

**MINUTES**

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE  
AND  
2010 COMMISSION**

August 14, 2008

Room 783—Docking State Office Building

**Members Present – LEPC**

Representative Deena Horst, Chairperson  
Senator Jean Kurtis Schodorf, Vice-Chairperson  
Senator Marci Francisco  
Senator Roger Pine  
Senator Mark Taddiken  
Representative Barbara Ballard  
Representative Steve Huebert  
Representative Eber Phelps  
Representative JoAnn Pottorff  
Representative Valdenia Winn

**Members Absent – LEPC**

Senator Ruth Teichman  
Senator John Vratil  
Representative Owen Donohoe

**Members Present – 2010 Commission**

Rochelle Chronister, Chairperson  
Dr. Ray Daniels, Vice-Chairperson  
Representative Clay Aurand  
Representative Sue Storm  
Carolyn Campbell  
Barbara Hinton  
Stephen Iliff  
Dennis Jones  
Lee Urban

**Members Absent – 2010 Commission**

Emile McGill

## Staff Present

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Reagan Cussimano, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Dale Dennis, Kansas Department of Education  
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

## Others Present

Dr. Alexa Posny, Commissioner of Education, Kansas State Department of Education  
Barbara Craft, State Representative, 65<sup>th</sup> District  
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards  
John Dougherty, Emporia State University  
Terry Forsyth, Kansas National Education Association  
Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools  
Cindy D'Ercole, Kansas Action for Children  
Kari Presley, Kearney & Associates  
Sue Gamble, State Board of Education, District 2  
Jeff Zehnder, 580 WIBW  
Martin Hawver, Hawver Capitol Report  
Mike Reece, K-12, Inc.  
Bill Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas, Public Schools  
Vanessa Lamoreaux, Kansas Board of Regents  
Kelly Cure, Little Government Relations  
Stuart Little, Shawnee Mission USD 512

## Morning Session

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Horst, who welcomed all Committee members and members of the 2010 Commission. Each member of LEPC and the 2010 Commission introduced themselves and gave a brief background.

Dr. Alexa Posny, Commissioner of Education, Kansas State Department of Education, spoke to Committee members and gave an update on a variety of education issues in Kansas. Dr. Posny stated there is one bottom line goal for the State Board of Education and that is to ensure that every child meets or exceeds high academic standards and is prepared for their next step, whether it be postsecondary education or the world of work. The four objectives of the State Board of Education include:

- Redesigning the delivery system to meet our students' changing needs;
- Providing an effective educator in every classroom;
- Ensuring a visionary and effective leader in every school; and
- Improving communication with all constituent groups and policy partners.

Dr. Posny stated that when talking about ensuring that every child meets or exceeds high academic standards, there are several things that are put in place:

- A multi-tier system of support;
- An infusion of the standards for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in all of the content standards and career and technical education standards; and
- An integration of accountability into all curriculums.

The major emphasis the Board has taken a look at this year is that academics need to be integrated into career and technical education. Dr. Posny stated it is a known fact that dropping out of high school is not something that a child suddenly decides to do. It is a gradual process of disengagement from the classroom. Students are first observed at approximately the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades becoming disengaged from what they are learning in the classroom. It is those students who are so far behind, who are not literate, who cannot read, and who are not proficient in math who tend to be the ones who perform in the lowest percentile throughout the rest of their career in the educational system.

When students have the option to enroll in career and technical programs, more of them stay in school. They begin to see the relevance of why they are being taught some of the content areas.

Dr. Posny told Committee members some teaching statistics in Kansas. According to 2008 Kansas data:

- 40 percent of Kansas teachers leave the field after seven years;
- 36 percent of Kansas teachers can retire within five years;
- 50 percent of reported personnel are over 45, and 36 percent are over 50;
- 12 percent fewer students have gone into teaching over the past six years;
- In June 2008, there were 846 teacher vacancies across the state; and
- In August 2008, there are an estimated 375 teacher vacancies that remain.

Dr. Posny stated the following reasons that teachers leave the teaching profession:

- Isolation from colleagues;
- Assignments outside their area of training;
- Lack of appreciation or respect;
- Feeling discouraged and frustrated;
- Feeling left out of the decision making;
- Poor school management and not enough support from administration;
- Lack of classroom resources;
- Too many regulations;
- Lack of mentoring or induction programs;
- Large class size;
- Undisciplined and poorly motivated students;
- Uninvolved parents;
- Unreasonable expectations; and
- Lack of resources.

