

(Draft - Awaiting Formal Approval)

**MINUTES OF THE  
EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 – 8:30 a.m. – Room 445 State Capitol

**Members Present:**

Sen. Howard A. Stephenson, Senate Chair  
Rep. Bill Wright, House Chair  
Sen. Lyle W. Hillyard  
Sen. Karen W. Morgan  
Sen. Wayne L. Niederhauser  
Sen. Aaron Osmond  
Sen. Jerry W. Stevenson  
Sen. Daniel W. Thatcher  
Rep. Johnny Anderson  
Rep. Patrice M. Arent  
Rep. Steven Eliason  
Rep. Gregory H. Hughes  
Rep. John G. Mathis  
Rep. Kay L. McIff  
Rep. Carol Spackman Moss  
Rep. Merlynn T. Newbold

Rep. Jim Nielson  
Rep. Val L. Peterson  
Rep. Marie H. Poulson  
Rep. Kenneth W. Sumsion

**Member Absent:**

Rep. LaVar Christensen

**Staff Present:**

Ms. Allison M. Nicholson, Policy Analyst  
Ms. Constance C. Steffen, Policy Analyst  
Ms. Gretchen C. Lee, Associate General Counsel  
Ms. Debra Hale, Legislative Secretary

**Note:** A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at [www.le.utah.gov](http://www.le.utah.gov).

**1. Committee Business**

Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. Rep. Christensen was excused from the meeting.

**MOTION:** Rep. Arent moved to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2011 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Niederhauser, Sen. Stephenson, Rep. Anderson, Rep. Eliason, Rep. Hughes, Rep. Mathis, and Rep. Nielson were absent for the vote.

**2. Online Education**

Rep. Stephen Handy reported that he recently held a briefing with the Davis School District regarding its online program and invited the school district representatives to report to the Committee on their online course offerings and implementation of 2011 General Session S.B. 65, "Statewide Online Education Program" (SOEP).

Ms. Sue Winkler, Online Programs Coordinator; and Dr. Patty Brown, Curriculum Director; Davis School District (DSD), described DSD's efforts to provide diverse learning opportunities for all students, including their online program, Utah Students Connect. They place an emphasis on personal connection with teachers and writing curriculum aligned with state and district standards. In implementing the SOEP, Ms. Winkler reported that DSD formed a consortium with six other school districts (Granite, Jordan, Murray, Nebo, Park City, and Tooele) to share teachers and curriculum, and allow students to take courses in any district in the consortium. Ms. Winkler and Dr. Brown expressed concerns with low rates of completion in courses that their students take from outside providers and the funding formula for the SOEP.

Ms. Laura Belnap, Director, Washington Online School Utah (WOSU), informed the Committee that WOSU implements the SOEP in its full- and part-time high schools, online credit recovery, and summer school. She addressed some concerns with the SOEP so far, including transferring and administering forms in a timely manner with district and state administration, and misinformation given to students. Ms. Belnap suggested some changes to the SOEP, including extending blended learning opportunities to junior high students, tiering costs for different types of classes and teachers, and the ability to use a variety of providers.

Mr. Mark Holley, Director of Business Operations, Provo eSchool, noted that the SOEP provided an incentive for their board of education to expand their school. Mr. Holley expressed some challenges of the SOEP, including the funding formula, improvement of the course credit acknowledgment, confusion in the market as to who is eligible for what, completion rate for students, and an effective screening program to determine which students are and are not a fit for the program.

Ms. DeLaina Tonks, Director, Open High School of Utah, stated that the SOEP allows students to be in control and allows them to look at all the options available to choose the one that best meets their needs. She gave some background information on her school, including that their teachers are highly qualified, the curriculum is open-source and aligned to the state standards, and students have a high completion rate.

Mr. Ken Grover, Utah Education Online Consortium, described the consortium, which provides leadership back-end support for IT and online courses for over 14 school districts (many rural) and 35 schools, including charter schools. The consortium does not create curriculum, but uses both proprietary and open-source materials.

### **3. Public Education Employment Reform**

Sen. Osmond continued his presentation, which he began in the October interim meeting, "Public Education Employment Reform Act," by discussing core components, including the importance of reinforcing local control, addressing the idea that it is difficult to remove poor teachers and public employees' expectation of continued employment, and the implementation of a pay for performance of teachers in some meaningful way. Sen. Osmond stated that he has extensively communicated with public education employees by holding public meetings throughout the state, posting an education blog and viewing its responses, reading emails, and sharing the feedback with the Committee.

### **4. Report: Performance-based Compensation Pilot Program**

Dr. Kristin Lee Swenson, Research Associate, Utah Education Policy Center (UEPC), University of Utah, discussed a report on a two-year pilot program created and funded by the Legislature in 2009 to provide compensation to elementary school classroom-related staff based on student learning gains, instructional quality, and parent, student, or community satisfaction. She summarized the report in her visual presentation, "Performance-Based Compensation Pilot Program Evaluation," and also distributed and discussed "Performance-Based Compensation Pilot Program Evaluation - 2011."

Dr. Swenson noted that each pilot program school developed its own program, which contributed to faculty buy-in and ownership of the program, but made comparing the effectiveness or impact of the plans across schools difficult. The UEPC evaluated the programs by holding focus groups, conducting

individual interviews, and performing statistical analyses of student test scores. In addition to reporting various findings related to planning, implementation, student achievement, instructional quality, and parent satisfaction at the different schools, UEPC suggested factors to consider in the future when designing pay-for-performance programs.

Mr. Randy Rafael, Senior Research Associate, UEPC, also answered questions regarding financial aspects of the program, including the amounts of bonuses.

### **5. Report: School Grading System**

Dr. Judy Park, Associate Superintendent, Utah State Board of Education, distributed and discussed a copy of her presentation "Grading Schools." She discussed the findings and provided recommendations from the group that was convened to develop a system to grade schools. The school grading system encompasses student growth, achievement, and readiness. Dr. Park recommended that the system incorporate a "growth to proficiency" measure for the growth component.

### **6. Reports**

Chair Wright reminded committee members that the following reports were provided to them before the meeting for their review, and noted that the authoring agencies were available to answer any questions.

- A. Students in Grades 1 - 3 Reading below Grade Level
- B. K-3 Reading Program Expenditures
- C. UPSTART
- D. Engineering Initiative
- E. Career and Technical Education

Dr. Larry Shumway, State Superintendent, commented on the success of Utah's reading improvement programs, noting increases in proficiency rates.

### **7. Other Items/Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Rep. Mathis moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Chair Stephenson, Sen. Hillyard, Sen. Niederhauser, Sen. Thatcher, Rep. Eliason, and Rep. Sumsion absent for the vote.

Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.