
Subcommittee Meeting

of

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ABBOTT SUBCOMMITTEE

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

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

DATE: October 13, 2005
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF SUBCOMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman Joseph Vas, Chair
Senator Martha W. Bark
Assemblyman Craig A. Stanley



ALSO PRESENT:

Melanie M. Schulz
Executive Director

Sharon Benesta
Chief of Staff

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ASSEMBLYMAN JOSEPH VAS (Chair): Good morning.

Thank you.

We had a few technical problems here today, in addition to some traffic problems on the Turnpike today, and some of the other roads.

But thank you all for being here this morning.

I'd like to call to order the Joint Commission -- Committee meeting of the Subcommittee -- Abbott Committee meeting today.

As I stated earlier, we are expecting Senator Bark here this morning.

We've scheduled this meeting to try to keep momentum going on the important issues that we've been talking about.

So good morning and welcome to the fifth meeting of the Abbott Subcommittee that centers on the issues of articulation and transfer coordination. We're looking forward to hearing about your progress on these issues, and suggestions and timetables for implementation.

Each time we come together, the Abbott Subcommittee members have learned how complex designing a new system will be, but we will not allow this complexity to be a barrier to progress. I'm happy that the Department of Education has agreed to be a partner with us as we tackle this very challenging issue, and look forward to working closely with newly appointed Acting Commissioner Lucille Davy.

And welcome, Commissioner. Thank you for being here today.

Lucille Davy, the Commissioner, brings a wealth of knowledge and policy experience to this discussion. And her perspective is most welcome.

While I was disappointed that you did not offer working session timetables at our last meeting on September 15, it is my understanding that meetings have taken place during this past month. And we look forward to an update today.

It will be most beneficial to the members if you could tell us how you see yourself being monitored. If this item has not yet reached your agenda to discuss, may I suggest that your future discussions include this topic.

It is my intention to continue working collaboratively with all of you. But I must reiterate that absent a voluntary resolution, the legislators have an obligation and responsibility to fix this problem through legislation.

In conclusion, I would like to state that I believe you are all making a good-faith effort on articulation and transfer. And some of the changes will be difficult and uncomfortable. However, the best interests of our students are at the center of these changes, and we must keep focused on our goal.

I'd like to call, as our first speaker today, the newly appointed Acting Commissioner for the Department of Education. I know she has another meeting she has to attend this morning. And I'd like to hear from her first, the honorable Lucille Davy, Commissioner of the Department of Education.

Commissioner.

I understand Assembly Chair of the Education Committee, and also a member of this Committee, Assemblyman Stanley, is on his way. He's also on the Turnpike trying to get through some traffic.

Commissioner, good morning.

ACTING COMMISSIONER LUCILLE E. DAVY:

Good morning.

Thank you for having us here this morning.

I'll be very brief. We're delighted to be able to participate in this work that you have already underway. Melanie, as you know, and I have met and talked about this issue briefly.

I have with me, this morning, our Acting Assistant Commissioner for Academic Program and Professional Standards, and that's Dr. Jay Doolan. Jay has been in the Department for many years. He's very familiar with these kinds of issues and will be working with this Committee, going forward, in -- especially when I cannot be here. It will be either Jay and I, or both of us together -- I mean, Jay or I, or both of us together.

I, frankly, do not have a great deal of background yet on this, Assemblyman. But, certainly, we are very interested in pursuing this issue with you. The issues that you're discussing, frankly, are no different than the kinds of issues that are faced in the K-12 system, as well. And articulation between the various levels -- that's an important topic for all of us to focus on as we go forward.

So I would pledge to you our support, and our help, and assistance in whatever way we can provide that to the Committee, in terms of accomplishing the important work that you have set forth for this Committee to accomplish.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you very much, Commissioner.

