

MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

September 2, 2010
Room 152-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Representative Deena Horst, Chairperson
Senator Jean Kurtis Schodorf, Vice-chairperson
Senator Marci Francisco
Senator Bob Marshall
Senator Ruth Teichman
Senator John Vratil
Representative Barbara Ballard
Representative Owen Donohoe
Representative Eber Phelps
Representative JoAnn Pottorff
Representative Valdenia Winn

Member Excused

Senator Mark Taddiken

Staff Present

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Reagan Cussimano, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Jason Long, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Kansas Department of Education
Dorothy Gerhardt, Committee Assistant

Introduction of Committee Members and Staff

The meeting of the Legislative Educational Planning (LEPC) was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Deena Horst. Introductions of Committee members and staff followed.

K-12 Education Issues Presentation

Dr. Diane DeBacker, Interim Commissioner of Education, and Tom Foster, Director of Career Standards and Assessments with the Kansas Department of Education, presented information on the Kansas Common Core Standards, Kansas Education Commission, Governor's Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery, and the P-20 Council.

Common Core Standards

Through multiple rounds of feedback from states, feedback groups, and validation committees, as well as national organizations representing educators, College and Career Readiness Standards were developed in the summer of 2009. Groups representing English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities were instrumental in developing the ELL and students with disabilities statements in the introduction to the standards.

This initiative for developing the Common Core Standards for K-12 levels in English language arts and mathematics was state-led, with the final draft released June 2, 2010. To date, 35 states have adopted them. They will be presented, for discussion and approval, to the Kansas State Board of Education later this year, at which point Kansas will begin writing curriculum standards.

Following the presentation, a question-and-answer session followed. Items discussed included the issue of local control over curriculum addressed in the adoption of the Common Core Standards ([Attachment 1](#)); transfer of student records; costs versus benefits of adopting the Standards; reaching goals with ever changing standards; and whether there is a schedule of revisions defined.

Kansas Education Commission

In May of 2010, the Kansas State Board of Education authorized the formation of the Kansas Education Commission ([Attachment 2](#)) to examine the framework for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Reauthorization of ESEA, as outlined in the *Blueprint for Reform* report released in March 2010, will set the direction for education in the United States for years to come. The Kansas Education Commission is the state's strategic approach to reauthorization and educational change. Objectives include:

- Recommend revisions to state statutes, regulations, and policies to ensure that Kansas students are prepared for their next steps (e.g., the world of work or post-secondary education);
- Provide coherence to the discussions and work currently underway in various segments of Kansas education regarding the reauthorization of ESEA and the future of education in our state; and
- Allow for a smooth transition from the accountability system of No Child Left Behind to the new system as outlined in the *Blueprint for Reform* report.

Subcommittees have been organized to address the scope of work as outlined for the Commission. These include the following:

- College- and career-ready students;

- Great teachers and leaders in every school;
- Equity and opportunity for all students;
- Raising the bar and reward excellence; and
- Promoting innovation and continuous improvement.

Dr. DeBacker stated that this is the first time in many years that a review of the entire system of Kansas education has been attempted. It is an ambitious undertaking, but one that is deserving of attention and dedication. The recommendations emerging from the Commission will give clear and consistent guidance to the State Board of Education as the members set the direction for education in Kansas for years to come.

Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention

This Commission was established in June 2010, by Executive Order of Governor Parkinson ([Attachment 2](#)). The mission of the Commission is to examine and make recommendations on issues related to graduation and dropping out. The Kansas Commission aims to bring a comprehensive solution to the issues through a collaboration of businesses, schools, community organizations, parents, state agencies, and youth. A final report is to be presented to the Governor by January 2011.

P-20 Council (Preschool through Postsecondary School)

The P-20 Council was established in 2008 by Executive Order of Governor Sebelius ([Attachment 2](#)) directing the Council to establish a vision statement, mission statement, and guiding principles that reflect the needs of the education system; create a shared plan for reaching the vision and establish benchmarks to promote the Council's commitment to success; and focus on standards-based improvement in P-20 policy and program coherence and coordination among the State Department of Education, school districts, postsecondary institutions, State Department of Commerce, businesses, communities, and foundations.

The goal of the P-20 Council will expire at the end of Governor Parkinson's term.

A short discussion followed these presentations.

K-12 School Finance Update

Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner of Education, presented a short review of FY2010 and FY2011 school district revenues and expenditures ([Attachment 3](#)). Items highlighted in his presentation included the change in status of the State General Fund from the approved FY 2010 budget to the estimated FY 2012 budget. He noted a total of \$400,172,916 in FY2010 expenditures were delayed to FY 2011.

The following summary regarding reductions or under funding in state aid was also reviewed by Mr. Dennis.

