

MINUTES

OF THE

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE

BOARD OF REGENTS

OF

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

HELD IN

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

JANUARY 16, 2001

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**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS
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A special meeting of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System, was convened by Mr. Robert H. Allen at 10:45 a.m., on Tuesday, January 16, 2001, in the Board of Regents Meeting Room, on the campus of Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas. Mr. Allen said Mr. Powell had been called away on an urgent matter and would return before the adjournment of the meeting. Mr. Allen served as acting chairman of the meeting.

The following members of the Board were present:

Mr. Don Powell, Chairman (*joined the meeting at 11:15 a.m.*)
Mr. Robert H. Allen
Ms. Anne Armstrong
Dr. Dionel Avilés
Mr. Lionel Sosa
Mr. R.H. (Steve) Stevens

The following members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board were present:

Ms. Pam Willeford, Chair
Dr. Martin Basaldua, Vice Chair
Mr. William C. Atkinson
Mr. Raul B. Fernandez
Dr. Delores Hutto Carruth

REPORT AND DISCUSSION ON "CLOSING THE GAPS"

Mr. Allen introduced the members and staff of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), as well as the members of the Board of Regents, and other guests in attendance. Mr. Allen said the purpose of this special meeting was to receive a report and have a discussion on the THECB's higher education plan, "Closing the Gaps."

Ms. Willeford thanked the Board of Regents for hosting the meeting and stated that the THECB is trying to meet with groups of regents all over the state, as well as college trustees. She said the THECB members have spent a year and a half to two years developing "Closing the Gaps," trying to come up with the language and goals to focus the state, as well as having discussions on what is most important for the state. Ms. Willeford said that some of the Board members have been involved in meetings with the THECB and in developing the goals. She expressed appreciation for their participation. Ms. Willeford said that she and Dr. Basaldua would explain the plan, followed by Ms. Teri Flack giving a brief presentation. Ms. Willeford stated that at the conclusion of the presentation, she hoped there would be a dialogue about how everyone in the state can help to reach the goals. She said they are ambitious goals, but they are goals that really must be met for the citizens and for the state. Ms. Willeford said the kind of economy and quality of life in this state cannot be sustained if these goals are not

reached. She said the THECB is very mindful of the fact that regents and administrators are the ones that need to make it happen. Ms. Willeford said that she and her fellow board members felt it was important to come and visit with the Board of Regents, have a dialogue, and talk about what role the TAMUS could take. Ms. Willeford said they have talked to key legislators during the process. She said it is going to be very important to identify and set benchmarks.

Ms. Willeford said they are trying to focus on the goals of the plan and to fully utilize available resources, money, time and influence to further these goals.

Ms. Willeford introduced Dr. Basaldua, Vice Chair of THECB and Chair of the Planning Committee, to talk about the process.

Dr. Basaldua thanked the Board. He said that when the Planning Committee was formed, a little over a year ago, they decided to open it up to other members of the community, including business leaders, community leaders and retired academicians. He said the key thing was to come up with a plan that was concise and focused, with a small number of measurable goals, with broad strategies, and that would be responsive to state and regional needs. Dr. Basaldua said that they wanted to make sure it stimulated creativity and adaptability. He said they felt that they would set the goals but could not tell the institutions how to accomplish the goals. They want the institutions to be very creative in determining how these goals can be accomplished.

Ms. Teri Flack, Deputy Commissioner, stated she would tell the story in four parts. The first part was the good news about higher education. The second part would cover the dangerous trends that the state faces if nothing changes. In the third part, she would answer the question, how do we turn around the trends from the bleak future that is currently faced, to the bright future that everyone wants for the State of Texas and its people. Ms. Flack said the answer is to close the gaps and participate in success, excellence and research. The fourth part is to ask what each system and institution in every region can do to contribute to “closing the gaps.”

Ms. Flack said there is a lot of good news in higher education. More students than ever before are enrolled, nearly a million in all sectors. The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) schools have grown by 12,360 students since 1990. That includes Texas A&M University-Texarkana (TAMU-T) and Texas A&M University-Commerce (TAMU-C), which joined the System in the mid-1990s. Ms. Flack said they have also seen enrollment increases in the two largest racial and ethnic groups statewide. She said more degrees are being awarded than ever before.