And as we spoke earlier, this is not only a very important educational issue, but is also an important financial issue. In light of the

fact that the State has appropriated \$10 million and made available scholarships for New Jersey STARS programs-- And we cannot have two-year students going into four-year colleges and not having all their credits applied against their major. And that's really at the heart of the issue here -- is that the State is a financial partner in this educational partnership that is in place. And we need to find a way to maximize both the economic and educational benefits that are at hand.

ACTING COMMISSIONER DAVY: To that end, I would also add that we are equally concerned about the fact that we know we have young people leaving high school, entering the college programs, who are not prepared adequately to take college credit-bearing coursework. And so we are also focused, as part of our high school reform, on that piece of the puzzle, as well. Because we see it the same way, that some of these young people are going into college programs and basically taking high school work over again in remedial courses, which is also an economic drain for the State. Because, obviously, we have provided those programs in K-12, and students shouldn't have to go to college only to repeat what they should have learned in high school.

So that's a focus of ours -- a real prime focus of ours as well, at the Department.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: I find that to be an interesting problem that we face. I don't want to date myself -- and I never had this difficulty -- but I recall when students couldn't meet the requirements of their grade, they didn't move on to the next grade. I don't understand how it is that students are moving from one grade to the next grade if they're not able to do the work. I mean, I think that's pretty fundamental. And I

think we have to take a look at that. Because I don't hear students staying back, or not moving on to the next grade, with the frequency that, perhaps, their educational competency would reflect.

ACTING COMMISSIONER DAVY: Well, as you probably know, Governor Codey has a social promotion initiative underway right now. It's a pilot project in four districts in the state. And we're taking a look at the impact of a program like that, that would, in fact, provide children with supports that would help them reach the benchmarks they need to achieve in order to be promoted to the next level. And we will take a look at the results.

There's obviously research out there that, I think on both sides of this question -- is social promotion appropriate or not? But there is no question that moving children along who have not been acquiring the skills along the way really does no service to those children for the future. And I think that, as part of our high school reform, we're looking at the whole pipeline. Because there's no question that a child is not going to be able to do high school work and achieve at the levels we know they must achieve in order to enter either college or the workforce prepared for the 21st century-- They're not going to be able to do high school work if they haven't had good preparation in elementary school and in middle school, as well. Young people will not be able to achieve success in algebra, for example, at the high school level if they haven't been prepared in middle school for pre-algebra concepts that get them ready to be able to do that kind of work.

So this is a full-spectrum issue, and one that we're taking very seriously. We are focusing, right now, on adolescent literacy as well. Because we know that just reading at third grade level -- which is a good

thing. We have a goal for all children to read at or above third grade level. That's very important for all children to get those fundamentals at a young age. But that's not enough to help those children achieve success as they move up into high school and, frankly, into college or the workforce, as well.

So we know that we've got to make sure there's a continuum of preparation, of literacy development along the way. And the Department is very actively engaged right now in addressing both the adolescent literacy issue and the math pipeline issue. We're working on both of those right now.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Commissioner.

ACTING COMMISSIONER DAVY: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: I'd like to welcome Senator Bark, who has just arrived.

Thank you, Senator, for being here.

SENATOR BARK: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: I don't know if you have some comments you'd like to make at this time.

SENATOR BARK: My apologies for being late.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: We were all late on the Turnpike.

SENATOR BARK: Other than that, we'll just move right along.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay, thank you.

All right. We'll move to Dr. Jeanne Oswald, the Executive Director of the Commission on Higher Education.

Doctor, thank you for joining us again. And thank you for your fine work on this matter.

J E A N N E M. O S W A L D, Ed.D.: Thank you.

I'm bringing the whole contingent with me.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Contini will join you, and Dr. Lynde.

Thank you both for being here today.

And if you could give us an update, we'd appreciate it.

DR. OSWALD: Thank you, Chairman Vas and Senator Bark. We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to provide you with this update on our work in developing an efficient and smooth transfer path for community college students who wish to be P-3 teachers, and finish their work at a four-year college.

