

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ralph Tanner at 9:00 a.m. on February 9, 1999 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Connie Burns, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Dr. William Sanders - University of Tennessee

Others attending: See attached list

The Joint House and Senate Education Committees, chaired by Representative Ralph Tanner and Senator Barbara Lawrence, met for a presentation on value added assessment.

Chairman Lawrence called the meeting to order and introduced Dr. William Sanders, a Professor at the University of Tennessee.

Dr. Sanders thanked the committee and was humbled and honored that the folks in Kansas would ask him to come and share the results of his work. He did state that he is a statistician not an educator and got involved in this work in the early eighties and that value added assessment is based on basic principles that you can plot a child's growth spurts at different times, then measure how they correlate with curriculum. Tennessee has been testing value added assessment in school districts for many years.

Dr. Sanders stated that the educational community is not responsible for solving all of society's problems, he does feel the educational community is responsible for allowing an opportunity to achieve academic growth each year. Under the value added assessment concept, all levels of academic growth are important, then it becomes a question of how to track the progress of students. Dr. Sanders went through the chart scores for Students A, B, C, and D over the different grade levels, pointing out the steady growth. The next thing Dr. Sanders wanted to share with the committee that in some places the most controversial aspect is the measure of teacher effectiveness, and is the single biggest factor in affecting academic growth. Another thing they are exploring is the years of service, that the beginning of a teacher's career is a learning experience, and that there can be some burnout at the end, but understand that if a teacher has some consistently good years, in their experience they see a variety of achievement levels based on the group of kids they get. There is more measurable variability among math teachers than among language arts teachers, than science teachers, less detectable variability exists among reading teachers. All of the math skill a student learns is at school, but once a child learn to read well, they may read a lot alone and some children read very little.

Dr. Sanders concluded his presentation on the cost of the program and by stating that the only way to get higher achievement is through measurability. The committee meeting was opened for questions and discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 1999.