Ms. Flack said that while we can celebrate the good news, we must not forget part two of this story, the dangerous trends in Texas. She said we have Dr. Steve Murdock, of the Texas State Data Center at Texas A&M University (TAMU), to thank for alerting us all to the future we face in Texas if we do nothing. In short, if we do nothing to change the current trends, we face the expectation that the average household income in Texas will decline by \$3,000 in constant dollars by the year 2030. If we multiply that figure by how many households we expect to have then, that translates into a loss of between \$30 to \$40 billion a year in annual household income. Ms. Flack said these dangerous trends are reflected in different measures. They show up in how Texas compares to the nation as a whole. They show up when we compare ourselves

to states that we like to compare ourselves to, like California and New York. She said Texas is below the national average in participation and total population, and falls in the middle of the ten most populous states. Ms. Flack said we are at least a full percentage point below California and Illinois. She said “closing the gaps” in participation would not be easy because one percent translates into approximately 190,000 more students. Closing those gaps with other states will be particularly difficult because Texas has not been headed in the right direction. Ms. Flack said that during the last decade, Texas’ overall participation in higher education declined from 5.3 percent to 5.0 percent. She said the projections made by Dr. Murdock are already coming true. If we do not do a better job of educating all Texans, this rate will continue to decline. Ms. Flack said projections indicate that the rate will drop to 4.3 percent by the year 2015, if we do not change things. Ms. Flack said there are many reasons why we should all be concerned about these trends, for example, basic economic reasons. There are links between education and the economy and links between education and how much income a person can expect to earn. Studies show the correlation between the educational level and personal income. Ms. Flack said we also know the gaps between economic well being is measured by median household income. Texas already lags behind the average of the ten largest states, as well as the national average of median household income. Within Texas, there are income gaps between regions. Ms. Flack said we also know that there are major gaps in educational attainment among the racial ethnic groups in Texas. She reported that whites are more likely to obtain an associate’s degree, or higher, while Hispanics and African-Americans are less likely to move beyond high school. Ms. Flack then discussed demographic changes expected in Texas by the year 2030. She said given historic participation rates of Hispanics and African-Americans in Texas, it is not hard to understand the challenge we face. She said she had just discussed the gaps in participation and success. Also, there are gaps between Texas and other states, as well as within Texas when it comes to excellence and in terms of research. She said given all this information, if these trends continue, and the gaps widen, the future of Texas is bleak. Texas will be a poorer state, and Texans will be a poorer people.

Ms. Flack said that leads to the third part of the story. What do we have to do to reverse these trends, to ensure a bright future for all the people in Texas? She said we must close the gaps in participation, success, excellence and research. These are the most critical goals that will make the most difference, and contribute the most to improving the future of all people of Texas. She said the THECB focused on a plan with a small number of reasonably remembered goals, and then developed strategies to achieve the goals, and targets to measure progress. Ms. Flack said they have developed plans in the past, and they have sat on the shelves because they had 25 or 30 goals that everyone thought were important, but no one had an actual road map to follow to get there.

Ms. Flack said that she would finalize some of the goals and the key strategies that the THECB included in the plan. She said by the year 2015, the goal was to increase enrollment by 500,000 students. She said it is important to understand how big a challenge this is. This is roughly a 50 percent increase in students enrolled in higher education in the next 15 years. She said it is expected that if we do nothing, we will have about 200,000 more students. She said we are really talking about getting 300,000 students to enroll. These are students that normally would not be expected to attend. These are people that are already in the pipeline, already in our public education system, but they may not be making the choices that they need to prepare themselves for higher education. She said they are likely to come from families whose incomes

are lower and traditionally have not participated in higher education. Ms. Flack said another ways to think of it -- we need to enroll between 33,000 and 35,000 students a year for the next 15 years. She said this year they estimate that about 24,000 more students will be added, so we are already behind in the first year of this 15-year plan. Ms. Flack added that even if we succeed in adding 500,000 more students, Texas' participation rate will only rise to 5.7 percent, which is still less than the current participation rate in California and Illinois.

