

Approved 1-25-90
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Don E. Crumbaker at
Chairperson

3:30 ~~xxx~~/p.m. on January 18, 1990 in room 519-S of the Capito

All members were present except:

Representative Blumenthal and Representative Smith, both excused.

Committee staff present:

Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes Office
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research
Thelma Canaday, Secretary to the Committee

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Dr. Charles Krider, Director of Business Research, Institute of Public Policy and Business Research, University of Kansas

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Crumbaker.

The chairman drew attention to the minutes of the January 16 meeting.

Representative Amos moved the minutes be approved. Representative R. D. Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Crumbaker introduced Dr. Charles Krider to the committee and asked for his report on research being conducted on Work Force Training in Kansas.

Dr. Krider said the major goals of the study were to generate a set of data on the current training system and develop policy options. Dr. Krider pointed out as changes are occurring in the country's economy, adjustments must be made in the vocational-technical training system in Kansas. Dr. Krider said fifty-eight percent of Kansas businesses surveyed reported a moderate to severe gap between the qualifications of newly hired skilled workers and the skill level required by the firm. Dr. Krider said thirty-six percent of firms surveyed use customized training and eightytwo percent believe it is cost effective.

Dr. Krider said administrators of vocational education institutions in Kansas are attempting to provide types of training needed today and into the '90's. (Attachment 1)

Dr. Krider referred to the report entitled "Work Force Training: The Challenge for Kansas". This report was prepared by the Institute for Public Policy and Business Research Department at the University of Kansas for KANSAS, INC. This report can be seen at the Capitol Towers Building, 400 SW 8th Street, Suite 113 in Topeka.

Dr. Krider entertained questions from the committee members during his presentation.

Chairman Crumbaker introduced his intern, Mr. Dan Barry, to the committee.

The chair announced groups desiring to introduce bills could do so at the meeting scheduled for Monday, January 22.

Ms. Mindy Haar, intern for Representative Al Lane, and Mr. Mike Kramer, intern for Mr. Ben Barrett were introduced.

The meeting was adjourned by the chairman at 4:35 p.m.

The next meeting will be Monday, January 22, in Room 519-S at 3:30 p.m.

TESTIMONY REGARDING WORK FORCE TRAINING

Presented to
The House Education Committee
January 18, 1990

Presented by
Dr. Charles Krider
Professor of Business, University of Kansas
Director of Business Research,
Institute for Public Policy and Business Research

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I. Introduction

The availability of a well educated, skilled work force is crucial for Kansas' economic development in the 1990's. The most important incentive the state can offer companies to affect their location or expansion decisions is a trained work force to meet their current needs and a training system that is responsive to needs for future work force training and retraining. Firms will be more likely to locate or expand in Kansas if a sufficient number of employees with appropriate skills are available. Consequently, a major policy objective for Kansas should be to ensure that the technical training system remains a competitive advantage for economic development in the 1990's. The purpose of this report, funded by Kansas Inc. and the Kansas State Department of Education, is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of that system and to identify policy options to ensure that the training and retraining needs of business will be met in the next decade.

The education challenge in Kansas, and in the United States, is substantial. Basic academic skill training must be emphasized at the primary and secondary education level (K through 12) so new entrants to the labor force arrive with adequate reading, computation, communication, and problem solving skills. Because 75 percent of the work force has already graduated from the secondary education system, adult education has become and will continue to be a critical issue. Thus, this report focuses on postsecondary technical education that is primarily offered through community colleges and area vocational technical schools. These

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are the public education institutions that are increasingly required to meet the needs of postsecondary and adult students who need technical training and retraining. Their training needs go beyond technical skill training. Increasing numbers of postsecondary students and adults also need training and retraining to overcome illiteracy and to upgrade reading, computation, communication, and other basic academic skills.

II. Methodology

The major goals of this study were to:

1. Develop a data base describing the current training system that could underpin policy development;
2. Propose policy options.

To achieve these goals, six broad areas of research were undertaken:

1. An analysis of the changes in the U.S. and Kansas economic environment and labor supply and the technical training implications were examined (Chapter 2).
2. A survey of Kansas businesses assessed training-retraining needs and determined how those needs were being met by institutional training-retraining providers (Chapter 3).
3. A survey of institutional training-retraining providers assessed how effectively the state's human capital needs are met. This included on-site visits, surveys, and examination of statistics collected for all state supported educational institutions that provide vocational and technical training (Chapter 4).
4. A survey of vocational-technical institutions' advisory committees assessed how business advisors impact the system (Chapter 5).
5. The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and Carl Perkins Act in Kansas were examined to determine ways that

federal funding could be utilized to enhance existing state training programs and benefit state economic development plans. Literature reviews and interviews provided information for this analysis (Chapter 6).

6. An assessment of other states' training-retraining programs examined strategies used to strengthen the impact training has upon state economic development. Information was collected through on-site visits to key states and review of literature describing state programs (Chapter 7).