Dr. Posny stated that licensure regulation changes were made in August 2007 and included:

- Removing the grade point average for conditional teaching licenses;

- Offering restricted school specialist licenses;
- Experienced out-of-state school counselors without teaching background were recognized;
- Provisional license options were expanded;
- Offering a one-year nonrenewable license without existing offer of employment;
- Offering three additional options for added endorsements:
  - Add science with content test;
  - 15 content credits plus test for middle level endorsements; and
  - Secondary endorsement with 50 percent of program completed, plus test.
- Expanding innovative/experimental programs at institutions of higher education (IHEs) in the state.

Licensure regulation changes made in July 2008 included the following:

- Enhanced access to practice;
- Enhanced access to a professional license as the initial Kansas license for veteran out-of-state educators;
- Offered reinstatement based on out-of-state experience;
- Added endorsements via:
  - Out-of-state license with endorsements by meeting specified course work
  - Passing the content assessment
- Changed “conditional” to “initial” license;
- Reduced renewal requirements for standard substitute to 50 professional development points;
- Reinstated “masters plus experience” renewal option;
- Emergency substitute renewed for two years;
- Removed prohibition on compensation paid to student teachers; and
- Edited the issuance of restricted license for one school year, reissued with successful progress report.

Dr. Posny also discussed the Kansas D-20 Education Council and stated it was designed to create a collaborative, seamless, education system and ensure a comprehensive system of education with benchmarks for success from pre-school through graduate school (Attachment 1).

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.

Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas State Department of Education, spoke to Committee members regarding school finance, specifically, the provision in Kansas law regarding the Consumer Price Index-Urban (CPI-U). Mr. Dennis advised that when the 2006 Kansas Legislature approved the three-year school finance plan, it included a provision for increases in state aid, excluding special education, for the fourth year. The law provides that school districts are to receive an increase in state aid for the 2009-2010 school year based upon the percentage increase of the CPI-U for the preceding fiscal year, as certified to the Commissioner of Education by the Director of the Budget and Director of the Legislative Research Department. The special education law provides that the Legislature fund 92 percent of excess cost ([Attachment 2](#)).

## **Federal Impact Aid to School Districts**

Sharon Wenger, Research Analyst, Kansas Legislative Research Department, gave an overview to Committee members regarding Federal Impact Aid and its effect on Geary and Riley County school districts, specifically, regarding the effect military families at Fort Riley are having on the local school districts ([Attachment 3](#)).

Representative Barbara Craft, District 65, spoke to Committee members regarding the way Kansas distributes Federal Impact Aid. The request to review the issue was originally requested by Major General Robert Durbin, Commanding General of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division at Fort Riley. General Durbin was aware that students who were military dependents in other states were receiving more dollars per student of Federal Impact Aid than their counterparts in Kansas.

Representative Craft discussed Kansas' position regarding Federal Impact Aid, including the fact that a percentage of the Aid must be counted as "local effort"; otherwise, the school finance formula could not be considered equalized across all school districts.

Representative Craft requested that the LEPC, after an in-depth review, determine whether or not the current practice of distributing Federal Impact Aid in Kansas is following the intent of the federal law and providing adequate funding for meeting the needs of educating military-dependent students. If it is not, according to the Committee's determination, Representative Craft requested the Committee make an alternative recommendation for distribution, such as increasing the percentage of Federal Impact Aid dollars that are considered miscellaneous income ([Attachment 4](#)).

Ron Walker, Superintendent, Geary County USD 475, told Committee members that of the military families in their school district, approximately one-fourth are new to the military and USD 475 is their first move. Over three-fourths of the military families will have moved a minimum of three times and a maximum of eight times. Mr. Walker stated that one-fourth will become single parents for the first time in their lives within a few months of their move to Fort Riley. Divorce, abuse, suicide, and other domestic problems rate higher for this war than any other in American history, and Fort Riley and USD 475 offer excellent support systems for families and students.