Ms. Flack said the task facing Texans is daunting, but all the more important. She said while it is called a higher education plan, because that is what the THECB is directing, it is really a "P-16" plan because it calls on people at all levels of education to work together to achieve the goals. It recognizes that we must close gaps in public education to close gaps in higher education. She said TAMUS is already ahead of the game with the Regents' Initiative to work with the public school system to improve both the public school system and educator preparation. She said making the recommended high school program a standard curriculum in Texas public high schools and requiring it for admission into Texas public universities by the year 2008 is widely considered one of the most promising strategies, because it would help ensure that students are prepared for life after high school, whatever their choices. She said it cannot be achieved unless we have a well-prepared educator core. Ms. Flack stated that students and their parents must understand the benefits of higher education. The THECB believes that this should be achieved through a widespread awareness campaign, such as the one proposed by Mr. Sosa. She said to increase participation we must also ensure that higher education is affordable. Ms. Flack said this takes the form of an affordability policy that provides adequate grants and scholarships for needy students while holding increases in tuition and fees to a level that closes gaps in participation. The third element ties the other two together by promoting efficiencies in higher education.

Ms. Flack said the goal to close gaps in participation calls for an enrollment increase by 50 percent. Likewise, the goal to closing gaps in success calls for a 50 percent increase in the number of degrees, certificates and other identifiable student successes from high quality programs. Ms. Flack said in some areas, such as teaching, they are suggesting that the increases need to be much greater. The plan calls for a number of strategies for "closing the gaps" in success. She said it is important for colleges and universities to focus their efforts on increasing graduates in such critical fields as education, engineering, computer science, math, physical science, allied health and nursing. She said a key tool to achieving greater success rates would be the state's uniform recruitment and retention strategy. She said this really means that institutions should pay attention to their students, that we should reach out to students and encourage them to attend. Once they have crossed our threshold we should take steps to ensure that they are afforded every opportunity to succeed.

Ms. Flack said the THECB has always believed that providing access to students is important, but that it's critical that access be applied in terms of high quality programs. The goal is to lift the quality of higher education across the state for all of the people in Texas. Ms. Flack said the plan includes strategies to establish ladders of excellence for different types of institutions. This would encourage institutions to acquire excellence without necessarily putting them in competition with other institutions. She said historically, they have not found a good way to value the strengths of each institution. Ms. Flack said that encouraging institutions

to have at least part of its program nationally recognized is an excellent way to show the unique value that an institution contributes to the state.

Ms. Flack said like the goals of participation and success, the plan calls for “closing the gaps” in research by increasing funding by 50 percent. She said they recognize that a significant mission of universities, like in health related institutions, is to conduct research. By increasing the level of federal science and engineering research funding by 50 percent, Texas institutions will be more competitive with their peer institutions. She said this will raise both the level of research conducted by institutions and the use of research outcomes by people across the state. She said the strategies include such things as permitting universities, like the health science centers, to retain their overhead income from grants and contracts. It also provides collaborative strategies and competitive strategies. Ms. Flack said one of which would be to increase funding for the Advanced Research/Advanced Technology Programs. She said having goals is not enough. It is important that we have a way of judging our progress for achieving the goals in these plans. She said these benchmarks would be established in collaboration with the institutions. Ms. Flack said as part three of the story concludes, the question of how we turn the trends around and ensure that Texas has a bright future is answered -- we close the gaps in participation, success, excellence and research.

Ms. Flack said part four, of the story involves the Board of Regents. It is the chapter of the story that has yet to be written. What can the A&M System do to close the gaps and how can the THECB help?

Ms. Willeford invited Mr. David Gardner, Assistant Commissioner for Planning and Information Resources, to express his concerns and thoughts. Mr. Gardner stated that it has been a year and a half of hard work putting together this plan. He said putting together the plan is really the easy part. Implementing it, really going about achieving these goals, is the really difficult part. He said the THECB was initially concerned that the plan was measurable. He said they are thinking that the system to measure progress really revolves around the goals and targets of the plan. Mr. Gardner said this plan has been sent to the state. He said they would like to establish this for regions of the state, for systems and for institutions. He said their thought is that the Board of Regents would propose for the state what it can do to achieve these goals and targets. Mr. Garner said the THECB is talking about producing the goals and targets for years 2005, 2010 and 2015. He said they want to measure those annually and to put out an annual publication charting where we really stand right now, to put it on the table for discussion. He said he thinks this publication would result in review by not only the THECB, but the legislature, institutions and governing boards. He said it needs to be a living plan. He said we would need to share results and talk about how to move forward.

