

**MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**

October 20, 1999 - 9:00 a.m. - Room 303 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. David H. Steele, Chair
Rep. Lloyd Frandsen, Chair
Sen. Ron Allen
Sen. Karen Hale
Sen. Lyle W. Hillyard
Sen. Howard A. Stephenson
Rep. Jeff Alexander
Rep. Ron Bigelow
Rep. Duane Bourdeaux
Rep. Judy Ann Buffmire
Rep. Fred J. Fife III
Rep. James R. Gowans
Rep. David L. Hogue
Rep. Bradley T. Johnson
Rep. Keele Johnson
Rep. Evan L. Olsen
Rep. Tammy J. Rowan
Rep. LaWanna "Lou" Shurtliff
Rep. Nora B. Stephens
Rep. Matt Throckmorton
Rep. Bill Wright

Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Mr. J. Wayne Lewis,
Research Analyst
Mr. James L. Wilson,
Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy L. Bangerter,
Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials distributed in the meeting are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

1. **Call to order** - Rep. Lloyd Frandsen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
 - a. **MOTION:** Rep. Bigelow moved to approve the minutes of August 18 and August 20, 1999. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. **Committee Business - Reports**

Cedar Mountain Science Center Report- Ms. Lana Johnson, Environmental Education, Southern Utah University, reviewed the Cedar Mountain Science Center Report, an analysis of a project authorized by H.B. 54 and devoted to environmental education. The objective of the project is to provide a hands on, field integrated learning experience for Utah students. Much of the training was accomplished in a teacher developed summer camp. She explained projections for future expansion and the center's request for ongoing funding of \$98, 670.00. She discussed the guidelines and mission of the project as detailed in the report.

Dixie College Report - Ms. Cecelia Foxley, Commissioner of Higher Education, reviewed the Dixie College Progress Report as required by H.B. 32. She said the State Board of Regents recommended that Dixie College be authorized to offer two bachelor degree programs; one in business administration and the other in computer information technology. Both would be subject to a three-year probation period. Dixie College administration requested authorization to offer a baccalaureate degree in elementary education, but the proposal was denied. She stated three criteria used by the State Board of Regents in considering changes in the role and mission of a college or university: 1) readiness of the institution, 2) demand or need in the local area, and 3) impact on the system as a whole. She explained that the college's requests and proposals were evaluated in detail and the college has, in the judgement of seven external evaluators, the readiness to administer baccalaureate programs. The southwestern part of the state is growing, and demands of business are sufficient for Dixie College to become a fully-accredited, four-year institution in specific areas. She said the board recommended that a university center program continue at Dixie College. The greatest impact on the system due to the change will be upon Southern Utah University (SUU) in Cedar City, and Ms. Foxley recommended that SUU's enrollment be held harmless until the impact can be studied.

November Meeting Dates - Mr. Wilson explained that the Legislative Management Committee authorized the Education Interim Committee to hold a second interim meeting in November. He said the co-chairs feel if the committee is unable to resolve all its issues in the November 17th interim meeting, a second meeting would be needed and has been scheduled for Tuesday, November 23rd.

2. Early Childhood and Family Education Proposal

Rep. Lloyd Frandsen and Mr. Barry Newbold, Superintendent of Jordan School District, proposed a early childhood task force be created and composed of interested persons and institutions. Rep. Frandsen explained the task force would gather and disseminate information about early childhood development to a child's parents who is the child's first teacher. He explained that since a number of currently existing programs will accomplish a number of objectives envisioned by himself and Mr. Newbold, that a collaborative effort could soon begin. He sees the task force serving as a catalyst to bring existing related resources together for the benefit of children.

Mr. Newbold emphasized that the public school system has three years to sufficiently teach children to read at grade level. Parents play a critical role in facilitating their child's readiness for school. Pre-school, as well as the social and medical communities, has an impact on school readiness. He distributed and reviewed a document, "Building the Foundation for Learning," that itemized facts currently known about early childhood development. He said a task force could bring together district and state office personnel, businesses, and the health industry in a collaborative endeavor. Mr. Newbold proposed the task force be permitted to meet without

intervention from the Legislature and then make its proposals and suggestions available to parents. He felt that if existing resources could be brought together, new resources would not be required.

MOTION: Rep. Frandsen moved that staff draft legislation requesting the creation of an early childhood task force and bring that proposal to the November interim meeting for committee action.

Several committee members spoke against the motion stating that many current programs and sources of information are available to parents, and government should not create additional programs which may take choices away from them.

Several members supported the motion believing it would encourage and help families prepare their children for success in school. Rep. Frandsen explained it would be important to involve the Legislature in this program, since many programs seem to be more successful if they are endorsed by the Legislature.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Rep. Stephens made a motion for the committee to approach the FACT committee about studying early childhood issues as collaborative effort, since they currently are involved in other collaborative efforts for children. The motion passed with Rep. Rowan voting in opposition and Rep. Bordeaux absent for the vote.

3. State and Local School Board Issues Requiring Legislative Review

Steve Laing, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, itemized issues which may need legislative consideration during the 2000 General Session. He identified 11 elements of overall stress and concern within public education:

1. Assessment
2. Accelerated learning programs: concurrent, gifted and talented, and AP
3. Low incident/high cost special education services
4. Transportation: special education, USDB, eligible routes
5. School construction and inspection programs
6. District performance reports/ District report cards: Activities time out of school
7. Implementation of SEP's and SEOP's
8. Professional Development
9. Highly impacted schools
10. Electronic high school; and
11. Average daily attendance and membership.