Since we came before you -- I believe it was September 15 -- there have been a number of meetings and discussions, and progress has certainly been made.

We think it's worth reiterating, as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, this is hard work. It's not easy. And it's hard and it's not easy, because we want to do this right, on behalf of the students.

We commend you, again, on your recognition that this is a problem that is best left to the higher education community to address with the assistance of the Department of Education. And we thank you for your confidence that we can move this along in an appropriate time line. Certainly, there are some professional tension issues involved here, but there's also an understanding this must be done, and it must be done

without delay. So I have seen -- we all have seen some very real progress in short order.

This morning, I'm going to brief you on what is underway in regard to the P-3 part of the curriculum. Dr. Lynde, who is the Provost of Montclair State University, is here today because Dr. Speert was not able to join us. And he will comment on the general education and major portion of the work. And Dr. Peter Contini, from Salem Community College, will comment on the improvements in the advisement process at the community colleges.

Since we last met with you, our primary focus has been on identifying the parts of the P-3 professional education program that would be covered best in the first two years. So I will summarize that progress for you.

We currently have 14 institutions -- higher education institutions in the state that are offering programs preparing students to be P-3 teachers. They come from very diverse institutions. The 14 institutions serve very different types of populations. Some have mostly part-time students, some have mostly full-time, some have a mix; some have students that come with very high SAT scores, and grade points, and accomplishments; and others come who are very disadvantaged, educationally.

As a result, these programs -- these 14 programs are structured differently, they're designed differently in order to most effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the particular student bodies. If all of our students that wanted to be P-3 teachers began -- completed their program at a four-year -- one of these four-year colleges, we wouldn't be here today.

But given the fact that there are many students who want to begin their program at a two-year college, we want to create that path -- that smooth path that will allow the students to move on to a four-year institution and to complete their program in the same time frame that a native student would be able to complete the program -- that is, a student who began their program at the four-year institution.

The challenge, of course, is to create this smooth transfer path without destroying or eliminating the innovative and creative programs that exist at the universities and the colleges and, also, to do it without requiring standardized courses at the community colleges, neither of which would be a productive solution.

Admission to a teacher education program doesn't actually occur until the third year, the junior year. That's for any student, not just transfer students. The native students at the four-year colleges, and the transfer students, don't get admitted into teacher education programs officially until the third year.

Admission is contingent upon the student's demonstration of competencies in general education and in their major -- the beginning parts of their major -- and on a grade point average. Therefore, our four-year institutions do very little professional P-3 preparation in the first two years. They focus, instead, on general education, the early major courses, and providing an early introductory framework for teacher education.

Our intention, and what we are working on, is to identify P-3 experiences at the four-year institutions that should be mirrored by the community colleges. That is a common core of professional P-3 education that could be covered in the first two years at all of the institutions, the

two-year institutions and the four-year institutions, in order to facilitate transfer. If the community college's P-3 preparation is limited to that common core, transfer of P-3 course work will be smooth, and time and money will not be wasted.

This past Monday, regardless of the holiday, we met at The College of New Jersey with a large group of two- and four-year representatives. And we discussed P-3 competencies that are addressed in the first two years at a large number of our four-year colleges. As a result of that discussion, there's a subgroup now working on four specific things.

First, the development of a full matrix of the NAEYC-based competencies for early childhood programs, defining with great specificity the common competencies that students need to acquire in the first two years at all institutions.

Second, the development of the common assessment, such as portfolios, that could be used by community college students to demonstrate their competencies.

Third, the identification of general education prerequisites that are appropriate for P-3 certificate.

And fourth and last, identification of other common requirements for admission into the teacher ed program in that junior year. For example, many of the institutions require that the individual students demonstrate proficiency in written and oral communication.