Ms. Willeford stated that Mr. Sosa had spent some time with the THECB on this subject. She said there is a need to create in our students the interest and desire to receive a postsecondary education. She said Mr. Sosa was working on a long-term public awareness campaign in the state that would talk about the value of higher education, what it takes to get there, how do you pay for it, and what does a student need to do to make it a possibility. She asked Mr. Sosa to comment.

Mr. Sosa stated that he had talked with Mr. Raul Romero and Mr. Tony Sanchez, the University of Texas System, and Ms. Patricia Diaz-Dennis, the Texas State University System, regarding the reasons why Hispanics tend not to have a history of higher education, not have the awareness of the difference that it can bring, and the expectation of actually having a higher education. Mr. Sosa said there is a need to encourage that thinking in the minds of every Latino in the state that says “your child will go to a university or can go to a university,” and make it an expectation. He said the best way to do that is through a public awareness campaign. He said he believes that if we get together, and work together, that kind of thing can happen. Mr. Sosa said the media would play a big part. He said he has talked with a few people that are the owners of media in the state and they are very willing to donate a lot of time. He said it would also take actual dollars to coordinate the media. The messages will have to be crafted “just so.” Mr. Sosa said there would have to be a place where everyone can come together to get information and to get the type of help that they need. Mr. Sosa said he thinks everyone believes that this is very possible, and it would be a strategy that he knows and would love to take on. He said there are willing people throughout the state who want to be part of it. He said he thinks it is one of the critical elements in all of this.

Ms. Willeford commented on Mr. Sosa’s expertise in the public relations field. She added that all ethnic and socioeconomic groups should be included. She then went on to say that many of the strategies and goals of the THECB’s plan were included in the Perry Commission report. She said that Senator Teel Bivens, who sat on the commission, was very interested in the public awareness campaign strategy. She said they have been talking with him about seed money and getting “Closing the Gaps” officially sanctioned.

Dr. Avilés stated that it appeared to him that it has to be a conscious decision by the state as a whole -- the people, the legislature and the Governor -- that higher education is utmost. Dr. Avilés said last year the Board had visited with the regents of the University of California. He said that California made the conscious decision to spend the money for higher education, which the state of Texas has never done to the same extent. He said what the universities in California get per capita, is much, much higher than what the universities in Texas receive. He said that the state as a whole has to come together and agree on a plan.

Mr. Fernandez stated that he thought California invested in education and the dividends were obvious.

Mr. Stevens stated that it seemed to him that the first goal covered all the citizens of the state. He said that many others were particular to various institutions or various systems. Mr. Stevens said he agreed with what Mr. Sosa and others had said, that this could be a statewide effort, and we need to obtain funding on a statewide educational effort for the children and the citizens of the state. He said he thinks that would be a way to approach this and perhaps the way to obtain the seed money, to at least kick off the first goal. Ms. Willeford said that it was not an accident that the first goal was indeed first. She said there was some discussion early on that it should be the only goal. She said there was some discussion among the committee that if they could accomplish getting more people, more citizens in higher education, that some of the other things would fall in place. Mr. Stevens said the information provided was compelling. We cannot ignore where we will be in 15 to 20 years if we don’t do

anything. Dr. Basaldua said he thought the desire was there with the legislature, but we have to figure out a way to find the funding.

Mr. Allen stated that he had read the materials carefully and was appropriately and understandably impressed by the work that has been done. Mr. Allen said he felt that unless we have students that have the capability to approach and succeed in higher education then we are bound to fail, that is insofar as excellence is concerned. Mr. Allen said his observation in reading this was that he would hope that this was being melded with a plan to begin the solution to the problem at kindergarten up through grade 12, so that the product leaving grade 12 to enter the 16 category was of a quality (preparation, capability, discipline, commitment, etc.) to accomplish our purpose. Mr. Allen asked where we are going to be if this is adopted and the funding is available, if we continue to receive students on that partition basis that are clearly not qualified and do not have the skills and the personal habits that are required for higher education. He said he hoped that those who are in a position of influence are mindful of that and are working on that along with what the THECB is working on and has so capably presented.

