

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Steve Abrams at 1:30 pm on Tuesday, January 27, 2015, 144-S of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Mark Savoy, Legislative Research Department
Lauren Douglass, Legislative Research Department
Erna Fabert, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant
Jason Long, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Kelly Stanford, Director of Development and Communications, Communities in Schools
Laura Mersman, Wyandotte High School, Kansas City, KS
Kenzi Dowdell, 8th Grade Student, Liberty Memorial Central Middle School (LMCMS), Lawrence, KS
Hannah Abell, Sophomore, Wyandotte High School
Cornelius Bell, Site Coordinator, CIS, LMCMS
Donald Fast, Ed.D., Educational Design Solutions
Amanda Fouts, EDS
Maureen Weiss, EDS

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Possible bill introductions

Chairperson Abrams called for a point of order. Senator Hensley introduced the intern currently working in his office. The Chairperson then asked committee members for bill introductions.

Allie Devine, of the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees introduced a bill relating to postsecondary career technical education performance-based funding. Senator Schmidt moved, with a second by Senator Arpke, that the Senate committee sponsor the bill. Motion carried. There were no other bill introductions.

Presentation on:

Chairperson Abrams invited Kelly Stanford to address the Committee on behalf of Malissa Martin, who was ill. Ms. Stanford informed the Committee that the primary issues CIS addresses are overcoming outside barriers to learning encountered by students, such as poverty, lack of proper health care and undiagnosed health problems, food issues and clothing and supply needs. This program is one of the most effective tools for lowering dropout rates of students and it is also very cost effective at an approximate cost of \$106 per student. In the 67 schools that have CIS programs, over 4,000 students in Managed Care and approximately 46,000 students in Level 1 Care benefit from the services.

[\(Attachment 1\)](#)

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She introduced Cornelius Bell, who reported that his goal is to promote five basic principles for all young people: a one on one relationship with a caring adult; a safe place to learn and grow; a healthy start and healthy future; a marketable skill to use upon graduation; and a chance to give back to peers and community. ([Attachment 2](#))

Kenzi Dowdell, an 8th grade student, reported that she is on the leadership team for Conversation PEACE (Purpose, equity, accountability, character, education), an organization that has caused her confidence to grow enough to be nominated as student of the month in her school. ([Attachment 3](#))

Laura Mersman spoke about her duties as a site coordinator by describing a typical day. ([Attachment 4](#))

Hannah Abell, a sophomore student, described the lifeline that her site coordinator has been for her. ([Attachment 5](#))

Senator Schmidt encouraged the students to stay on the good path they are on and congratulated them on their presentation skills. In response to the senator's question about qualifications for CIS site coordinators, Ms. Stanford replied that all coordinators must have a degree and are required to go through specialized CIS training. She emphasized that these site coordinators come from all types of backgrounds.

Discussion then followed about how students with needs are identified and referred without violating privacy concerns; what role does the faculty play; is permission required from parents and what typical case loads look like. Chairperson Abrams thanked each of the presenters and the Committee gave Kenzi and Hannah a standing ovation.

Presentation on:

Chairperson Abrams then introduced Donald Fast, Ed.D., who provided an update on the Kansas Reading Initiative program known as Lexia Reading Core 5. Dr. Fast reported that in its second year, over 20% of Kansas schools, representing 141 school districts and 38,000 students are enrolled in the Lexia program. The cost of the program is approximately \$50 per student and to Dr. Fast's knowledge, none of the schools has had to add additional faculty to facilitate the reading program. ([Attachment 6](#))

The program breaks students into 4 separate categories: High Risk students are those who are two or more grades below their grade level in reading skills; Moderate Risk students are those who are one grade below their grade level; Low Risk students are those performing in their grade level and those who are performing above their grade level are identified as those who have reached EOY or end of year benchmarks. ([Attachment 7](#))

Dr. Fast and his associates, Maureen Weiss and Amanda Fouts, explained graphs showing increases in

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reading proficiency in all categories, stressing that overall, 86% of students reduced their risk for reading failure through participation in this program. While the Reading Initiative program is only in its second year, and there is funding to add more schools, for students who use the program as designed, the results are very promising. ([Attachment 8](#))

Questions followed concerning how the \$50 per student per year figure is derived; how many students are actually meeting their recommended minutes of usage and what are the usage minutes for various grade levels; an explanation of terminology used in handouts provided to committee members; whether state assessment results are going to be incorporated into the statistics; how many students maintain a significant level of improvement; and whether the charts provide statistics for students who are meeting their standards or for all students using the program.

Chairperson Abrams thanked Dr. Fast and his associates for their presentations and then adjourned the meeting at 2:20 pm.

The next meeting of the Senate Education Committee will be Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at 1:30 pm in Room 144-S of the Capitol.