

**MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, April 18, 2007 – 9:00 a.m. – Room W135 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Howard A. Stephenson, Senate Chair
Sen. Margaret Dayton, Senate Vice Chair
Rep. Gregory H. Hughes, House Chair
Sen. Curtis S. Bramble
Sen. Lyle W. Hillyard
Sen. Patricia W. Jones
Sen. Mark B. Madsen
Sen. Ross I. Romero
Rep. Sylvia S. Andersen
Rep. Brad L. Dee
Rep. Craig A. Frank
Rep. James R. Gowans
Rep. Kory M. Holdaway
Rep. Bradley G. Last
Rep. Rebecca D. Lockhart
Rep. Carol Spackman Moss

Rep. Merlynn T. Newbold
Rep. Patrick L. Painter
Rep. LaWanna "Lou" Shurtliff
Rep. Kenneth W. Sumsion
Rep. Mark A. Wheatley

Members Absent:

Rep. Stephen H. Urquhart

Staff Present:

Ms. Constance C. Steffen, Policy Analyst
Mr. Phillip V. Dean, Policy Analyst
Mr. Dee S Larsen, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Glenda S. Whitney, 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.

1. Committee Business

Sen. Stephenson called the meeting to order at 9:22 a.m.

MOTION: Sen. Dayton moved to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2006 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Bramble, Rep. Dee, and Rep. Holdaway were absent for the vote.

Ms. Steffen distributed and reviewed the study priorities assigned to the Education Interim Committee by the Legislative Management Committee.

Chair Stephenson asked staff to prepare a letter to Legislative Management Committee requesting permission for members of the Education Interim Committee to participate in the joint meeting with the State Board of Regents and State Board of Education.

Sen. Dayton requested a report be presented to the Education Interim Committee on the new math curriculum.

2. Education Legislation Enacted in the 2007 General Session

Ms. Steffen and Mr. Larsen briefly reviewed a report, "Education Bills Passed in the 2007 General Session," which was distributed in the mailing packet. Mr. Larsen also distributed a handout, "Bagels and Briefings, H.B. 148, "Education Vouchers," and the Referendum Process."

3. Professional Excellence Programs

Chair Stephenson explained that in the 2007 General Session, Rep. Ronda Menlove introduced H.B. 381, "Professional Excellence Programs," which created or modified various programs to improve the quality of instruction and student achievement. The bill incorporated a portion of the ProExcel (Professional Excellence) proposal that was developed under the direction of the State Board of Education.

Mr. Ray Timothy, Deputy Superintendent, USOE (Utah State Office of Education), distributed a copy and presented a slide presentation, "Professional Excellence, Utah Educator Quality." He explained that ProExcel is the educator quality initiative adopted by the State Board of Education at the September 8, 2006 meeting. ProExcel is designed to increase student achievement by addressing three major areas: a) Educational Leadership, b) Teacher Retention, and c) Professional Compensation.

Rep. Newbold asked to hear from the State Board of Education on initiatives to improve administrator quality.

Sen. Jones asked for data on current teacher salary schedules in Utah. Along with this request, Rep. Lockhart asked for data on teachers' benefit packages in Utah and surrounding states.

Mr. Timothy responded to questions and noted he would follow up on the requests from the Committee.

Rep. Menlove presented a slide presentation, "ProExcel Comprehensive Reform." She explained that the ProExcel legislation: a) focuses on education reform to promote educator professional excellence, b) supports comprehensive system changes, c) builds a foundation to support educator excellence, and d) takes the first steps in changing how to compensate educators. She presented an overview of the ProExcel Comprehensive Reform program. A copy of her presentation was mailed to the Committee.

Chair Stephenson noted that there will be further discussion on this issue during the interim.

4. Student Achievement and Management Data System

Chair Stephenson noted that H.B. 160, "Minimum School Program Budget Amendments," enacted in the 2007 General Session, directs the State Board of Education to issue a request for proposals for an electronic student achievement and management data system and authorizes the Board to spend up to \$3,000,000 to fund a proposal.

Ms. Judy Park, Associate Superintendent, USOE, reported on the Board's process for issuing the request for proposals and awarding a contract. She said USOE is excited to move forward with having a data tool and putting it in place. She noted that a committee has been put together to look at data tools and determine what is the best fit for Utah. She explained that the committee will be meeting April 19 and 20, 2007 to determine the process, time line, and data tools to measure student achievement.

5. Evaluation of Instructional Materials

Chair Stephenson noted that H.B. 364, "Public School Textbook Evaluation," enacted in the 2007 General Session, prohibits a school district from purchasing certain instructional materials unless the materials

have been evaluated by an independent party for alignment with the core curriculum and requires the alignment evaluation to be made available on a website at no charge.

Sen. Dayton and Sen. Bramble asked for clarification on the process.

Supt. Patti Harrington, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, responded to the Senators' questions. She explained that the State Board of Education is not going to do evaluations in-house, that the legislation is clear that the publishers contract with an outside vendor to have the evaluations done. She said it is the Board's job to establish criteria for the evaluation, both in terms of form and substance.

Mr. Timothy discussed the time line and implementation of the textbook evaluation requirements. He said a draft rule will be presented to the State Board of Education in the May 3, 2007 meeting. He said the rule reinforces the requirements of school districts to only purchase items that have gone through the evaluation system and the mapping. He said they are working on a list of approved independent vendors and that list will be available for publishers by June 1, 2007.

Chair Stephenson expressed a desire that the State Board of Education approve the evaluators.

Mr. Paul Hoffmann, President, Pro Cert Labs, said Pro Cert is encouraged by Supt. Harrington's comments and indicated that he had not heard from the USOE for a couple of months. He said the Utah core curriculum is one of the best in the Nation. He discussed the benefits of having each classroom teacher understand the core curriculum.

6. Other Items / Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Painter moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Hillyard, Rep. Dee, Rep. Gowans, Rep. Holdaway, Rep. Last, and Rep. Shurtliff absent for the vote.

Chair Stephenson adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.