Ms. Willeford said that it was not an accident that the first strategy was that the recommended high school program (college preparatory courses) was the standard curriculum in Texas public high schools and that it will be a minimum requirement for admission to Texas public universities by 2008. She said it was being received very well in all areas. Ms. Willeford said they have talked with Dr. Jim Nelson, Commissioner of Texas Education Agency. She added that Dr. Don Brown, Commissioner of THECB, and Dr. Nelson have a very good working relationship. Ms. Willeford said it was their understanding that it is not out of the realm that all high schools will be able to offer this. She said all districts do offer the recommended high school curriculum at this point, but not all schools within a district.

Mr. Allen stated that as Mr. Sosa had already pointed out, one major segment of the effort has to be to educate the parents to a level where they understand the need, and to understand what has to be done in order for the kids to move through the system towards higher education. He said in Houston there is a program called "Project Grad" being pursued. It starts with the elementary schools, the middle schools and on into the high schools. Mr. Allen said it is meeting with extraordinary success. He explained that the reason it is meeting with success is there are concerted efforts to educate the parents to what has to be done in order to accomplish the mission. He said that sort of thing has to be done with a set plan. He said that unless there is some detailed and organized attention given to the problem at the very lowest levels, then we will succeed in the sense that we can put them into higher education at some point, but it is going to bring the level of excellence down to some lowest common denominator. Mr. Allen said that it is going to defeat the purpose that has been clearly indicated -- that is to compete with national standards and to be sure that Texas is not left behind. Ms. Willeford said she agreed.

Ms. Armstrong stated that she was delighted with the support that the plan has received. She asked for the next step, which is even harder than building the plan, the implementation, what are the options for setting up the time budget, implementation budget as it were. She asked if they hope that the legislature and/or Governor will appoint a commission to lay out a plan for implementation? Will it be bits and pieces? She said she didn't think that

would be ideal. She asked if it would be the THECB that would do that. She asked what are the possibilities for now coming to a plan to implement it. Ms. Armstrong asked what was wanted from TAMUS. What was necessary from TAMUS in the next year? Do they want TAMUS' benchmarks? She asked what would be the ideal things that TAMUS ought to be doing in the next months to do its share.

Dr. Basaldua responded by stating that he thought it started with people starting to use the same language. He said the Senate and House Education Committees are asking, how are you "closing the gaps" in this area and that area. He said even though there is not one plan with a budget, if it becomes part of the culture, it will get a good start. Dr. Basaldua said the THECB is going to use it at every meeting. When an institution comes to them with a proposal, someone on the THECB is going to ask how is this proposal going to "close the gap" and which one of these gaps. He said that when they put the plan together, they purposely did not come up with a cost. He said now that they have the plan, their staff is working on the budget. Dr. Basaldua said surprisingly it is not a huge number, when you compare it to what we will already spend in the next 15 years.

Ms. Willeford said the systems and the institutions are the ones that will have to move things along. She said the THECB is trying to get the state focused and get the goals in front of everybody. She said they really do want to know if they are on target with the goals. Then they need to know what the systems and institutions feel they can "bite off." She said they need to hear from the systems using their creativity, their means, and their influence.

Ms. Armstrong asked if a public awareness campaign should come first, or in the middle, or if it should come when they get the money from the legislature. She asked if A&M should try to raise money for a public awareness campaign. She said that it is just so vast it needs a center.

Ms. Willeford said that the purpose of this dialogue was to find the best way to set that up. She said she thinks they are going to find a critical mass of people who support this. She said a lot of things are going to have to happen simultaneously. She said some things would take legislative action. They are kind of parceling out who needs to be doing what. She said there will be some upfront gains but also some back-loaded gains.

Mr. Stevens asked when the THECB was talking about budgets, and comparing budgets with other budgets in the way that would apply to the first goal, are they developing an overall budget for a statewide campaign. He asked if that was what they were doing. He then stated that when he read the material, he thought about "Don't Mess With Texas." He wondered if something on that order should cover the first goal.

Dr. Basaldua said that would be part of it, but there won't be a true budget for that goal until they identify the vehicle that is going to push that. He stated that the state spends \$10 billion every biennium now on higher education. He went on to say that within the next 15 years we will spend that much, and more, with the growth. He asked how much more money will it take to get the extra 500,000 students on board. Dr. Basaldua said that is the kind of budget that they are looking at.