Mr. Laing emphasized the importance of clear legislative intent in enacting educational programs, since there are times when partial funding is appropriate. However, he felt it is difficult for partial or experimental program implementation to be totally successful. He said the State Office and school districts are often frustrated when they have identified a critical need and want to implement a program to meet that need, but they don't have adequate resources. He was concerned that many programs for disabled students are federally mandated, but not adequately funded and local districts are unable to create resources on their own to meet those obligations. He said education has become a federal concern, state responsibility, and district activity. He suggested the creation of a task force to examine these and other issues over the next year to propose ways to alleviate these stresses. He concurred with a suggestion that an Education Interim Committee subcommittee could perform this task.

MOTION: Rep. Gowans moved that a subcommittee or task force be established to study the concerns enumerated by Mr. Laing and then make recommendations to the Education Interim Committee. The motion passed unanimously with Representatives Keele Johnson, Brad Johnson, Bourdeaux, and Alexander absent for the vote.

Allen Lowe, President - Utah School Superintendents Association, said he gathered information, as requested by the Education Interim Committee, from the school districts regarding unfunded mandates. He agreed to make his information available to the committee in a written report. Committee members requested a copy of Mr. Laing's remarks.

4. Uniform Data Collection - Mr. Laing was supportive of the concept of draft legislation for the collection of educational data. He felt that caution must be exercised to guard against unauthorized persons having access to specific kinds of data.

Jim Wilson, Associate General Counsel, said the proposed legislation is for discussion only and not for immediate action. He reviewed the proposal. In explaining the purpose of the bill, he said data collected would be comprehensive and could be used in longitudinal studies. The data would be formatted to be accessed through the Internet.

Rep. Frandsen felt that a uniform data collection process would be important for gathering data to improve policy making. Committee members made suggestions to enhance the legislation.

5. USBA/USSA Legislative Education Recommendations - Bill Moore, Davis School District Board Member & Legislative Committee Co-chair, along with Alan Lowe, Logan School District Superintendent & Legislative Committee Co-chair, reviewed the mission statement of the Utah School Boards Association (USBA) and Utah Schools Superintendents Association (USSA) and outlined major legislative concerns and recommendations from a "Facts About Utah Schools" document.

Mr. Steven Peterson, Executive Director of USSA and Associate Director of USBA, reviewed what would be financially required within a decade to accelerate student achievement and learning to bring Utah student test scores up to the national average. Mr. Peterson noted that the percentage of the total state population enrolled in public schools has decreased. He recommended giving local school boards more flexibility in funding categories. He referred to a USSA & UABA brochure and handout for recommendations of potential sources of revenue to support their proposals. Their recommendations are as follows:

1. Make full use of the corporate franchise tax. Proposition 6 - 1996 stated that revenue not in use is to go to education;
2. Reinststate a portion of the property tax. There exists an automatic reduction of the property taxes that has reduced the tax by 50% over the past five years. If that continues, the basic rate could become nonexistent.
3. Provide for a fixed minimum basic tax rate, which would increase the state wide basic school tax rate yield;
4. Institute a soft drink tax. Using Arkansas as an example, it is estimated that for every cent taxed, \$16 million would be raised. This tax should not be a burden to anyone and would, no doubt, be passed on to the consumer; and
5. Increase bonding to finance state and higher education capital projects while preserving current revenue.

Rep. Frandsen encouraged the committee to discuss in depth its concerns with Mr. Lowe and Mr. Peterson.

6. Necessarily Existent Small School Formula Revision - Mr. Kirk Wright, Superintendent of Juab School District, Mr. Henry Jolley, Superintendent of Beaver School District, and, Mr. Pat Wilson, distributed a pamphlet, "Why Rural Schools Need a Revision in the Necessarily Existent Small School Formula?" They reviewed the results of a four-year study, as well as a study done by the Western Institute. Mr. Wright pointed out that ACT and AP scores of rural students are significantly lower than urban students. Each study proposed that these differences exist because of teaching ability, teacher knowledge, and teacher aptitude. He said major differences include the following considerations: rural teachers have four or more different preparations per day; many teacher instruct in class subjects outside their own expertise; and, rural teacher salaries are well below urban and national averages. Mr. Wright emphasized the distance teachers must travel to increase their skills and knowledge is a problem. He noted the existing equity gap and said 70 to 75 percent of rural teachers are ill-prepared. He said the number of media specialists and counselors in rural schools is inadequate.

Mr. Pat Wilson, Business Administrator, Sevier School District reviewed costs and revenues per student in necessarily existent small schools from the "Small Schools Financial

Study.” He emphasized the use of a regressionary formula utilized with necessarily existent small schools.

MOTION: Rep Bradley Johnson moved the committee make a recommendation to the Education Interim Appropriation Committee to review and adopt the rural school recommendations..

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Rep. Bradley Johnson made a substitute motion to secure the endorsement of the Education Interim Committee. The motion passed unanimously with Senator Hillyard and Rep. Bordeaux absent for the vote.

7. School Safety Review - Due to time restrictions, this item will be presented at next meeting

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Rep. Throckmorton moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously at 12:05 p.m.