Mr. Walker told Committee members that most students will not see at least one of their parents for up to 12 months and a few students, at times, will have both parents deployed. Almost 62 percent of the district's student body were dependents of federally impacted parents last year. Fear of the loss of a parent is the students' number one concern.

Mr. Walker stressed to Committee members that the district has one of the highest mobility rates in Kansas and is one of the most diverse in Kansas. Over 52 percent of the students meet the definition of disadvantaged.

Mr. Walker stated that for USD 475, the most important legislation passed by the Kansas Legislature was the second count date. For the first time, the district was able to appropriately hire teachers, add support staff, and order materials and supplies. Resources from the second count date have allowed the district to equitably provide for its students.

The second legislation that was passed was to allow districts to keep 30 percent of the Federal Impact Aid, rather than 25 percent. This allowed the district to transfer more funds into special education. Fort Riley is a destination point for families with special needs students. For the 2008 school year, there were over 1,200 special needs students in USD 475; however, the district served over 2,100 special needs students at one time or another.

Mr. Walker concluded by stating that USD 475 will lose ground in education if the issue of the second count date and Federal Impact Aid are not continued ([Attachment 5](#)).

### **Supplemental State Aid for High Assessed Property Valuation Counties with Low Numbers of School-Age Children**

Martha Dorsey, Principal Analyst, Kansas Legislative Research Department, told Committee members the Legislative Coordinating Council (LCC) has referred to the LEPC the charge of reviewing the amount of supplemental state aid provided to Chase County and other counties in similar situations with low numbers of school-age children that have a high assessed property valuation relative to other counties. The LEPC was requested to study whether the amount of supplemental state aid provided to these local school districts related to the local option budget (LOB) is low. The study topic was requested by Senator James Barnett ([Attachment 6](#)).

Senator James Barnett briefly addressed the Committee and reviewed the request to LCC regarding the amount of supplemental state aid provided to Chase County and other counties in similar situations with low numbers of school-age children that have a high assessed property valuation relative to other counties.

Bill Halvorsen, member of Chase County USD 284 Board of Education, addressed Committee members as a proponent of SB 627 concerning school finance and the Chase County situation. Mr. Halvorsen told Committee members this bill would amend the current formula for calculating a district's entitlement to supplemental state aid for the LOB.

Mr. Halvorsen told Committee members that SB 627 would provide a fiscally neutral method to address an obvious inequity by amending KSA 72-6434, specifically, by adding New Section (g) and its "escape hatch." It does not require any more money; it just allows the district to share in what is appropriated. Additionally, because this is a small district, the actual amount of money would be small in relation to the total appropriation (less than \$1,000 per year for the average district now benefitting from the current formula) ([Attachment 7](#)).

Greg Markowitz, Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer for USD 284, also spoke to Committee members as a proponent of SB 627 which addresses what USD 284 considers to be errors and inequities in the current School Finance Formula, specifically, the Local Option Budget Wealth Formula. Mr. Markowitz gave an overview of how this wealth formula is having a significant and negative impact on the students, parents, patrons, and taxpayers of USD 284.

Mr. Markowitz stated that USD 284 is at or near the state average for LOB and the district is doing its share to fund education. 24.39 mills of local effort are required to fund only the USD 284 Supplemental General Fund. Mr. Markowitz further stated the LOB is no longer a budget "option"

in their school district and USD 284 can no longer provide an appropriate educational opportunity to the children of Chase County without the LOB.

Mr. Markowitz told Committee members that USD 284 is taxing for needed capital expenditures with its locally funded Capital Outlay Fund. Further, he said that USD 284 is not getting any state assistance with the LOB, Capital Outlay, or Bond and Interest Funds. The current classification of USD 284 as "wealthy" is unfair to the taxpayers of the district and places the education of Chase County students in continued jeopardy (Attachment 8).

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.

An updated version of the 2010 Commission Recommendations and their Disposition was distributed to Committee members (Attachment 9).

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. 2010 Commission members were reminded of their meeting at 1:30 p.m. LEPC members were told the next meeting would be September 17, 2008.

Prepared by Janet Henning  
Edited by Sharon Wenger

Approved by Legislative Educational  
Planning Committee on:

September 17, 2008  
(Date)

Approved by 2010 Commission on:

October 9, 2008  
(Date)