Ms. Willeford said she hoped that when TAMUS goes to the legislature and asks for money, that it will justify some of the money as a way to accomplish these goals. Ms. Willeford said the public awareness campaign, which is a separate, is really a different animal because it is going to take a centralized effort. She said on the public awareness campaign, some of them will have to "take the bull by the horns," and work together to come up with the right vehicle, some seed money, some private money and some organization.

Mr. Sosa said it would be helpful if there was a way that we could objectively say, if we are going to achieve this number of 500,000 new students by the year 2015, what should each system do in their region. And then, what should each individual institution do within their region each year in order to reach that goal. Ms. Willeford stated that they are just into that process. She went on to say that is why they are having discussions with the governing boards. She said she hoped that regents and administrators would report back to the Coordinating Board with the ways the state can achieve these goals.

Mr. Allen asked about the THECB's meetings with other governing boards. He asked the format that should be used in responding to the THECB. Ms. Willeford responded that the dialogue has been pretty much the same. She said they have met with boards of regents of the Texas Tech University System and the University of North Texas System. She said that they also met with the Academic Affairs Committee of the University of Texas System. She said everyone has said that they need money and have asked how centralized this is going to be.

Mr. Allen stated that unless the Board of Regents was given some pretty specific marching orders, they were not likely to get there. Mr. Gardner said he hoped that shortly after their meetings with the board of regents, they would be able to send something to the systems saying here are our targets, can you lay out for each of the schools in your system what do you think their role would be in terms of each of these targets, or whether they would have a role.

Mr. Fernandez stated that he thought it would be presumptuous of the THECB to come asking for input, and then laying out "this is what you need to do." He said he did think that the THECB was the vehicle that the state has to monitor this plan. He said he thought there would be responsibilities for assignments, and assignments of responsibilities.

Mr. Allen said he thought it would be productive to give everybody concerned, statewide, some sort of outline or parameters, or timeframe, or something so that everyone is working off of the same page. Ms. Willeford said she agreed with Mr. Allen. She went on to state that TAMUS is going to be well ahead of the curve because of the planning that the Board has already done. She said they did not see this as a process that was in conflict with the Board's planning process or things that were ongoing. She added that they want the initial information to come from the Board and the System, as far as what can be done with certain targets by certain dates.

Mr. Atkinson stated that he thought everyone agreed to the goals and objectives that were outlined. He then asked how to go about it. He said now we need to take the time to try and build an implementation plan. However, it is going to require some resources to do so. He said the question is how and where do those resources come from. He said he thought there

should be a follow-up commission that the Governor designates that is the implementation team or implementation planning team for the state.

Ms. Armstrong asked if it is within the Coordinating Board's charter to make, or to write the plan for implementation. She stated that she agreed that a commission appointed by the Governor was one option. Ms. Willeford responded by stating that the THECB is charged by statute with planning for the state. She said they recommend funding to the state, but they don't control funding. She added that she thought they could do that within their statutory charge.

Mr. Basaldua stated that he thought that under Ms. Willeford's leadership that they have actually gone in that direction. He said the Coordinating Board has actually changed its approach towards the policymaking end, and setting the plan, rather than getting involved in some of the details in the institutions. He added that the Perry Commission utilizes the THECB staff quite a bit.

Mr. Allen asked how the THECB, in this effort, communicates, or designs, or plans in such a way so as to be sure that what is going on in the lower levels in the education system is in concert with what is indicated in this plan.

Ms. Willeford stated that she has seen a much closer working relationship since she has been on the board, between the Texas Education Agency and the THECB. She stated that there are several joint committees and a coordinating council. She said that the legislature is demanding that the two agencies work together.

Mr. Stevens asked if the THECB had the authority (for example if TAMUS and the THECB and others were able to sell this statewide effort), to be funded to enable that this effort take place. Ms. Willeford answered in the affirmative, as an agency. Mr. Stevens asked if it was determined that some millions of dollars should be made available for a statewide awareness campaign, could it be handled out of the THECB, as opposed to each individual system going and doing their own thing. Ms. Willeford responded in the affirmative. She said in fact, at their next meeting, they were going to look at adopting rules that would put them in a position to create a foundation if they wanted to. She said that she was not sure if the best place to administer this was from the THECB, because they have state purchasing and contract obligations just like TAMUS does. She said they need a vehicle that can accept private donations and work. She said either a foundation or non-profit organization.

