

**MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, August 20, 2008 – 3:07 p.m. – Room C445 State Capitol

Members Present:

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

Rep. LaWanna "Lou" Shurtliff
Rep. Kenneth W. Sumsion
Rep. Stephen H. Urquhart
Rep. Mark A. Wheatley

Members Absent:

Sen. Curtis S. Bramble
Rep. Brad L. Dee
Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove

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

Chair Dayton called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m.

MOTION: Rep. Urquhart moved to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Hillyard, Rep. Hughes, and Rep. Morley were absent for the vote.

2. Computer-Adaptive Testing

Chair Dayton noted that the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Assessment has proposed a modification of the Utah Performance Assessment System for Students (U-PASS) to include computer-adaptive testing in reading, math, and science.

Superintendent Patti Harrington, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, distributed a handout and reviewed the recommendations, "Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Assessment Tentative Recommendations for U-Pass Reform."

3. Federal Education Issues

Congressman Rob Bishop distributed and reviewed a handout, "Percent of State Expenditures Allocated to Education 2003." He discussed proposed federal legislation to mitigate the impact of federal land ownership in western states and asked for Utah legislative support for the measure. He also addressed committee members' questions on education issues.

4. Consider Proposed Legislation Reauthorizing a Grant Program for Teachers

Rep. Kory Holdaway and Sen. Mark Madsen distributed and reviewed proposed draft legislation, "Grants for Licensed Teachers Amendments - I" and "Grants for Licensed Teachers Amendments." The proposed legislation is to reauthorize and modify a program that provides grants to minimize teachers' out-of-pocket expenses for advanced-level certification programs and to take tests to meet highly qualified teacher standards.

MOTION: Rep. Urquhart moved to continue to the next agenda item and revisit this agenda item at the next committee meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Morley absent for the vote.

5. Property Tax and School Funding in Utah

This agenda item was not discussed.

6. Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB)

Mr. Dean noted that, in September, the Committee will visit the USDB.

Mr. Karl Wilson, Utah State Office of Education (USOE), distributed a handout, "Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Legislative Workgroup." He noted a working group has proposed changes in statute and State Board of Education rule relating to the USDB and has held public hearings on the proposed changes. He gave background information, addressed key questions, and reviewed preliminary recommendations from the USDB legislative workgroup.

Mr. Ron Gardner, President, National Federation of the Blind of Utah, distributed a handout, "Outline for Comments to Education Interim Committee." He addressed concerns regarding USDB in four areas: 1) teaching braille; 2) the budget; 3) the proposed legislation; and 4) the USDB structure.

Ms. Cheralyn Creer, National Federation of the Blind of Utah and Utah Parents of Blind Children, indicated the system is perceived to be in compliance, but the system is broken and needs to be overhauled.

7. Other Items / Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Hughes moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Hillyard, Rep. Holdaway, Rep. Last, Rep. Lockhart, and Rep. Morley absent for the vote.

Chair Dayton adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.