These four critical steps are now underway. There are certainly some other things that we have left to do in this component of our work, and other issues need to be considered. But we're off to a very promising start. By the middle of next month -- there's a time line for you. By the

middle of next month, we hope to have the details -- and I know we will have the details regarding P-3 standards and competencies for the first two years, as well as the other commonalities that I mentioned for the P-3 program.

I believe that the beauty of this solution that's unfolding is that it can be implemented, and it can have an effect on students soon. In fact, it can provide the critical guidance that's necessary to guide community college students, who are seeking a P-3 certificate, regarding what they should take or they should not take next semester, in January -- ensuring that they only take those P-3 courses at community colleges that mirror the common work that's being done by native students at the four-year institutions.

Dr. Lynde is going to comment on how this rather small portion of the full work that needs to be accomplished by these students fits in with the other requirements in gen ed, in the majors. And those, of course, are critical transfer issues, as well. And they are actually the basis on which admittance into a teacher education program is based. So they become extremely critical. And I will defer to him at this point.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Oswald, before we move to Dr. Lynde-- What about the content material of the courses that are going to be taken at these two-year schools? Has there been some discussion about the content material so that there is equivalent content material for these courses?

DR. OSWALD: Absolutely, Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: So that's not an issue at this point. If there's an agreement about what courses would be taken at the two-year

colleges that would fully transferred into the four-year colleges, there's no question about the content material of the courses.

DR. OSWALD: Right.

Let me address that for the piece that I'm looking at now -- what I'm talking about here. As I said, the four-year colleges only do a small bit of introductory work in P-3, usually around six credits. So we're only talking about two courses there. And what we are identifying -- and why we're going to be able to have this done rather quickly -- is the competencies that must come from those courses. So rather than identify the content, and the syllabi, and what you must teach, and how you must teach it, we are looking at the outcomes that are needed by the students in order to proceed through the program and to have the basic competencies. And we're basing these on the NAEYC standards, the national standards that all of our four-year institutions are held to.

So they are the competencies that our native students need to meet. And whether they do it in three courses over here, or two different courses, or one course, the key is they need to address the competencies.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: I don't want to minimize the -- or the goals and the objectives that we've set for ourselves, because, in some way, we've begun to minimize them down to the P-3 courses only. When we started this discussion, this was about achieving those competencies for all courses that are taken at the two-year schools that would move into the four-year schools. And I don't want to narrow it down.

I mean, I understand that if we're able to achieve that for the P-3 courses, that we've created the model that can be used for other courses.

And I'm hoping, Dr. Lynde, you'll be speaking about that in your presentation today.

So why don't we go to Dr. Lynde.

DR. OSWALD: Wonderful. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you.

RICHARD A. LYNDE, Ph.D.: Thank you.

Good morning.

It's actually been 16 years since I last testified before members of the Legislature. And I'm glad to be here again before you, this time to comment on articulation between the community colleges and the four-year colleges, an issue that I feel very strongly about.

I think it is useful for you to know that I started my career at Montclair State University as a member of the chemistry faculty in 1970, and that I am beginning my 19th year as Vice President for Academic Affairs at Montclair.

During the course of my service as Chief Academic Officer, I'm pleased to be able to state that Montclair has greatly expanded the number of active articulation agreements with the community colleges. Most recently, I chaired a group of academic vice presidents from the State college and university sector that successfully concluded an agreement with our colleagues from the community college sector for the seamless transfer of general education credits between the two sectors.

Because of my experience with this issue, I was asked this past Monday to co-chair, with Thomas Wilfrid, the Academic Vice President of Mercer County Community College, a small committee formed to resolve several issues that are unique to the general education transfer process for

P-3 students. I look forward to working with Vice President Wilfrid, again, since he was my community college counterpart in the previous and successful general education discussions.

As Dr. Oswald indicated earlier, native P-3 students at four-year institutions focus on general education courses and initial courses in their major during their first two years. Additionally, they take four to six credits, generally two courses, of introductory work in teacher education. But as you've heard before, it's a little more complicated than this, because many of the requirements student and teacher education programs must meet -- courses must often satisfy two requirements to enable students to complete their programs within the standard 120 credits of the baccalaureate program.