Ms. Flack stated that they needed some seed money to get things started. However, she stated, that the anticipation really was, as Ms. Willeford suggested, that a lot of the contributions would come either in-kind or as private donations.

Mr. Sosa stated that it seems like it needs to be a combination of state funds, private funds, and in-kind contributions, in order to really make it all happen. He went on to state that everything begins with numbers when you have an objective. He said we need to have benchmarks. He said that even though everybody will be part of it, the focus on Hispanics and African-Americans would have to be there. He said we would need to be very sensitive in how

we do that so that nobody is left out. He said we do need an effort that is prompt and effective and begins at every level.

Ms. Willeford said there is a need to have a dynamic person in this state to seize this public awareness campaign as his or her life for the next ten years. Mr. Allen stated it would need to be an obsession. Ms. Willeford stated that everyone present could bring expertise to the table, but they have other jobs. Therefore, she stated, we need the right kind of person to step in to head this foundation and this effort. This person needs to go into boardrooms and raise private money and convince employers that this a priority and it needs to be funded. She said we need a driving force, and it needs to be a person that would take it on for the long-term.

Mr. Allen stated that it was obvious that at least the first major step has been taken, that is the preparation of the work, and therefore the preparation of a presentation of this class. He said he thought the next step should be outlining the next four steps that need to be taken, and what the sequence should be.

Ms. Willeford said after the THECB's meetings with all of the governing boards and the policy makers, they would try to come back and report what they had heard and the kind of benchmarks that they are going to use. She said the responsibility would then be for the boards of regents to come back to the THECB and say, okay, within that framework, we feel like we can do this. Ms. Willeford said there are some very specific things that need to be going on parallel, like getting the public awareness campaign going, working with the legislature with the recommended high school curriculum, etc. She said the THECB would have to communicate with the governing boards, but first they needed this discussion and input.

Ms. Armstrong inquired if they had run into any opposition with the plan. Ms. Willeford said that almost everyone they have talked with said that they had identified important goals. Not everybody has the same ideas on the strategies, and TAMUS has some great strategies. She said they were trying to focus on the most important goals and the most important strategies, and leave creativity and flexibility to the policy makers and the administrators.

Mr. Powell said he had heard this presentation on several occasions and was glad to hear that they had not met any strong criticism. He asked if dollars had been associated with this plan. Ms. Willeford said their staff is working on what they think it will take.

Mr. Powell asked for a hint as to how much it would be. Dr. Basaldua stated that he did not know the exact figure. He did say that it would be in the billions. In the context of the overall higher education budget, it is not a lot of money, but it is a lot of money. He said over 15 years, just adding 500,000 more students, using the current formula, if no changes were made, adds up to in the billions range itself. He said the main idea was to get people to come to agreement, in terms of the basic things that are needed and make sure to focus on those, rather than getting dollars on the table.

Mr. Powell said until this passion for higher education is of such importance in the State of Texas, we are not going to get there. He said he thinks that the private sector is going to have to be a more important player in higher education, including money. Mr. Powell said for access

and excellence, either the customer, the student, is going to have to pay a larger sum, or we as the taxpayers, are going to have to give more money, or it has to come from private industry.

Dr. Carruth said that they really had no opposition, but at the same time, they are dealing with people whom this is going to affect, through this plan. She suspected that the opposition would come with the high school curriculum. She said they are going to have to be very tough on that issue. Dr. Carruth stated that she thought that the opposition would be organized. She said we must keep the momentum going.

Dr. Powell asked if there had been any conflict between the Perry Commission report and the THECB's plan. Ms. Willeford said many of the recommendations are the same. She said their first recommendation is that they endorse the THECB's goals and strategies and targets. She said in some ways they have different ways of getting there.

Dr. Carruth said the THECB is not going to tell the institutions what centers of excellence they are going to have. What the THECB wants is for the institutions to come forward and say we are going to do this. She said it is not competitive. Dr. Carruth said it will be coming from within your institution, where you already have excellence now. It is not like the THECB will come and say "you are going to have to do this." She said she thought that the enthusiasm from within the institution would help drive it.