III. Changing Work Force

The vocational-technical training system in Kansas, and other states, must adjust to changes that are occurring in the U.S. economy. The demands on the technical education system will increase in the 1990's for several reasons:

1. Demographic changes indicate that the growth in the labor force will slow and labor shortages, not unemployment, will be a major concern.
2. The composition of the labor supply will change as most of the growth will come from minorities and women.
3. The skill requirements of business have been increasing because of technological advances.
4. Changes in management practices indicate that workers will have a greater responsibility for how their work is performed and for the quality of their work.
5. International competition, particularly from Japan and Europe, will continue. The effect of these changes is to increase the importance of technical education in the state's economic development efforts.

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IV. Findings

Skill Gap

1) Fifty-eight percent of Kansas businesses surveyed reported a moderate to severe gap between the qualifications of newly hired skilled workers and the skill level required by the firm (Table 17).

2) The skill areas in which the Kansas work force needs improvement include (Tables 18, 19):

1. Writing skills
2. Listening and oral communication skills
3. Problem solving skills
4. Comprehension/understanding skills
5. Interpersonal relations skills
6. Teamwork skills
7. Goal-setting and personal motivation skills
8. Organizational effectiveness and leadership skills
9. Adaptability/flexibility skills
10. Proper attitudes toward work and work habits

Training Sources

1) Less than half of the firms surveyed indicated that they used technical or vocational training within the last five years.

2) Over 70 percent obtained training from professional association seminars and from vendors and over 60 percent obtained training from consultants and other commercial trainers, from community colleges, and from AVTS'.

3) Fifty-one percent of the firms surveyed had not utilized technical or vocational training within the last five years. Most conducted on-the-job training and developed in-house training programs. Others reported their employees did not need training, they could not find training to meet the firm's needs, and that training was too expensive.

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Evaluation of Training

1) Generally, firms rated the quality of technical and vocational as adequate. Firms gave "adequate" ratings for such aspects of vocational and technical training as geographic accessibility, content of the programs and courses offered, the instructors, the equipment used, and scheduling convenience.

2) Eighty-two percent of all firms agree that customized training is more cost effective than other forms of training, even though 36 percent of the firms report having used customized training in the last five years.

3) The overall level of promotion of customized training by community colleges and area vocational technical schools over the past three years is low. Businesses reported that the most frequently used sources of customized training were consultants or commercial trainers, vendors, and in-house training.

4) When asked what would substantially increase the likelihood of using community colleges and area vocational technical schools, one third or more of the respondent sample cited making training more relevant to the firm's needs, state assistance in reducing training costs, greater flexibility in the scheduling of training programs, more up-to-date equipment, and more highly qualified instructors.

Equipment

1) Thirty percent of the firms rated having the most technically advanced equipment as important to conduct training, while 53% rated it as very important.

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V. Policy Options

Basic Academic Skill Training

1) Vocational-technical training programs should integrate training of basic academic skills, such as reading, computation, communication, reasoning and problem solving, with technical skill training (page 38).

2) Students should be tested on basic academic skills at the time of program entry and completion. Predetermined competency levels should be demonstrated by students prior to entering a program and prior to obtaining a degree (page 38).

Secondary Technical Skill Training

1) Technical Preparation Programs should be established and funded in secondary schools to provide secondary vocational-technical students with a more rigorous training in principles of technology, applied math, and applied science (page 39).

Postsecondary Tecnological and Technical Skill Training

1) Technical courses/programs should be based on the demonstration of competency in the principles of technology underlying a discipline or field and competency in technical skills, rather than the accumulation of credit hours (page 40).

Coordination Across Institutions

1) Coordinate secondary with postsecondary technical programs so students who obtain training at both levels receive credit or advanced placement (page 41).

2) Require articulation agreements between all community colleges and AVTS' for postsecondary students in a service area.

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Funding

1) Provide incentives for community colleges to offer technical programs by basing state aid for technical programs on relative costs (page 44).

2) State funding of AVTS' should be based on student aquisition of technical and academic competencies as well as some minimum number of hours of attendance (page 45).

3) KTEC Equipment Fund grants should be continued at a level of \$250,000 for FY91 to provide equipment funds for new, innovative programs.

Customized Training.

1) State support is needed for a work force training coordinator at schools generating at least 1,000 hours of customized training to market and coordinate customized training in a service area (page 46).

2) Customized training through AVTS' should be financed by a separate state budget.

Faculty/Staff Development

1) The Department of Education should assess current opportunities and requirements for faculty and career counselor development at all community colleges and AVTS' and set guidelines for such development (page 48).

V. Summary

Vocational education institutions in Kansas ranked access and cooperation with business as the most important issue facing them, followed by recruiting quality students, and better funding for

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vocational education. Administrators are, for the most part, attempting to position their institutions to provide the types of training needed today and into the 1990's. They are making adjustments in who they train (more adults), how they train (competency based education), where/when they train (nontraditional locations and schedules). The system is dynamic, but some changes must occur more rapidly. It is not in crisis, but serious challenges must be addressed if the system is to fulfill its mission.

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