For example, a general education course may serve as a required professional education -- as a prerequisite in the professional sequence in education. So it serves both as a general education course and as a prerequisite to an education course.

Community college students generally have a variety of ways in which they can satisfy their general education requirements. But only certain of the courses will simultaneously satisfy the education prerequisite. Thus, careful planning and advising become absolutely essential for students who intend to transfer into certification programs at the four-year institutions.

At the present time, there is not a great deal of uniformity in the way the four-year institutions utilize general education courses to also fulfill prerequisites to the professional sequence. This is the issue that Tom Wilfrid and I will be addressing in our committee. Our goal will be to

identify a sequence of courses, within the community college general education foundation program, that will also satisfy the professional sequence prerequisites at each of the four-year institutions that offer P-3 programs and which receive transfer students from the community colleges.

I believe that aligning the general education component of the P-3 transfer programs can be readily accomplished. Thus, the time line that Dr. Oswald has identified -- a mid-November target for identifying the commonalities in the general education portion of the curriculum -- is reasonable. I believe this time line is a realistic compromise between the very real need to resolve these issues as soon as possible, and the need to allow for adequate deliberation to ensure that our programs produce exceptionally well-qualified graduates.

The committee that Tom Wilfrid and I will co-chair will also review issues related to that portion of the program reserved for the academic majors of P-3 transfer students. And we will make recommendations within the same time frame just noted for the general education portion of the program.

Let me assure you that my four-year college and I share your sense of urgency to resolve these issues. And we are prepared to work with our counterparts from the community colleges to ensure a seamless transfer of P-3 students to baccalaureate programs in our institutions. More generally -- and coming back to what you just mentioned -- the types of decisions and procedures we are devising to expedite the transfer of P-3 students will benefit all community college students who wish to transfer to baccalaureate programs.

I am confident, therefore, that by resolving these issues -- these P-3 issues -- we will enhance the transfer process for all students seeking to further their education by transferring from associate to baccalaureate programs.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Dr. Lynde.

I'd like to welcome the Assembly Education Chairman, Assemblyman Stanley, today.

Chairman, good to see you today.

Any comments or--

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: No.

DR. LYNDE: The third critical component of this project, then, is improving the transfer advisement for P-3 students. And President Contini will address that issue.

P E T E R B. C O N T I N I, Ed.D.: Thank you very much, Dr. Lynde.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Contini, welcome.

DR. CONTINI: Thank you very much, Assemblyman Vas. It's a pleasure to be back before the Subcommittee.

Senator Bark, Assemblyman Stanley, it's a pleasure to see you both today.

As you've heard, there's been a great deal of action, activity. And I think process is well on the way. I would underscore Dr. Oswald's statement about professional tension. But we also believe that coming out of that professional tension is going to be a better product that will serve our students and, certainly, address the sense of urgency you've created for the underlying causes that you've identified. So we're really pleased.

As you recall, there were three focuses we had given you in our previous presentation. You've heard about the first being the professional courses for the P-3 certification, the link between that and general ed, and the coordinate major for those students. Because, as we know, those education students graduating with certification are not uniquely education majors. They also have a coordinate major in that major field.

And the third focus was that of, how do we communicate that to students? How do we advise students? How do we link, if you will, the information that's available to them, as students in a community college, so that they're making good decisions, well-informed decisions as they move on for their transfer to a four-year school?

What we're pleased to tell you is that there already exists a mechanism to accomplish some of what I'm going to describe to you. There has been in existence, for many years, a group called the New Jersey Transfer Counselors Association. And I'm pleased, today, that with us is the Chair of that group, Ann Tickner Jankowski.

Ann, just raise your hand.

