairman, that he request that present at these meetings be a representative from the Department of Education, who would have the authority to consider the bureaucratic, regulatory concerns that are brought forth. And that also a representative from the Office of Legislative Services first be provided with all the transcripts and all the reports of these Committee meetings, and that someone be present at these meetings, as well; and that they work in parallel in drafting proposed legislation that would achieve the same

outcome that the voluntary proposals would achieve through legislation. Because I think we need to stick to a timetable.

That would take us to our return at the Assembly, which would be after the election; and would take this process to the return of the Senate to full session. And I think the Committees, hopefully, can meet. The Chairman is here -- perhaps schedule an Education Committee meeting to hear from all the parties and also to consider proposed legislation, if need be, at that particular time. And that would ensure that by the end of this year, we would confront this issue in the interest of our students.

So I would certainly appreciate if everyone could cooperate with that schedule. Letters will go out today. If someone can't participate, we're going to move forward with the stakeholders that are present. There are enough people here today, and others who have come to our meetings, who have an interest in seeing this issue resolved. I certainly would like this to be a collaboration of the entire educational community. But we're not going to allow for someone's disinvolvement of this to alter our schedule. I think we have to work on a tight schedule to make this happen.

Thank you all for being here.

**(MEETING CONCLUDED)**