

MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

October 18-19, 2006
Room 514-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Representative Kathe Decker, Chairperson
Senator Marci Francisco
Senator Ruth Teichman
Senator Roger Pine
Senator John Vratil
Representative Barbara Ballard (October 18)
Representative John Faber
Representative Deena Horst
Representative Steve Huebert
Representative Eber Phelps
Representative Jo Ann Pottorff

Members Absent

Senator Jean Kurtis Schodorf
Senator Mark Taddiken

Staff Present

Carolyn Rampey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Michele Alishahi, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Audrey Dunkel, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Art Griggs, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

State Department of Education Staff

Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner

Conferees

John Harriss, Principal, Westview Elementary, USD 233 (Olathe)
Kerry Boydston, Fourth Grade Teacher, Westview Elementary, USD 233 (Olathe)
Marsha Parry, Fourth Grade Teacher, Westview Elementary, USD 233 (Olathe)
Billie Jo Drake, Principal, Eugene Ware Elementary, USD 234 (Fort Scott)
Gayla Croan, Fifth Grade Teacher, Eugene Ware Elementary, USD 234 (Fort Scott)
Kim Christner, Principal, Garfield Elementary, USD 402 (Augusta)
Judy Terick, First Grade Teacher, Garfield Elementary, USD 402 (Augusta)
Barbara McCalla, Third Grade Teacher, Garfield Elementary, USD 402 (Augusta)
Jennifer Cody, Fourth Grade Teacher, Garfield Elementary, USD 402 (Augusta)
Dr. Ron Ballard, Superintendent, USD 470 (Arkansas City)
Dr. Jan Voss, Associate Superintendent, USD 470 (Arkansas City)
J. K. Campbell, Assistant Superintendent, USD 470 (Arkansas City)
Jeff Shearon, Principal, Frances Willard Elementary, USD 470 (Arkansas City)
Mark Whitener, Principal IXL, USD 470 (Arkansas City)
Greg Obory, Principal, Regency Place Elementary, USD 233 (Olathe)
Genia Deets, First Grade Teacher, Regency Place Elementary, USD 233 (Olathe)
Julie Moore, Fourth Grade Teacher, Regency Place Elementary, USD 233 (Olathe)
Scott Brunner, Chief Financial Officer, Kansas Health Policy Authority
Susan Helbert, Assistant Director, Teacher Education and Licensure, State Department of Education
Dr. Andy Tompkins, Chairperson, At-Risk Council
Dr. Bill Hagerman, Director, State and Federal Programs, State Department of Education
Cory Peterson, Associated General Contractors and President-Elect of the Kansas Advisory Committee on Career and Technical Education
Debby Alford, Manager, Technical Training and Performance, Learjet (Bombardier Aerospace), Wichita
Gordon Rostvold, General Manager, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka
Kathy Gosa, Director of Information Technology, State Department of Education

Wednesday, October 18

Kansas Blue Ribbon Schools

Dale Dennis, State Department of Education, explained to the Committee that the No Child Left Behind Act contains a program called the “Blue Ribbon Schools Program” which recognizes outstanding public and private schools that are making significant progress in closing the achievement gap. Schools qualify in one of two ways: They can serve at least a 40 percent disadvantaged population with dramatically improved student performance scores in reading and mathematics or they can score in the top 10 percent of schools in the state in both reading and mathematics, regardless of demographics.

Schools in Kansas are selected by a team comprised of representatives of education associations and principals from three prior Blue Ribbon Schools. According to Mr. Dennis, the team looks at schools that meet both qualifying criteria. In addition, the schools must have made adequate yearly progress for the past two years. The team recommends five schools to the Kansas Commissioner of Education who makes the nomination for the federal program on the state’s behalf. There are 250 Blue Ribbon Schools nationwide.

The following material is a brief summary of presentations made by representatives of the five Kansas Blue Ribbon Schools.

USD 233 (Olathe)–Westview Elementary (Attachment 1). Westview Elementary was labeled a failing school six years ago. Approximately 45 percent of the students were on the free lunch program and 15 on reduced lunches. Representatives of the school told the Committee that the staff resolved to turn the school around and adopted several strategies. One was to become data-driven and focus on improvement. Another was to target areas in which improvement is needed and teach those areas in each grade so that all students are working on those things that need improvement.

The school adopted the “Brazosport 8-Step Model” which involves instructional focus, assessment, tutorials, enrichment, maintenance, and monitoring, after becoming familiar with how the program had been implemented in Florida schools. The school also implemented after school reading, math, science, and Spanish clubs and developed programs to encourage more parental involvement, such as Family Learning Nights. The school has Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), a type of team teaching that, depending on the circumstance, brings together the several teachers who might work with an individual child, along with supporting staff such as the school nurse or counselor, as appropriate, in order to identify the best way to help the student succeed. Implicit in the concept of PLCs is the need to give PLCs adequate time to meet and plan and to have high quality professional development programs in place. An outgrowth of PLCs is better focus on student needs and staff collaboration and teamwork.

In response to a question, representatives of Westview Elementary said no teachers transferred to other schools because they did not want to meet the challenge of improving the school. The representatives also said that some of the innovations were paid for with federal grants but, basically, costs to implement the new programs were minimal.

USD 234 (Fort Scott)–Eugene Ware Elementary (Attachment 2). Representatives of the school told the Committee that in 2000 no reading scores were equal to or above the state averages. Only two of 24 mathematics scores were equal to or above the state averages. A new principal, Billie Jo Drake, had just assumed her position and she set about to improve student achievement. Among the strategies she used were to:

- Have the staff function as a family unit united in purpose and effort;
- Have the staff realize the value of each person’s part in the success on assessments; and
- Have the staff be confident that the “teacher next door” was capable of doing everything that “I” do.

The school became “data conscious” in school year 2000-01; began PLCs in school year 2001-02; implemented new reading and math programs in school year 2002-03 and provided training for the entire staff; implemented additional programs in school year 2003-04 and added one-hour common planning times for each grade level; and in school years 2004-05 and 2005-06 created extended day learning opportunities and continued grade level and cross grade level collaboration. As a result of these efforts, 100 percent of the students scored at Proficient and above on the 2005 Kansas Mathematics Assessment and 95 percent scored at Proficient and above on the 2005

Kansas Reading Assessment. Student discipline referrals have decreased, students are more confident of their abilities, teachers and staff members have become more collaborative, and everyone realizes that he or she is important in preparing students for success.

Conferees explained that one strategy is the “parallel learning block” whereby, in a 90-minute period, students in a grade are divided into thirds, with one group working on writing, another on literacy, and another receiving individual reading help at the level of the student’s need. Students rotate among the groups so that all are exposed to the material and all have the opportunity to receive individual help.

Dale Dennis told the Committee that Principal Billie Jo Drake had been selected as Kansas Principal of the Year and was notified that she has received the Terrel H. Bell Leadership Award, named after the former United States Secretary of Education, in recognition of her leadership abilities.

In response to questions, conferees said involving parents is an ongoing problem and the school encourages teachers to contact parents directly. In response to the question about “what had to give” in order to shift resources to the intensive math and reading programs the school has implemented, Principal Billie Jo Drake responded that less time is spent on science and social studies.

USD 402 (Augusta)–Garfield Elementary (Attachment 3). Representatives of Garfield Elementary touted PLCs and attributed much of their success to the collaborative efforts of teachers. Conferees said their collegial staff works well as a team, is open to change, and experiences low staff turnover.

One strategy the school developed is after school tutoring, which is small groups of three to five students who get individualized instruction that targets specific learning needs. There is a team of three teachers for each grade level and attendance for a student who is struggling is mandatory. Teachers are paid a small stipend and there are snacks for the students. Conferees told the Committee that parents are supportive of the program. Students are selected on the basis of assessment scores and teacher referrals. Future plans include fitting the tutoring into the school day, directing more attention to students with Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), and implementing more early intervention programs to address emotional issues that affect learning.

In response to questions from Committee members, conferees said a set amount of time each day is scheduled for co-teachers to plan and a weekly planning session is scheduled for PLCs, including paraprofessionals, to meet. On Fridays, there is an all-school assembly to recognize student achievement, award prizes, and mix with returning high school students. Conferees explained that the mixer is a way to build confidence in students and give them a positive attitude about school.

USD 470 (Arkansas City)–Francis Willard Elementary and IXL Elementary (Attachments 4 and 5). Representatives of USD 470 said their district is comprised of 35 percent minority students and 61 percent who receive free and reduced lunches. Because of the high at-risk population, the district decided it needed to develop a district-wide strategic plan which addressed facilities, staff, student achievement, student life issues, technology, and other components of elementary-secondary education. The plan, adopted by the local board in November 2004, identifies activities necessary to achieve each goal, identifies the person accountable for the activity, when the activity will be implemented and completed, what resources will be needed, and how progress will

be measured. Representatives explained that change has to be systematic and that is why the district approached change on a district-wide basis. The fact that the district has two Blue Ribbon schools demonstrates that the approach works.

Preliminary data for Fall 2006 indicates that all schools are meeting adequate yearly progress, a marked improvement over 10 years ago when only one in three students was reading at grade level and math scores were declining. The turn-around is attributed to strategic planning, data-driven educational designs, and professional development which involves outside experts and “internal experts” who work with other teachers. (An example would be special education teachers who help regular teachers deal with special education students in their classrooms.)

All classroom time has to be aligned with the curriculum. Data are monitored on a daily and weekly basis and instruction can be quickly adjusted to address problems as they arise. State assessment data are used but, because the data are available only at the end of the year, other indicators of student progress are used as well. Tutoring is adapted for each child.

In response to a question, conferees said the district has learned that the most effective way to deal with students who need help is to provide staff with in-service activities and professional development.

USD 233 (Olathe)–Regency Place Elementary (Attachment 6). Representatives of Regency Place Elementary also emphasized the importance of PLCs and said PLCs meet weekly for planning sessions. An emphasis also is placed on working with parents so that they can help their children at home.

One feature of the school is “vertical teaming” whereby teachers meet with teachers in one grade level below and one grade level above. Vertical teaming helps teachers integrate what they are teaching into a more seamless learning experience for the child and better prepare students for the next grade.

Medicaid Payments to School Districts

Scott Brunner, Chief Financial Officer, Kansas Health Policy Authority, and former Director of Medicaid and HealthWave, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS), reported on audits of school districts relating to Medicaid payments for services to special education students (Attachment 7). School districts are eligible to receive Medicaid reimbursement for medically necessary services in a school setting. At one time, schools received the money on a fee-per-service basis, which was costly and time-consuming to claim, the result being that many districts could not afford to calculate the reimbursement they were due.

To make it easier for districts to receive reimbursement, “bundled” rates were approved so that, for each of 15 separate categories of disabilities, school districts receive a flat rate reimbursement. In Kansas, the program formerly was administered by SRS. It now is administered by the Kansas Health Policy Authority. At the federal level, the entire Medicaid program is overseen by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. To ensure that programs in Kansas are compliant with federal Medicaid and Medicare rules and regulations and with the Kansas plans for Medicaid and Medicare, audits are conducted by the United States Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

The immediate issue before the Committee is that five OIG audits of school districts and Medicaid payment policies have identified problems. Some of these audit findings have resulted in Kansas refunding Medicaid payments; others currently are being appealed.

Mr. Brunner's summary of the audits and explanation of action currently being taken are as follows:

- School District Administrative Functions. Beginning in FY 2001 and through April 2005, 156 school districts in Kansas received a total of \$9.7 million to perform administrative functions such as outreach, eligibility intake, information and referral, health service coordination and monitoring, and interagency coordination. Based on an audit of \$2.8 million in Medicaid reimbursements made in FY 2002 to four school districts, OIG concluded that errors were made that resulted in the districts receiving \$293,182 for which they did not qualify.

Kansas officials do not agree with the finding because the particular requirement cited in the audit was not a requirement until FY 2003.

- Application of Bundled Rates. During the period from FY 1998 through FY 2003, bundled rate payments were made for the entire year, not for the nine months of the typical school year, resulting in an overpayment of \$13.9 million.

Kansas officials agree that the rate payments should have been made only for a nine-month period. A subsequent reimbursement to Kansas was reduced to adjust for the excess payment.

- Claimed Costs for School-Based Health Services. An OIG audit of 300 claims submitted by three school districts found that the districts provided incorrect or inadequate instructions to local school districts on submitting claims, resulting in claims that were unallowable because services were not rendered or the claims did not include the required prescriptions or referrals. According to OIG, many services lacked documentation for items such as place of service, type of service rendered, and units of service provided. OIG contends that, for the three districts, \$5.1 million in Medicaid reimbursement should be refunded. Further, it recommends that Kansas assume the same incidence of error statewide and calculate an amount that should be refunded for all districts in the state. Kansas officials are challenging the finding for several reasons. First, they do not believe a physician's order is required for some of the services deemed unallowable, as OIG contends, and they do not believe the findings for the three districts are representative of the state as a whole. To ensure that school districts are fully aware of federal requirements, Kansas officials have provided increased oversight of school districts regarding supporting documentation of claims and provided additional billing instructions.
- Inflation Adjustment of Bundled Rates. OIG found that Kansas did not periodically adjust the bundled payment rates for inflation in the manner required, resulting in overpayments to school districts from FY 1998 through FY 2003.

Kansas officials agree that the appropriate inflation rates were not used, although the rates used were not applied each year, meaning that, overall, the state

probably received less Medicaid reimbursement than it was entitled to, rather than more. Presently, the state is working with the federal government to determine if the rates should be adjusted or recalculated and to refund any identified overpayments.

- Development of Bundled Rates. The bundled rates in Kansas were developed using cost and utilization data of special education students in six school districts. OIG found that these original rates were not developed in compliance with federal requirements and the State Plan, nor did the state have adequate internal controls to ensure that it correctly developed the payment rates. The audit recommends that Kansas refund \$18.5 million which had been refunded based on incorrect indirect cost rates.

Kansas officials concur with the audit findings and have refunded the \$18.5 million. They also have agreed to continue efforts to ensure that the school district Medicaid program complies with all federal requirements.

Mr. Brunner concluded his formal presentation by reminding the Committee that all of the audit findings pertained to payments prior to FY 2003. He said the Kansas Health Policy Authority has increased oversight of the program through contractual changes and improved training of schools. He said that in January 2005 the state initiated a new contract with Public Consulting Group to revise the administrative claiming process to meet new requirements imposed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, based on the comments of OIG.

In discussion with Committee members, Mr. Brunner said in some instances the contractor hired by SRS to administer the program "inadvertently advised" school districts regarding the program, which resulted in some of the problems cited by OIG. Mr. Brunner could not remember if incorrect information also was given by SRS officials and could not clearly remember what action SRS officials took to challenge the contractor who gave school districts the incorrect information.

Mr. Brunner said that, in its negotiations with the federal government, the state is taking the position that too many years have gone by to expect the state to repay all of the money that is being contested. Further, it is unfair to expect reimbursements for actions taken by school districts that complied with the federally-approved Kansas State Plan which was in effect at the time. Mr. Brunner did say that there apparently are other manuals that school districts may follow which are not part of the State Plan.

Senator Vratil asked Mr. Brunner if Kansas presently is in compliance with federal requirements that are applicable to the school district Medicaid program. Mr. Brunner answered in the affirmative, with the possible exception being how the bundled rates were developed and how the rates have been inflated. Senator Vratil contended that it appears that some state policy continues to be contrary to federal requirements, raising the possibility that the state will remain in noncompliance and incur ongoing violations.

Representative Decker noted that, of the \$36.5 million in Medicaid reimbursement Kansas is expected to receive in FY 2007, SRS will keep \$1.5 million (4.1 percent) for administrative services and asked Mr. Brunner to get a report from SRS on what those services are.

Dale Dennis, State Department of Education, told the Committee that total special education excess costs for FY 2007 are estimated to be \$351.2 million, of which 92 percent (the statutory excess cost percentage) would be \$323.1 million (Attachment 8). He said Medicaid reimbursement to school districts is estimated to be \$35.0 million. If some or all of this money were to be disallowed because of failure to comply with federal requirements, Mr. Dennis said the money either would have to be made up from some other source or school districts would get less special education funding than estimated.

Federal Funding Under the No Child Left Behind Act

Dale Dennis, State Department of Education, provided a history of federal funding received by Kansas under the No Child Left Behind Act since the Act's implementation in FY 2001 (Attachment 9). Mr. Dennis said funding for programs under the Act is expected to total \$174.7 in FY 2007, which is only a slight increase (\$3.2 million) over FY 2006. He concluded that funding basically is "flat."

When asked what Kansas would lose in federal funding if it failed to comply with the Act, he said the rough rule of thumb is that a state would lose 2.5 times its Title I funding. In Kansas, that amount would be \$250.0 million. Committee staff contacted the National Conference for State Legislatures (NCSL) and was told that no one really knows what the federal government would do if a state tried to "pull out" of the No Child Left Behind Act. To date, Utah is the only state that seriously has considered the action and, according to NCSL, the federal government made considerable efforts to keep Utah from withdrawing.

Budget Preparation Time Line

Dale Dennis, State Department of Education, presented information on the school district budget preparation schedule (Attachment 10). It begins in December with districts conducting a needs assessment and receiving budget requests from attendance centers. In March and April, local boards of education review requests and consider tentative budget projections in the event it is necessary to notify staff that reductions are necessary.

In May, the Legislature adjourns and districts have information on the amount of money that will be available. In June, actual preparation of budgets begins, with public hearings on the budgets being held in August. Local boards adopt budgets in August and submit them to the State Department of Education and to county clerks by August 25.

Mr. Dennis said school district budget preparation has been difficult in recent years when the amount of the legislative appropriation has not been known until late in the process, especially in 2005 when there was a special session. He said districts are helped by the adoption in 2006 of a multi-year plan which lets them know what the expected appropriation will be for three fiscal years, not just one. Senator Francisco suggested that the Legislature should adopt the practice of always funding three years in order to give school districts more stability.

Licensure for Teachers of Autistic Children

Susan Helbert, Assistant Director, Teacher Education and Licensure, State Department of Education, provided additional information pertaining to the licensure of teachers who deal with

autistic children, in response to questions that had been raised at an earlier meeting ([Attachment 11](#)). The issue raised was why the State Board does not recognize individuals who hold graduate degrees in applied behavior analysis and who are certified by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) as qualifying for school district special education reimbursement.

Ms. Helbert explained that, currently, Kansas no longer endorses special education teachers by category of exceptionality, such as teachers of the mentally retarded, teachers of the severely multiply handicapped, and so forth. Instead, teachers are licensed as “adaptive special education teachers,” who are qualified to work with all children who have learning problems and needs in the mild through moderate range, and as “functional special education teachers” who are qualified to work with children who have learning problems in the severe through profound range. It is these two categories of teachers who are employed by school districts, who are qualified to work with autistic children, and who are counted for special education state aid reimbursement.

Ms. Helbert said behavior analysts currently can be hired by a school district as consultants, but do not generate special education reimbursement. However, a proposal under consideration by the State Board of Education would allow State Board certification for individuals who hold graduate degrees in applied behavior analysis and who are certified by BACB. To be certified, the individual would have to have completed a specified number of graduate level course work, have met experience requirements, and have passed an examination. A certified individual would be eligible to work with autistic children as a specialist or related services provider in a school district or cooperative and would qualify to be counted for special education state aid reimbursement.

Thursday, October 19

Recommendations of the At-Risk Council

Dr. Andy Tompkins, Former Commissioner of Education and Chairperson of the At-Risk Council, presented the Council's recommendations to the Committee ([Attachment 12](#)). The six-member Council was created by the 2005 Legislature to make recommendations to the 2010 Commission and to the Governor on or before October 1, 2006. A final report is due by October 1, 2007.

The Council reached a number of conclusions, including the following:

- The Council continues to believe that the best state proxy for identifying at-risk students is poverty, whether that be measured by free or free and reduced price lunches.
- The Council notes that student achievement on state assessments has improved in elementary and middle schools, but little at the high school level. The Council believes that there needs to be a better understanding of the achievement gap at the secondary level to include examination of dropout, graduation, and attendance rates.
- The Council believes that a single tool, such as state assessment scores, is too narrow to determine if a child is at risk.

- The Council affirms the work of the Kansas Legislature and Governor in differentiating at-risk funding, with the core funding being decided on poverty and the second level of funding taking density into account. The Council believes that the third level of funding at-risk students based only on student proficiency on the state assessments for those who are not on the free lunch program is an interesting and potentially effective approach that needs further study.

The specific recommendations of the Council's are the following:

- The Council recommends that the second level of funding for at-risk students, which is the high density formula, be based on the prior year's data and implemented using a linear transition calculation. The Council believes that the density formula needs to be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is taking into account all areas of the state and that it is adding value to student learning.
- The Council affirms that the third level of funding, Non-Proficient At-Risk Weighting, be for students who are below proficiency and not on free lunch. Also, the Council recommends that the 2010 Commission study the impact of this provision and that the formula which distributes the funding should be simplified if the weighting remains in effect beyond its current statutory termination date of June 30, 2007. Further, the Council notes that the student improvement team practice currently utilized in the schools should be helpful in identifying the results of this initiative.
- The Council recommends the continued support of the data system being developed and implemented by the Kansas State Department of Education as a critical component in the ongoing understanding of the achievement gap of at-risk students. Furthermore, the Council supports the implementation of 2006 SB 549 which requires the State Department of Education to provide performance and financial accountability for the use of at-risk funding. Additionally, the Council recommends that the Kansas State Department of Education be supported in its efforts to be a resource for schools in identifying successful programs and strategies for helping at-risk students.
- The Council recommends that the Department of Education periodically reevaluate the existing criteria for the determination of a student to be in need of at-risk services to include consideration of the use of at-risk funds on specific professional development to serve at-risk students such as behavior management training.
- The Council recommends that the 2010 Commission authorize follow-up studies on early career teachers who leave the profession to determine what factors contribute to their leaving, as well as successful practices needed to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers.

Career and Technical Education

Dr. Bill Hagerman, State Department of Education, introduced conferees and made introductory comments (Attachments 13 and 14). He said “vocational education” has developed into career and technical education and no longer involves such courses as woodworking and “bread and thread” home economics classes. He said current demands require a much higher level of academic knowledge and technical skills. Further, the skills must continue to develop as jobs become more specialized.

Dr. Hagerman said it is important that career and technical programs be articulated so that students can move from one level to another without barriers. Also, programs must be of high quality because workforce needs are demanding. Delivery systems must be flexible and include mentorships and on-site training partnerships.

Gordon Rostvold, General Manager of Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka, told the Committee that an orientation toward technical work begins early in an individual’s life and should be something that is introduced and reinforced as early as the elementary and secondary school level.

Mr. Rostvold described the diverse types of occupations in the hospitality and tourism industry and talked about partnerships the industry in Kansas has with various educational institutions and with the State Department of Education. Some of the programs provide entry-level apprenticeships at training sites and begin as early as the 11th grade.

Mr. Rostvold told the Committee that greater effort must be made to make teachers and counselors aware of career opportunities for students and to direct students toward a career education. Committee members asked Mr. Rostvold if high school students have enough time to take required and technical courses and still have time to take elective courses and the suggestion was made that perhaps academic skills could be taught in the context of technical programs.

Debby Alford, Manager of Technical Training and Performance, Learjet, told the Committee that technical training ought to prepare a student immediately for a job. She said the aviation industry is important to Wichita and provides workers with good starting salaries in the range of \$13 to \$15 an hour. She said currently there is a need for 4,000 aviation employees in the Wichita area and, because these workers are not available, the aviation industry is training its own.

According to Ms. Alford, part of the problem is that parents, counselors, and teachers continue to promote college-bound curricula even though a baccalaureate degree is not necessary. As a result, important blue collar positions remain unfilled. Ms. Alford told the Committee that not everybody can be a “knowledge” worker. However, she acknowledged that many companies compete globally and it may become necessary for their workers to be able to speak a foreign language.

Ms. Alford said it is expensive for a company to train its own workers and advocated a “career pipeline” whereby students would determine a career path, receive the necessary training at an educational institution, and then go to work upon graduation. In Ms. Alford’s opinion, educational institutions are not targeting the job market need, as evidenced by the fact that almost a third of the community college students in the Wichita area already have a degree but are returning to school for job retraining. Ms. Alford said they realize that they “need a different education to succeed.”

Ms. Alford elaborated on the difference between how the educational and business sectors train workers. She said she prefers the business model, which means “If you do not do the job, you

get fired.” She told the Committee that students should be taught skills in context so that they understand one skill interacts with another.

Ms. Alford said economic development depends on a trained workforce in order to attract business to a state and cited the Georgia Quickstart Program as a successful model.

Corey Peterson, Associated General Contractors of Kansas, Inc., and Chair-Elect of the Kansas Advisory Committee on Career and Technical Education, gave the Committee his perspective on career and technical education (Attachment 15). He identified the following problems with technical education in Kansas:

- The workforce is getting older and will need to be replaced;
- The education system is steering young people away from technical education, in part because the demands of the No Child Left Behind Act preclude elective classes;
- Very little career counseling is being done; and
- Tight budgets have forced many schools to eliminate career and technical education classes.

Mr. Peterson said when he was a student there were introductory classes that taught students about career possibilities and introduced them to the “world of work.” Many of those courses sparked a lifelong interest in a profession or an occupation. Without this exposure, many students do not know what career opportunities exist.

To address the problem, Mr. Peterson said the Associated General Contractors of Kansas formed and sponsored four high school programs at Wichita East High, Kaw Area Technical School in Topeka, Wamego/Rock Creek High, and Perry Lecompton High, with a fifth program being developed in Garden City. The programs feature two to three-week segments during which different construction trades are taught. Students learn trades such as plumbing, carpentry, surveying, and bricklaying. The programs now are being expanded to include the involvement of the Kansas Contractors Association and include highway, bridge, and utility construction sections. Graduates of the programs may enter the workforce directly or go to construction science programs at Kansas State University or Pittsburg State University.

Representative Decker suggested that one way for industry to encourage students to enroll in technology programs is to provide scholarships. She also said the state should not be funding “fluff” vocational courses as a way to generate revenues to pay for more expensive programs.

Senator Vratil said he is not sure what schools can do about overcoming the public perception that students should not be directed toward blue collar jobs. Senator Teichman said schools in her area do a good job of counseling students to go into career and technical education programs, but the problem is a lack of jobs in those areas.

Enterprise Data Warehouse Project

Kathy Gosa, Director of Information Technology, State Department of Education, told the Committee that the "Enterprise Data System" being developed by the State Department of Education will be used to support decision making and reporting (Attachment 16). She said objectives of the system are the following:

- To make data accessible;
- To reduce the reporting burden on local districts and the State Department;
- To connect numerous data reporting systems that presently are not integrated;
- To make information more accessible to the public;
- To give policy makers better information on which to base decisions; and
- To provide a better way to track and measure student progress.

Ms. Gosa said the system was begun in 2006 and will be completed in 2009.

The meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by Carolyn Rampey

Approved by Committee on:

November 16, 2006

(date)