Ann is our Chair of the group, and also is the transfer coordinator at Brookdale Community College. Ann heads up the group this year. And their focus, obviously, is continuing to look for mechanisms that would improve the way in which we communicate on behalf of students and between the two- and four-year schools in our state.

The group functions on an almost monthly basis among the community colleges. And, twice a year, the group comes together with two- and four-year counselors. And the meeting for this fall will be mid-November, and which will be held right here in Trenton, at Thomas Edison

College. And on that agenda -- the first item on that agenda will be what I'm going to describe to you now. And so we are moving ahead rather quickly.

I'd also like to reinforce what the Chair has indicated that, certainly, we see P-3 as a way to model the processes and procedures, but, certainly, this will apply across the board for articulation and transfer of students, whatever their major may be. So it's really critical.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Dr. Contini, what's the date of that meeting in November?

DR. CONTINI: I believe it's November 18.

Is that true, Ann? (affirmative response)

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

DR. CONTINI: As a result of our challenge that we presented to you, in terms of this focus -- and I'll just remind us. It was: community college students need immediate and ongoing advisement about transferring to a four-year college, and information about any institutional changes must be consistent and kept current.

With that in mind, the community college transfer counselors have met and have identified several strategies, some of which are already in place, some which we believe will be enhanced and improved. The first among those is that we certainly need to educate students, early, on the fundamental concepts of successful transfer, understanding the differences of degrees -- and we've heard that discussed -- associate of art degrees, associate of science degrees, and even associate of applied science degrees, because there are frequently some challenges about understanding what those individual degrees may bring them, in preparation for a transfer.

Choice of transfer institutions is critical -- who has the alignment. As Dr. Oswald indicated, not everyone has P-3, if that's your area of interest. Not everyone has other majors that you might be interested in.

The impact of graduation on your transferability, when that will occur, and what credits and access to other opportunities, through scholarships that might be available-- So having an early dialogue and an early indication of where a student may be going is very important.

We also know that many of these students are not necessarily at that point where they've made that decision. So we're going to be talking, certainly, to what we might describe as the late focusing students, students who are not quite sure where their major may take them in transfer, to keep their options open with broadly looking at general education courses that might allow them to transfer to a number of different majors, as well as different institutions.

The third would be the mechanism that we have in place. And it's one that we think is very powerful. It's a tool, as we've discussed -- and that's New Jersey Transfer -- in ensuring that students, upon their decision to come to a community college, know that that is an instrument that is available to them and that will be used by them and, certainly, their transfer counselors, as they look at specific courses and programs that they may select at the community college; and how they can be maximizing those courses on transfer to the four-year institution that they may be interested in so that, in effect, they are maximizing all the opportunities it may have.

Critical in New Jersey Transfer is keeping it current. And so it's not good enough just to have it set up in one way and having courses reviewed -- but to maintain that on a regular basis. And that responsibility

is both at the two- and four-year institutions. Because community colleges change their major and courses, four-years do that. And how we communicate that, through the seamless opportunity -- one way of recording it is through New Jersey Transfer, and communicating it to those students.

Setting up and proactively scheduling sessions with our colleagues in the four-year institutions -- the Association that I mentioned is one mechanism. But we also know transfer advisors are not always in tune until some decisions are being made. So working collaboratively, like we're talking about with the academic officers of both the two- and four-year institutions, is really critical in, again, keeping a focus on how that is impacting advisement as a student enters their decisions.

As much as we would love students in community colleges to finish in two years, many do not for many reasons -- some of which are work related, family related, and some decisions about their collegiate preparation. So that may take them longer to get through that schedule. And as they're making that decision, the standards might change, the expectations may change, so they have to be aware of that -- and be really aware of it.

The other is to have an ongoing communication. And, certainly, meetings are wonderful, but we think there should be a mechanism established between the two- and four-year institutions so that type of articulation and discussion about changes can be shared across the board with transfer counselors, whether they be resident at two- or four-year institutions. And we think we have the means to do that, possibly

through New Jersey Transfer serving as a host -- but in keeping an electronic awareness of where changes may be occurring.

