

**MINUTES OF THE  
ENHANCEMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

Tuesday, May 21, 2002 - 9:00 a.m. - Room 129 State Capitol

**Members Present:**

Sen. Howard A. Stephenson, Senate Chair  
Rep. Matt Throckmorton, House Chair  
Sen. Millie M. Peterson  
Sen. Carlene Walker  
Sen. Bill Wright  
Rep. Marda Dillree  
Rep. Bradley T. Johnson  
Rep. Karen W. Morgan  
Rep. Gordon E. Snow  
Ms. Janet A. Cannon  
Ms. Joyce W. Richards

**Members Absent:**

Sen. Dave L. Gladwell  
Sen. Paula F. Julander  
Rep. Margaret Dayton  
Rep. Patricia W. Jones

**Staff Present:**

Ms. Constance C. Steffen, Research Analyst  
Mr. Dee S Larsen, Associate General Counsel  
Ms. Wendy L. Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

**Note:** A list of others present and a copy of materials can be found at <http://www.image.le.state.ut.us/imaging/history.asp> or by contacting the committee secretary, Wendy Bangerter, at 538-1032.

**1. Call To Order**

Sen. Stephenson called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. He announced that Sen. Julander, Rep. Dayton, and Rep. Jones had asked to be excused from the meeting.

**MOTION:** Sen. Peterson moved to approve the April 30, 2002 minutes.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** Ms. Cannon moved to correct and amend the minutes. She asked that the minutes show her present for the adjournment motion. She also requested that the minutes reflect Superintendent Laing's report that the USOE (Utah State Office of Education) staff was reduced by 15 positions due to budget cuts and that the "Efficiency and Effectiveness Study of the Utah State Office of Education" found the USOE to be understaffed by two positions. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Morgan absent for the vote.

**2. Utah State Office of Education**

Ms. Steffen explained that the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) administers rules and policies of the State Board of Education and executes many of the duties and responsibilities assigned to the State Board of Education in law. Despite its significant role in education in the state, the USOE is not created in Utah law and there are very few references to the Office in law. She distributed a table on the governance of public education in Utah which shows the general powers and duties assigned to the Legislature, the State Board of Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. She noted that the USOE acts as staff to the State Board of Education and operates under the supervision of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Sen. Stephenson noted the breadth of services performed by the USOE and posed the question, "Should the Legislature appropriate funds to the USOE to perform services for school districts, or should the money be appropriated to school districts and let them contract either with the USOE or other entities for the services they need?" Supt. Steven Laing, USOE, stated that the USOE does not perform any function that is not in accordance with a direct state or federal mandate. He explained that some functions have shifted from the state to local districts since some larger districts often have the resources to fill their needs, e.g., curriculum development and implementation. Smaller districts rely on state curriculum specialists for training in implementing the core curriculum. Supt. Laing clarified that the regional service centers are collaborative entities organized by school districts. Their funding flows through the USOE.

Mr. Steve Peterson, Utah School Boards Association and Utah School Superintendents Association, expressed concern that allowing districts to contract individually for services may not be advantageous for the smaller districts, since they are so dependent on the USOE.

### **3. Mandates on Schools and School Districts**

The Task Force decided to continue its review of mandates on schools and school districts to determine whether additional mandates should be eliminated or modified and to solicit the input of educators on which mandates to review.

### **4. Other Business**

The Task Force discussed the 2002 tentative meeting schedule and made revisions. All meetings will be held in Room 129 of the State Capitol Building at 9:00 a.m. The dates are as follows: June 18, July 16, August 27, September 10, October 22, and November 19.

**MOTION:** Sen. Peterson moved to adopt the revised 2002 tentative meeting schedule for the Task Force. The motion passed unanimously.

### **5. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Sen. Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Chair Stephenson adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.