

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

Tuesday, August 27, 2002– 1:00 p.m. – Room 129 State Capitol

Members Present:

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

Members Absent:

Sen. Dave L. Gladwell

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. Committee Business

Sen. Stephenson called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

MOTION: Sen. Peterson moved to approve the minutes of July 16, 2002. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Julander absent for the vote.

2. On-line Administration of U-PASS Tests

Mr. Randy Merrill, assistant superintendent, Provo School District, and Mr. Barry Newbold, superintendent, Jordan School District, reported on their experiences piloting on-line administration of U-PASS (Utah Performance Assessment System for Students) and formative tests. The districts have developed electronic core assessments that are administered several times during the school year. The benefits of the formative assessments include the following: 1) individual student results and group results are provided; 2) a new student is given a benchmark where he or she should begin work; 3) the results are immediately available for teachers' use in lesson design; and 4) the practice tests help to prepare students for the end-of-level testing. The districts would like to expand on-line formative assessment, but it is expensive, and they will need help in the future to continue it. The summative testing will be paid for by the USOE (Utah State Office of Education) from the savings achieved by replacing paper testing.

Dr. Barbara Lawrence, USOE, stated the office is in a position to offer all schools on-line U-PASS testing this year. She stated that they also have a federal grant to provide some schools with hardware

upgrades. She explained that, by law, the Legislature is responsible to offer comparable on-line testing. She also explained there is an assessment of on-line testing vs. paper-pencil testing built into the testing system. Dr. Lawrence said the USOE is supportive of formative systems developed and used in schools. She clarified that there is 3-week window for assessment at the end of the school year, with some tests being administered earlier. She commented that Utah turns test results around faster than any other state, and that Utah is one of the few states with assessments approved under the new "No Child Left Behind" federal program.

MOTION: Sen. Walker moved to have the USOE and those involved in piloting the on-line assessments report to the Education Interim Committee in July 2003. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Wright absent for the vote and Rep. Jones voting in opposition.

Mr. David Hansen, a teacher at Springville Jr. High School, stated he has developed and administered electronic tests for seven years. He agreed that time is saved and lot of good is accomplished by doing so.

3. School Trust Lands Monies

Ms. Steffen explained that the Administrative Rules Committee asked the Task Force to consider whether rules and statutes on the use of school trust lands monies create more procedural requirements than are necessary. She reviewed the application and reporting requirements in statute for the use of school trust lands monies. She also reviewed the on-line application and reporting form for school trust lands monies that was developed by the USOE. Ms. Steffen reported that several educators have complained that the application and reporting procedures are burdensome.

Mr. Merrill Muir, Utah School Boards Association, stated there have been many positive effects from the use of the trust lands money, and they do not feel the reporting rules are burdensome. He reviewed ways that some schools have used the money.

Ms. Margaret Bird, USOE, noted that this is a paperless program and is assessable to anyone on the Internet.

Supt. Newbold stated there are various programs that require a plan to be developed and reported. He suggested that a single, comprehensive school improvement plan be developed that would include required information for various plans, including plans for the use of school trust lands monies.

Ms. Paula Plant, USOE and school community council member, cautioned about discouraging parents to serve on school community councils if the work gets too complicated.

Mr. Carl Boyington, executive director, Utah Association of Secondary School Principals, agreed with the idea of developing one report that would include all required plans.

Ms. Bonnie Palmer, Utah School Boards Association and Nebo School District, explained that the school trust lands application was very cumbersome in the beginning resulting in many complaints. She stated that the association and others have worked hard to streamline the application.

Ms. Bonnie Morgan, USOE, noted there are requirements for plans for block grants, professional development, student interventions, Title I, and now No Child Left Behind. For efficiency sake, she spoke in favor of developing one plan that would include all of those areas of need. She noted the critical role the school community council would play in developing that all-inclusive plan.

MOTION: Rep. Dillree moved to encourage the USOE to work with the education associations to develop a unified school improvement plan and report that would include information for all funding sources and reports, retain the integrity of each report and plan, as well as maintaining the involvement and input of the school community council. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Scheduling of Criterion-referenced Tests under U-PASS

Ms. Maggie Cummings, teacher, Jordan School District, expressed the concerns of many teachers about the timing of the criterion-referenced tests. She explained that by administering the test 8-10 weeks before the end of the school year, the time for teaching the core curriculum has to be reduced. It also leaves several weeks of school after the testing with nothing to teach. She suggested allowing the tests to be given closer to the end of the school year, allowing teachers to grade them to meet the end-of-year reporting deadline, and sending the forms to the USOE for official results that would be available at the beginning of school in September.

Dr. Lawrence responded explaining the process taken to set testing dates and what state and federal requirements the USOE has to meet. She also expressed concern for maintaining the integrity of the assessments.

5. Other Items / Adjourn

Future meetings of the Task Force were scheduled as follows: September 10, 2002, October 22, 2002, and November 19, 2002. All meetings are scheduled at 9:00 a.m. in Room 129.

MOTION: Sen. Wright moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Julander, Sen. Peterson, Rep. Dayton, Rep. Dillree, Rep. Jones, Rep. Morgan, Rep. Snow, Ms. Cannon, and Ms. Richards absent for the vote.

Chair Stephenson adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.