These strategies are that. Some of them are already active, some need to be refined. But what we'll be doing at the November 18 meeting will be now taking those strategies and putting them into action. What are the specific things that need to be done? What are the benchmarks? And are there best practices? There may well be institutional relationships that already exist that can really demonstrate how those things can be as effective as we possibly can.

Again, we're focusing, because of the charge, initially on P-3 certification. But we realize that these efforts are going to have impact across all teacher preparation, as well as all majors, no matter whether someone is interested in becoming a teacher or not.

So I think we're well on our way. We have, certainly, the commitment from the Counselors -- the Transfer Counselors Association. And I can assure you that these are not just words, these are strategies that will be put into action.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay. So the counselors are going to be meeting -- the transfer counselors will be meeting on November 18. The next meeting between the higher education community -- two- and four-year colleges-- When is that going to occur?

DR. OSWALD: We haven't set the date for that meeting. There's an e-mail out now, trying to get availability of the key people. But it's the subgroup that's working on the P-3. And then there's the committee that Dick Lynde and Tom Wilfrid are chairing. That's going to be within the next week or two. So we don't have the actual dates, but

we're talking about all very soon. Because as we indicated, we are looking to have some real progress and some details by mid-November.

DR. CONTINI: Assemblyman, in effect, what we have is three paths that are being taken that will, obviously, all come together so that we weren't waiting for one to be completed, then the other. We started, certainly, with the professional aspect of the P-3. But now we see the integration and linkage, because of the general ed requirement. And, certainly, the result of this is then to -- how do we communicate this to students? So hence, the advising portion of it.

So we see them taking, certainly, separate paths at this moment, but they will be integrated as one communication.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay.

So Dr. Lynde's group will be meeting, probably, the first week of November.

DR. LYNDE: No later than that.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: No later than that.

DR. LYNDE: No later than that. Hopefully earlier than that.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Right. And then the other group that's meeting on the P-3 certification -- hopefully by mid-November.

DR. OSWALD: They will be meeting within the next two weeks, certainly -- at least for the first meeting. They'll probably meet two or three times before mid-November.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Okay. And then you'll have the transfer advisors meeting the 18th of November. So is it realistic that we can get a follow-up update, let's say, the following week, which would probably mean--

MS. SCHLUZ (Executive Director): That's Thanksgiving.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Right. But we could probably meet either Monday or Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Because the legislative board is opening right after the election. We have a draft bill that we prefer not to draft -- drop into this process. We prefer to have this done on a voluntary basis. But if there isn't some progress being made -- I think I've been clear about it -- we intend to drop a bill to do this. So I'd like to see if we can get an update the week before Thanksgiving, assuming that everyone's had a chance to continue to meet, so that we can make an intelligent decision as to how to proceed.

Is that realistic?

DR. CONTINI: Yes.

DR. OSWALD: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: And, again, I want to thank you. I know there's been a lot of work that's been done over the last couple of weeks. This is something that's serious and important. And it requires that we do -- give our best effort to try to achieve.

Assemblyman Stanley, any comments?

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Senator Bark.

SENATOR BARK: I don't think so.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Then we're going to hear from our last speaker. We have Nancy Thomson, the CDA Advisory Council. She's here, today, to make a presentation.

Nancy, thank you for being here.

NANCY C. THOMSON: Thank you very much for allowing me to come today.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you, Nancy.

MS. THOMSON: I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of the CDA Statewide committee. The CDA-- The Child Development Associate, which is known as the CDA, is a nationally recognized early childhood credential, and has been acknowledged in New Jersey's Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers as an acceptable qualification for group teachers. And this has been in place for over 20 years.

