

CSSI Steering Committee

October 3, 2018 Meeting Summary

Steering Committee (in attendance):

Dr. Cherise Jackson, Chamberlain University (substituting for Dr. Jennifer Bussen)
Dr. Luanne Haggard, American Business & Technology University
Mr. Satheesh Kumar, American Trade School
Mr. Robin O'Connell, Wellspring School of Allied Health
Ms. Jennifer Steinmetz, Dogwood Dental Assisting School

Note: Five Steering Committee members were unable to attend due to illness/scheduling conflicts.

Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) Staff:

Mr. Leroy Wade, Assistant Commissioner
Dr. Laura Vedenhaupt, Senior Research Associate
Ms. Dory Hamburg, Research Associate
Mr. Jaron Vail, Research Associate

The Steering Committee was provided background on the initiative and the Department's strategic plan, *Preparing Missourians to Succeed: A Blueprint for Higher Education*. Additionally, the Steering Committee reviewed and discussed feedback from sector colleagues on the initiative planning meeting held June 29, 2018. Two key points were raised:

- Certified schools tend to have lower visibility than public and independent institutions at the secondary level. Therefore, a successful pilot and subsequent project could improve recognition of certified schools as viable options for graduating high school students.
- Some businesses require bachelor degrees for positions where such a credential is not necessary. A successful project may inform employers of the quality training provided in certificate and associate degree programs.

The Steering Committee agreed the process needs to be transparent and include the involvement of the sector in honing definitions and descriptors. The Steering Committee and MDHE developed the following set of general objectives for the pilot project:

- Define / verify clear and objective quality criteria for selected programs
- Validate evaluation process and instruments
- Identify challenges for inclusion of non-licensure programs
- Identify evaluation / quality of soft skills
- Identify quality assessment instruments for selected programs
- Develop positive brand awareness for the sector

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After discussion and consideration of the number of schools, programs and program fields, and objective and available data, the Steering Committee selected the following three program areas for the first year pilot project. The Steering Committee agreed any program delivery methodology (i.e., residential, online, or blended) would be accepted for participation provided all other program and institutional criteria are met.

- Licensed Practical Nurse (both degree and non-degree)
 - Graduates must pass the same exam (NCLEX-PN).
 - Certified schools must be accredited.
 - Certified schools must be approved by the Missouri Board of Nursing to offer pre-licensure programs.
- Certified Nurse Assistant
 - Graduates must pass the state exam to be listed on the State Registry. Failure to be listed on the Registry may preclude employment at most long-term care facilities.
 - Certified schools must be approved as an eligible training provider by the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS).
- Information Technology
 - Programs must lead to an industry certification (e.g., A+, CCNA, etc.)
 - Graduates either sit for the national vendor certification exam as part of the program or are encouraged to seek national certification after graduation.

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Suggested Quality Criteria

- NCLEX-PN pass rate within 1 year of graduation
 - The Steering Committee will work to identify a “quality” pass rate benchmark for participating schools. The benchmark will be determined through evaluation of NCLEX data and through feedback from the community.

Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) Suggested Quality Criteria

- CNA State Exam pass rate
 - The Steering Committee will work to identify a “quality” pass rate benchmark for participating schools. The benchmark will be determined through evaluation of Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) data and through feedback from the community.

Information Technology Suggested Quality Criteria

- Certification pass rate
 - The Steering Committee will work to identify a “quality” pass rate benchmark for participating schools. The benchmark will be determined through evaluation of available vendor certification data, data through feedback from the community, and data from journal articles and graduate surveys.

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Data to be considered in developing additional quality criteria for all programs in the pilot would include:

- Cohort enrollment
- Percent of cohort graduating within 150% of the program length
- Student evaluations
 - The Steering Committee will work with the MDHE and certified schools to develop a “quality” survey for students. While schools may use their own surveys, all participating schools must agree to include two MDHE-required questions.
 - Knowing what you know now, would you enroll in this program again?
 - Knowing what you know now, would you encourage family or friends to enroll in this program?
- Employer evaluations
 - The Steering Committee will work with the MDHE and certified schools to develop a “quality” survey for employers. While schools may use their own surveys, all participating schools must agree to include two MDHE-required questions.
 - Did the employee have skills adequate for the job?
 - Would you employ other graduates from this school’s program?

Institutional Criteria for Participation

The Steering Committee and MDHE staff agreed with the following institutional criteria for participation in the pilot:

- Certified to operate by the MDHE
- Completed at least one full recertification cycle with the MDHE
- Program has been established for at least three years without substantive changes
- Have no formal grievance within the last five years prior to application that the MDHE has officially determined constituted a violation of certification standards
- Have no findings from the school’s most recent MDHE site visit that have not been satisfactorily resolved within sixty (60) days of formal notification
- If accredited, neither the school nor the program are under show cause
- If Title IV eligible, the school is not under Heightened Cash Management 2

Establishing a Review Process

The Steering Committee and MDHE staff discussed an evaluation process that would consist of:

- Determination of initiative components and process
- Announcement of invitation to participate, including application
- Application deadline
- Reviewer selection
- Application evaluation
- Data verification
- Quality award

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MDHE staff are open to suggestions but would recommend accepting applications at the beginning of the calendar year (January 1) with all evaluation and review completed and awards made by the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1).

Recognition for participating schools would entail an official letter or certificate suitable for framing from the MDHE, recognition via the MDHE website, and a downloadable logo the school would be authorized to use for the duration the school's program is recognized as high quality.

However, there will be no specific public recognition for the first year of the pilot program. The results of the pilot will be evaluated to determine if the process met the stated objectives and to allow for the adjustment of any process and/or evaluation instrument. If the results of the pilot deem the strategic initiative to be workable, the Steering Committee may or may not choose the same programs for full implementation.

Next Steps

A draft summary of the meeting will be distributed to the full Steering Committee for review and feedback after which, the summary will be posted to the initiative page on the MDHE website (https://dhe.mo.gov/initiatives/certified_school_strategic_initiative.php). Feedback from sector colleagues on the summary and on general questions for the community will be solicited and summarized for the next Steering Committee meeting tentatively scheduled for November 2018.

Questions for the Community

- What, if any, should be the minimum number of students in a cohort for a school to submit a program for consideration? If a minimum is established, should schools with low enrollment in a particular cohort be allowed to combine cohorts to meet minimum criteria for program participation?
- What should be the benchmark pass rate for each of the selected program areas? Why? *(NOTE: While the Board of Nursing requires at least an 80% NCLEX pass rate, the MDHE believes the benchmark should be higher to ensure the highest quality program(s) are recognized).*
- What, if any, questions should be included in all Student Surveys? Employer Surveys?
- At what point during the program should a student be asked to complete the Student Survey?
- At what point after hiring a program graduate should an employer be asked to complete the Employer Survey?