Ms. Willeford stated that the THECB wants to hear from the Board of Regents, and that she wants this to be a long, long dialogue. She said it has to be a statewide effort, with all of us going in the same direction.

Mr. Sosa thanked the THECB for their wonderful effort and especially the simplicity with which they had presented this report. He said coming up with a plan that had four strategies, that were memorable, understandable and doable, was a wonderful effort. He said the THECB should be commended.

Dr. Carruth said when Mr. Sosa made his report to the THECB, it opened a window for her. She said until she heard from him personally, she really didn't really realize what they were up against. She thanked Mr. Sosa for making it clear for her.

Mr. Stevens agreed with Mr. Sosa, stating that this is a great plan.

Ms. Willeford said that they had the hard part ahead of them.

Mr. Powell then presented a framed resolution to Ms. Willeford that was adopted by the Board of Regents on November 30, 2000, congratulating the THECB on its efforts and coming forth with the plan for "Closing the Gaps." Mr. Powell thanked the Coordinating Board for the plan and for all that it does for higher education.

Ms. Willeford accepted the resolution and thanked the members of the Board of Regents for their time.

Mr. Powell thanked the THECB. He stated that there would now be a report and discussion on the TAMUS's Integrative Plan.

Dr. Walter Wendler, Vice Chancellor for Planning System Integration, stated that in the interest of time, he would not present his report because they had just talked about all of the key issues that he would point out in the TAMUS Integrative Plan. He said he thought that all the language between the TAMUS Integrative Plan, the THECB, and the Perry Commission was starting to converge. He said he thought this was very important. He added that he found out that Stephen F. Austin University (SFA) has made it mandatory to require high school curriculum for admission to SFA. Dr. Wendler said he thought that actions like that are going to continue to happen, as this planning culture actually settles in to higher education in Texas, and is very positive and has a strong sense that the plan has made a difference, and has been well guided and well attended.

Dr. Wendler then distributed a copy of the TAMUS Integrative Plan (a copy of which is on file in the Office of the Board of Regents). He also distributed a document that compared the Perry Commission, the THECB, and the Integrative Plan (a copy of which is on file in the Office of the Board of Regents). He said they overlap and there is mutual support.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Powell said the Board had one agenda item to consider. He asked Dr. Ray Bowen, President of Texas A&M University (TAMU), to present this item. The Board took action as set forth below:

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**MINUTE ORDER 01-20001 (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

**ADOPTION OF A  
RESOLUTION HONORING  
PRESIDENT-ELECT GEORGE W. BUSH,  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

On motion of Dr. Avilés, seconded by Mr. Stevens and by a unanimous vote the following minute order was adopted.

Whereas, George W. Bush, having been elected to lead our nation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as the 43<sup>rd</sup> President of the United States, brings great honor and distinction to the State of Texas; and

Whereas, President-Elect Bush has served as Governor of the State of Texas for six years, providing steady and imaginative leadership and steadfast commitment to the welfare of all its citizens; and

Whereas, as Governor, Mr. Bush demonstrated his strong dedication to the education of our youth, a pledge that he now carries forward to his Presidency; and

Whereas, he has in both his public service and in private business, exemplified an indomitable Texas spirit; and

Whereas, Mr. Bush has been a constant friend to Texas A&M University and all institutions of The Texas A&M University System; and

Whereas, the presence of the George Bush Presidential Library on the campus of Texas A&M University is celebrated by our students, our faculty, our former students and the entire Aggie family; and

Whereas, the placement of the George W. Bush Presidential Library on the Texas A&M University campus near the George Bush Presidential Library would provide a unique opportunity for visitors and scholars to study the contributions and history of two of our Presidents; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System engage President-Elect George W. Bush in a process leading to a proposal to him that he locate his Presidential Library on the campus of Texas A&M University.

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Mr. Powell thanked the regents and the members of the THECB for their time and for all that they do for higher education.

There being no further business, Mr. Powell adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Regents at 12:00 p.m., the same day.

Vickie Burt Spillers
Executive Secretary to the Board of Regents
The Texas A&M University System

VBS:bg