To obtain a CDA credential, one must have a minimum of 480 hours of classroom experience, successfully complete 120 hours of professional development in eight content areas, and prepare a professional resource file, pass a standardized assessment by a nationally qualified monitor who conducts both an oral and written exam.

As Executive Director of a child care resource and referral agency that provides over 500 hours of training to child care practitioners, I would like to share a little bit about the people who attend our CDA classes. Our average student is in her early 40's. Most have been working in child care environments for over 10 years and have not envisioned themselves as college students. Most have an annual salary of less than \$20,000. And most receive scholarships to attend their classes through the State-funded New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education. By the time these adult students obtain the CDA credential, they have typically attended two to three years of classes and are

often motivated, at that point, to then continue their learning by enrolling into a college program.

And that's where the barriers arise. Although Thomas Edison State College has assigned the value of nine college credits to the CDA credential, very few New Jersey colleges articulate the credential for any credits. Caldwell College and Thomas Edison are the only four-year colleges that accept it for credit. And some of the community colleges accept the CDA for six credits; however, it does not then articulate into usable credits for most of the four-year programs.

The CDA credentialed individual has experience, education, and a working knowledge of good early childhood practices. All learning is specific to early childhood education and is relevant to the work that is performed. And it is competency based and encompasses the core knowledge categories of curriculum: safe, healthy environment; physical and cognitive development; establishing productive relationships with families; managing an effective program operation; observing and recording children's behavior; and principles of child growth and development.

New Jersey annually invests over \$300,000 in CDA training scholarships. The students have invested two to three years of learning to obtain the credential, and because of the rigorous program that one must complete, many child care center directors have publicly stated that they would often prefer hiring a CDA recipient over a four-year degreed person with no early childhood experience, which I'm not advocating for. But I'm just showing you that it's a true value to people that hire early childhood staff.

There are currently over 4,000 adults in New Jersey who have obtained the CDA. The 1999 National Survey of CDAs showed that 22 percent of the CDA recipients have college credit towards a degree.

I am here today to petition the legislators and our institutional policy makers to validate this national credential by accepting the CDA as part of the articulation process you are currently framing. The CDA should, at a minimum, be articulated into usable early childhood program credits at both the two- and four-year college programs for a minimum of three college credits.

Thomas Edison State College believes the credential is equivalent to nine college credits. And we just ask that you at least recognize the credential as an accepted three-credit introductory course in early childhood education, so that the learning that takes place through the CDA doesn't have to be repeated again once that person goes into a two- or four-year college.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Just to set the record straight, we're not empowered to make that determination. But some of the people who can participate in making that happen are here today. Dr. Contini, Dr. Lynde, certainly Dr. Oswald -- who are reviewing this information now. And I would suggest that you take advantage of the opportunity to speak to them and, perhaps, see if you can be involved in the dialogue that's occurring, to see if some credit can be given to the work that's been done.

MS. THOMSON: I realize that your focus isn't to make that type of determination. But I think it's a major articulation issue--

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: It is.

MS. THOMSON: --because people come into programs with experience, credential, much more than they would get out of a three-credit course the CDA has for them. And then it's like starting all over again, discounting what they did.

So I am here, really, to encourage the framers to really include the CDA in that discussion as acceptable credit.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you. Your point has been made. Thank you very much.

MS. THOMSON: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VAS: Thank you very much.

Okay.

Is there anyone else out there that would like to be heard today?

I see Dr. Farahi here, from Kean University.

Welcome, Dr. Farahi.

Anyone else wish to be heard this morning? (no response)

If not, I'm going to ask that our staff schedule a meeting for the -- I guess that would be the third week of November -- perhaps Monday or Tuesday of Thanksgiving week, to hear a further update. And I think at that point, we would be ready to make a determination as to what the next steps would be.

Again, I want to thank all our participants on this effort for their work -- their valuable work.

And to all the members who have made time to be here, I certainly thank you all for being here on such short notice. And we look forward to seeing you again in November.

Thank you.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)