<u>State Aid</u>	<u>Reduction</u>
Base State Aid Per Pupil reduced from \$4,400 to \$4,012	\$ 241,288,471
Supplemental General State Aid	37,816,280
Capital Outlay	25,600,000
Professional Development	1,750,000
Teacher Mentoring	200,000
Discretionary Grants	85,000
National Board Certification	240,000
Special Education	4,000,000
TOTAL	<u><u>\$ 310,979,751</u></u>

Mr. Dennis also stated U.S. Department of Education auditors would be visiting the Kansas Department of Education in November regarding special education funding. They will visit approximately three or four school districts and review programs being delivered to students in an effort to determine whether students are receiving adequate educational services. The following regarding special education excess costs was presented to the Committee:

FY 2011 - 92% of Excess Cost	\$ 448,225,000
FY 2011 - Appropriation	367,540,630
Plus Federal ARRA Funds	<u>55,684,000</u>
Total FY 2011	<u><u>\$ 423,224,630</u></u>
Increase Required to Fund 92% of Excess Cost	\$25,000,370

A review of assessed valuations for the state was also presented. In November of 2009 the Consensus Revenue Estimating Group projected the total assessed valuation for 2010-11 would result in an increase of 2.38 percent, or approximately \$670 million increase for the general fund assessed valuation. Current estimates indicate assessed valuations will decline by at least the same percentage. If this estimate is correct, the \$670 million estimated increase, combined with a \$750 million estimated actual decrease, results in a difference of at least \$1.420 billion. This results in an additional funding requirement of at least \$28.4 million.

Other areas of concern affecting schools and financing include the increase in free and reduced-price lunch applications. The potential percentage increase to the state is \$9,389,363 for the upcoming fiscal year, with estimates of up to eight out of every ten students being eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

Changes in Early Childhood Education: Updates on Head Start Program Changes in the State

Janet Schalansky, President and CEO, Kansas Children's Service League ([Attachment 4](#)); Dona Booe, Vice-president of Program Services for the Kansas Children's Service League, ([Attachment 5](#)); and Mary Baskett, Executive Director, Kansas Head Start Association ([Attachment 6](#)) appeared before the Committee to present a report regarding the recent authorization asking Head Start agencies to develop Memorandums of Agreement with school districts to ensure that cooperation and collaboration were occurring at the local level.

This is an attempt to avoid duplication of services in order to maximize the services that are available in the community for children and make the most efficient and effective use of resources. A number of pilot programs are currently underway in cooperation with local school districts.

Proposed School Finance Plan

Senator Steve Abrams appeared before the Committee in support of his Relevant Efficient Academic Learning Education Act ([Attachment 7](#)). Objectives of the proposal include:

- Creating greater opportunities for success for students in finding relevant careers;
- Encouraging the concept of Career and Tech Ed (CTE) for all students, no matter whether as a brain surgeon, welder, or teacher;
- Creating opportunities for students to maximize their potential;
- Developing a system that will assist students, parents, and educators, as they move forward in making the best decisions for students; and
- Creating opportunities for economic development.

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation. Senator Abrams pointed out school financing was not addressed in the proposal. It was also noted by Senator Vratil that adoption of Common Core Standards on a national level could adversely affect this proposal.

School District Efficiency Audits

A summary of seven school district efficiency audits was presented by Laurel Murdie, Principal Auditor, Legislative Division of Post Audit. ([On file - Kansas Legislative Division of Post Audit, August 2010](#)) The seven districts reviewed included Derby, Ellinwood, Renwick, Winfield, Concordia, Riley County, and Clifton-Clyde.

These efficiency audits were conducted at the direction of the 2010 Commission. It was noted that none of the districts had a systematic process for managing efficiency. A number of opportunities for districts to operate more efficiently was found, the largest of these savings coming from cutting teachers. All seven districts potentially could save money by changing their high school class schedules or course offerings and by using their buildings more efficiently. In addition, several districts could save money by making their food service programs more self sufficient.

Suggested changes included changing from a block schedule to traditional scheduling, increasing class sizes, using buildings more efficiently, and recommending food service programs be self supporting. Other areas where savings could potentially be realized included:

- Automating paper-driven business processes;
- Competitively purchasing transportation-related services;
- Using information technology more effectively;
- Sharing resources with other entities;
- Reducing cell phone costs by reducing the number of phones or using stipends;
- Maximizing the use of business procurement cards; and
- Reducing overtime costs by hiring full-time staff.

A summary of recommendations is included ([Attachment 8](#)).

Update on Issues Related to Dyslexia

Dr. Terry Sader, Chair of the Kansas Coalition for Dyslexia Legislation, appeared before the Committee regarding activities concerning HCR 5015 ([Attachment 9](#)). He stated that, based on parent reports and observations, a majority of the resolutions in HCR 5015 were not responded to by the Kansas State Department of Education or the Kansas State Board of Education.

The Coalition is asking that the Committee recommend to the House and Senate Education Committees in 2011, passage of a bill patterned after HCR 5015. Coalition members think this is the only way to ensure adequate educational opportunities for children with dyslexia and similar learning disabilities.

Colleen Riley, Director, Special Education Services, Kansas State Department of Education, also appeared to answer questions regarding HCR 5015 ([Attachment 10](#)).

Committee discussion followed.

Discussion of Other Issues

A short discussion followed regarding suggestions for the next meeting of the Committee.

Among those mentioned were:

- A presentation from the Board of Regents;
- Statistics regarding free and reduced-price meals, including reviewing the Kansas population at or below the poverty level, correlated with the number of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches;
- Special education funding;
- Bills not acted on during the last legislative session; and
- Reasons for and the impact on the increase in school populations.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m. The date for the next meeting was set for November 4, 2010.

Prepared by Dorothy Gerhardt
Edited by Sharon Wenger

Approved by Committee on:

November 4, 2010
(Date)