



West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission  
West Virginia Community and Technical College System

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May 14, 2013

The Honorable Robert H. Plymale  
Co-Chair, Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability  
Senate Education Committee  
Room 417-M, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

The Honorable Mary M. Poling  
Co-Chair, Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability  
House Education Committee  
Room 434-M, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Senator Plymale and Delegate Poling:

Through Senate Bill 330 passed during the 2011 Legislative Session, *West Virginia Code* §18B-9A-8(b)(5) requires the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (Commission) and the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education (Council) to study whether the unified enterprise resource program in development for the state can serve as a human resources information system (HRIS) for the state's system of higher education. The Enterprise Resource Program, now known as wvOASIS, will serve as a platform for storing system-wide human resources information while also providing access to a variety of HRIS modules that will greatly enhance the capacity to manage, track, report, and inform human resource decisions at all of the state's public institutions of higher education.

The adoption of some form of a system-wide HRIS is vitally important to achieving the goals outlined in Senate Bill 330 and its mandate for fair, accountable, credible, transparent and systematic human resource processes and functions. On the basis of the information available as of now, the Commission and the Council recommend full adoption of all available HRIS modules within wvOASIS in lieu of any free-standing, independent HRIS. Provided on the following pages is an overview of the proposed wvOASIS structure as it relates to human resources.

### **Existing HRIS-Related Systems**

The current system of maintaining and tracking human resource related data within the State's higher education system is a piece-meal collection of commercially-available HRIS-related modules and systems, home-grown spreadsheets and other manual processes for what is a very data- and labor-intensive function. Some institutions have purchased or subscribe to commercial systems from a variety of vendors to perform some HRIS functions such as applicant tracking, performance management and time-reporting/payroll administration. Other institutions continue to rely heavily on manual processes for these same functions or have home-grown systems that are unique to the institution. At present, very few institutions maintain any systems that provide other functions that will be available through wvOASIS such as learning management and employee self-service for time-keeping and benefits administration. The wide variety in methods and sophistication of current human resource data maintenance systems affects the efficiency of the institutional human resource departments while also rendering it more difficult for the Commission and the Council to collect and to process human resource data for its many reporting functions.

For example, ModernThink, the outside consulting firm who conducted the human resource reviews required by Senate Bill 330, was forced to collect data from each individual human resource department for inclusion in the human resource metrics since much of this information is not presently available to the Commission and the Council through a uniform HRIS. Once wvOASIS is on-line, all of this information should be available directly from the Commission and the Council.

### **Existing Needs to be Served by a HRIS**

A full-spectrum HRIS would provide increased functionality to all institutions that choose to participate in such a project and would assist the Commission and the Council in meeting its reporting requirements. As presented, wvOASIS would provide the following HRIS-related functions that currently exist in varying degrees and by various methods within the institutions:

- Position Control
- Personnel Administration
- Payroll Administration
- Employee Relations and Performance Management
- Recruitment and Applicant Services
- Benefits Administration
- Learning Management
- Time Reporting
- Employee Leave Accounting
- Employee Self-Service

The functions of each of these areas will be served primarily by commercially-available modules

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that will be integrated into or interfaced with wvOASIS (e.g., Kronos for time-keeping, NeoGov for applicant tracking, CourseMill for learning management, etc.). Some human resource components of wvOASIS, however, appear to be designed by the wvOASIS team themselves (e.g., performance management). Access to each of these functions from a centralized system would enhance the capacity of the institutional human resource departments to provide a higher level of customer service, better maintain applicant data for equal employment opportunity/affirmative action purposes, track employee professional development and its associated costs, and administer the performance management component required by Senate Bill 330.

At present, the West Virginia public higher education system's Chief Human Resource Officer community has only limited experience with the commercially-available modules that will be integrated into wvOASIS. Another unknown within this community is the appropriateness of the fit between the performance management module and the needs of higher education. Finally, there is an understandable reluctance among many institutions that currently run parallel systems to invest the time, effort and training resources that will have to be devoted to bringing a new, separate system on-line.

Despite the fears of the unknown and the other impediments to implementation of a system-wide HRIS through wvOASIS, the system as presented by the wvOASIS team appears to be capable of serving those functions that would be otherwise served by a free-standing HRIS were one to be adopted by West Virginia higher education.

### **Unanswered Questions**

Despite the apparent complementary fit between the wvOASIS-designed HRIS and the existing needs of the institutions, there are some questions that remain unanswered and will affect the viability and acceptability of wvOASIS as a higher education HRIS. The first among these is the cost of each institution's share of the HRIS functions of wvOASIS. The absence of this information makes it impossible for institutions currently running parallel systems to compare the financial impact of migrating to wvOASIS as opposed to maintaining existing systems.

Institutional Chief Human Resource Officers have also not yet been able to view the various human resource modules that will be integrated within wvOASIS for purposes of testing the functionality of those modules to higher education applications. A committee of representative Chief Human Resource Officers has been composed to follow and to offer input on the design of the HRIS functions of wvOASIS so as to ensure it meets the demands of higher education human resources. At a recent meeting between institutional Chief Human Resource Officers and the wvOASIS HRM team, the Chief Human Resource Officers were encouraged to participate in the design of the human resource component of the system to ensure that it meets the needs of higher education. This participation will include a review and testing of the selected human resource modules to ensure an appropriate fit with higher education's needs.

Finally, there is still a question remaining about the compatibility of the wvOASIS system and existing human resource-related modules that institutions may choose to continue to use after the

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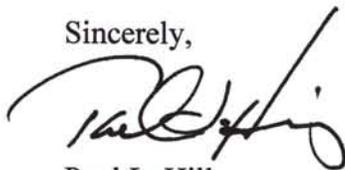
adoption of wvOASIS. Specifically, about half of the institutions currently use a commercially-available applicant tracking program called PeopleAdmin, the costs of which is based on an annual subscription fee. PeopleAdmin has offered to write an interface with wvOASIS to ensure compatibility and wvOASIS appears to be receptive to this proposal. The true degree of compatibility between the systems, however, remains an unknown until an interface can be written and tested.

### **Conclusion**

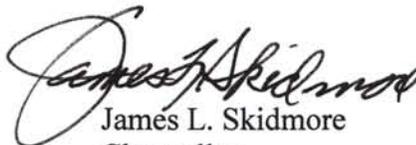
Although some questions remain unanswered, it appears wvOASIS will effectively perform all of those functions that would otherwise be available through a full-service HRIS. Pending cost information, the Commission and Council recommends that institutions be encouraged to adopt all HRM modules that will be available through wvOASIS while retaining the right to continue to run parallel systems as appropriate.

We would be pleased to present an update to members of the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability upon request. If you have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Paul L. Hill  
Chancellor



James L. Skidmore  
Chancellor

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Rob Anderson, Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration  
Mr. Mark Toor, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources