

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Barbara Lawrence at 10:00 a.m. on January 28, 2000 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senators Bleeker, Umbarger and Jones excused

Committee staff present: Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes  
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department  
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department  
Jackie Breymeyer, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

WilliamR. Docking  
Craig C. Blair III  
Jack Wempe  
Floris Jean Hampton  
Fred Kerr  
Harry W. Craig

Others attending: See Attached Sheet

Chairperson Lawrence called the meeting to order and stated that this was an informational meeting for the members of the Senate Education Committee and the appointed members of the Board of Regents. The Regents have already gone through the confirmations process. Six of the nine Regents are present. It is a courtesy meeting for the committee to discuss the issues currently before the Regents. She turned the meeting over to the Regents' Chairman, Bill Docking.

Mr. Docking mentioned that by enacting of **SB 345**, Kansas is now positioned to have public higher education for the first time in history, speak with one voice. It creates a unique opportunity for the state. The Regents are honored that the Governor has asked them to serve. Their goals are simple and that is to help students. They are doing their best with their charge to implement the new system. They are trying to find common ground between the three sectors and to develop working relationships to obtain the highest possible level of quality education.

Mr. Docking called on Clay Blair. Mr. Blair is from Olathe, Kansas and stated that he is a relatively new member of the Board. He stated that when **SB 345** was enacted, five out of the nine Board members were new members. Mr. Blair thinks that the focus of the Regents should be on visionary, or big picture issues. These issues will need to be developed and require a great deal of thought and research to develop a platform for policy. One of the innovative things the new Board of Regents is doing is going outside legislative sources and seeking independent sources of funds. Grants totaling \$400,000 will help provide a basis of research. This is another way to fund the research needed to make decisions. A comprehensive student aid financial package is being developed. There is funding from the legislature, but private and federal sources and possibly tax credits need to be investigated to provide true financial aid to the students in the State of Kansas.

Mr. Blair stated that the Board of Regents is pulling together and dealing with the problems of running the office on a minimum budget, with minimum staff and is trying to make good business decisions on the daily operations and to take hold of policy issues. Working together, they can advance what will someday be considered one of the best systems of coordinated higher education in the United States.

Fred Kerr, Pratt, spoke next to the Committee. Mr. Kerr served 16 years in the Senate, including 12 years on the Senate Education Committee. He stated he wanted to speak of the other members of the Regents Board. They are dedicated people who have devoted their professional or public service careers to education. He gave comments of praise to members Bill Docking, Clay Blair, Floris Jean Hampton, Sylvia Robinson, Janice DeBauge, Harry Craig, Steve Clark and Jack Wempe for the knowledge, fields of expertise and service they render to the Board.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, Room 313-S Statehouse, at 10:00 a.m. on January 28, 2000.

Jack Wempe stated that he feels that **SB 345** is a very serious charge given to the Regents by the legislature. Some type of different arrangement for higher education has long been a goal for many of the legislators. Through the years the realization came to many of how hard it is to achieve change. Through **SB 345** this has come about. He had visited several of the community colleges in Kansas and some of the Regent's schools, but had not been to any of the vocational technical schools. He feels that as a member of the commission dealing with community colleges and technical education that it is incumbent upon him to visit and get a feel for what they are doing.

Mr. Wempe also discussed the different models of tuition levels; which is better, more effective and fair. Kansas has traditionally had a low tuition model. This has been a way of subsidizing students who attend the universities. Every student who attends is being subsidized with a low tuition model, at the same level, regardless of need. A discussion needs to occur as to whether to subsidize a student on the basis of need, or to subsidize all students equally with the low tuition model. If an efficiency argument is made, it is more efficient to subsidize students on the need basis. The Regents will find out what other places are doing terms of student aid .

Floris Jean Hampton, Dodge City, thanked Mr. Kerr for his kind words about the Regents. She is very impressed with all of them. Every one wants to do the job in the right way. There is a lot to learn with many challenges. She believes that communication and sharing is one of the most important building blocks in any type of relationship. They are very much in awe of the responsibilities that have been placed upon them. She is still excited about the concept of education in Kansas and believes that Kansas can build the model for the United States.

Harry Craig spoke next, and stated the Regents have a great journey before them. He had nothing to add to what the others had said and stated he would be happy to stand for questions.

Mr. Docking responded to a question on gender inequity by stating the Board is determined to see a fair result is reached on the lawsuit that has been filed. There is a determination not to repeat the mistakes of the past. As the opportunity arises to fill key staff positions, the hope is that they will be fielded by a more diverse group of people. The commitment is there to make this happen.

The comment was made that it is not only hiring diversified staff, but it is also equitable salaries for that diversified staff.

Mr. Docking was questioned about the salaries for university presidents. His explained that the salaries of these individuals were looked at in terms of their counterparts in peer institutions. Several recent changes have seen individuals leaving for better pay. The former Board decided to enact a one time only market-based adjustment to bring salaries closer to the general salary range. Each president was evaluated with the raise being based on a merit adjustment and a one time salary adjustment. It was hoped by this to slow down the exodus and drain on the system.

With regard to tuition increases, Mr. Docking said there were two factors weighing on them heavily. The budget director basically stated that he would use the Regents' recommendations on tuition in putting together the final recommendations to the governor. The other factor relates to the timing of certification to the federal government for federal student financial aid for the cost of education and takes tuition into account. It had to be done before the end of December last year so students would be eligible for the larger need-based state aid based upon higher tuition figures. Both of those factors required a quick decision. In the Regents budget recommendations to the governor, an additional one million dollars was asked for need-based student financial aid which the governor has not seen fit to recommend. The legislature could help the students substantially by restoring that to the budget. Students do have an opportunity to work with financial aid officials at each one of the universities so the students who are most at risk from this increase can continue their educations.

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, Room 123-S Statehouse, at 9:00 a.m. on January 31, 2000.

Mr. Docking was asked if the agreement continues to match the money for both technology and libraries.

He replied that the technology match is included in the governor's recommendation, however, the governor has not recommended the match on the libraries.

The comment was made that when the initial tuition increase talks took place, the students were involved, but when the next increase was made, the students were left out of the process. Some of the students felt like the proceedings were a foregone conclusion.

Mr. Craig, Chairman of the Budget Development and Tuition Committee, responded that he totally believes in the process. What occurred was an extraordinary circumstance. A decision had to be made because of budget considerations. They notified as many people as they could as quickly as they could.

Mr. Docking stated that the Regents are beginning a system-wide study on the relationship between tuition and financial aid. A small working group that will study and advise the whole group has been formed; they will soon get underway. They have identified an excellent consulting company out of Colorado. They believe this company will be an excellent help in assisting them with recommendations about financial assistance.

Several committee members took the opportunity to make comments to the Regents, covering things done in the past and what needs to be done in the future.

The Chairperson thanked the Regents for appearing and the committee for their comments.

The meeting was adjourned.

