

**MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

Wednesday, May 22, 2013 – 9:00 a.m. – Room 210 Senate Building

Members Present:

President Wayne L. Niederhauser, Chair
Speaker Rebecca D. Lockhart, Chair
Sen. Patricia W. Jones
Sen. Aaron Osmond
Sen. Stuart C. Reid
Sen. Howard A. Stephenson
Sen. Stephen H. Urquhart
Rep. Jack R. Draxler
Rep. Francis D. Gibson
Rep. Keith Grover
Rep. Bradley G. Last
Rep. Carol Spackman Moss

Rep. Jennifer M. Seelig

Members Absent:

Sen. Gene Davis

Staff Present:

Ms. Allison M. Nicholson, Policy Analyst
Ms. Constance C. Steffen, Policy Analyst
Ms. Angela Oakes Stallings, 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.

1. Task force business

Chair Niederhauser called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. Sen. Davis was excused from the meeting.

Chair Niederhauser asked the task force members and staff to introduce themselves. He and Speaker Lockhart then addressed their goals and objectives for the task force.

2. Overview of Education Data

A. Public Education Demographic and Outcome Data

Ms. Steffen addressed details of her visual presentation and handout “Indicators of Utah Student Achievement” by discussing information on Utah student demographics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores and performance levels, achievement levels on Utah’s Criterion Reference Tests, ACT scores and college readiness benchmarks, Advanced Placement test scores, and four-year cohort graduation rates.

B. Public Education Funding and Fiscal Data

Ms. Steffen reviewed her visual presentation and handout “How Utah Public Schools are Funded” by addressing constitutional and statutory references, revenue sources, major educational program appropriations, certain levies, and charter school funding.

Mr. Jonathan Ball, Director, Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst (LFA), and Dr. Thomas Young, Economist, LFA, reviewed their visual presentation and handout, “Education – Dollars & Comparisons,” by detailing certain demographic and economic characteristics for Utah’s population compared to the other states, revenues and expenditures per student in Utah compared to the other states, and academic achievement data for Utah compared to the other states. They also presented and explained regression analyses they had prepared comparing each state’s NAEP scores against various demographic and economic characteristics discussed earlier in the presentation and comparing each state’s total revenue per student against graduation rate and scores on college entrance exams. Mr. Ball then discussed potential

conclusions that may be inferred from the data and what additional factors could be added to their analyses.

C. Higher Education Demographic and Outcome Data

Ms. Nicholson described her visual presentation and handout “Higher Education in Utah” and discussed the extent to which Utah students are prepared for higher education and their need for remediation, Utah students’ enrollment and retention in post-secondary education, retention and completion rates for various higher education institutions in Utah, potential reasons contributing to students not completing higher education, the average time and the number of credits students take to complete a degree in the Utah System of Higher Education, and potential policy considerations or next steps for the task force.

— **Recess for lunch** —

D. Higher Education Funding and Fiscal Data

Mr. Spencer Pratt, Fiscal Manager, LFA, continued with the visual presentation “Education Dollars and Comparisons” and discussed Utah’s post-secondary institutions’ enrollment and funding history and how Utah post-secondary institutions compare with other states in tuition, fees, revenue per student, certain measures of state support per student, and degree production. He also discussed various higher education outcomes in Utah including graduation and retention rates, degrees and certificates awarded, and potential topics for further task force discussion.

3. Utah Data Alliance

Dr. Judy Park, Cochair, Utah Data Alliance (UDA) Governing Board, briefly discussed the history of the state longitudinal data system and how it was funded. She discussed the ability of the UDA to assist in seeing how students perform as they leave the K-12 system and move on to higher education and careers.

Dr. John Brandt, Grant Manager, UDA, in his visual presentation “Utah Data Alliance – Looking Back, Moving Forward” described the UDA as a multi-agency effort with many data elements that enable the examination of education progress and are capable of measuring program success and identifying better programs and policies. Dr. Brandt stated that they have the opportunity to use the agency data, as it is updated regularly.

Dr. Park informed the task force that a federal grant was to end this year, but funding has been extended for one more year.

4. Post-secondary Education Attainment Goal: 66% by 2020

Mr. Mark Bouchard, Chair, Prosperity 2020, described Prosperity 2020 as a business-led organization involving Utah chambers of commerce, business organizations, and companies with a focus on improving Utah’s education system. He explained that the people involved in the organization believe in measuring outcomes and calling on experts to guide them and its mission is to organize a collaborative environment and work in partnership with education leadership, industry, the governor, and state legislators.

Dr. Richard Kendell, former commissioner of higher education, professor, University of Utah, and adviser to Prosperity 2020, listed two issues that dominate the Prosperity 2020 movement’s discussion: 1)

develop Utah's workforce; and 2) create a more robust economy, of which educational achievements are key to meet these goals. He described the movement's goal and general consensus of what Utah's workforce will look like in 2020, which is to ensure 66% of the adult population will attain a degree, certificate, or other credentials to advance them in the workforce, and to reach out to parties affected in a collaborative effort to ensure their strategies make sense for the future.

Dr. Martell Menlove, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, expressed his active support of Prosperity 2020's goals in areas for which the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) is responsible.

Ms. Bonnie Jean Beesley, Chair, State Board of Regents, sees the Prosperity 2020 movement as able to close the achievement gap in Utah's workforce. She expressed her support of Mr. Buhler as fully engaged and qualified to lead this effort as Commissioner of Higher Education.

Mr. David Buhler, Commissioner of Higher Education, distributed and reviewed "HigherEdUtah 2020 – 2013 Report," and described what each of the eight institutions in the Utah System of Higher Education is doing in the areas of participation, completion, and economic innovation. He stressed that Utah needs to have more students complete post-secondary education to be economically competitive. He noted that the state needs to inspire students to attain degrees and increase funding to accommodate the resulting increase in higher education needs.

Mr. Robert Brems, President, Utah College of Applied Technology (UCAT), addressed his visual presentation and handout, and referred to UCAT's 2012 Annual Report, discussing UCAT's tuition, enrollment, programs, certificates awarded, and progress toward the 66% goal. Mr. Brems commented that UCAT is actively engaged in pursuit of the 66% goal and expressed that student achievement of a UCAT certificate is an important factor in achievement of the 66% goal.

Mr. Michael Morris, Executive Vice President of Real Estate, Zions Bank, informed the task force that his institution places an importance on degrees and believes that those who have attained degrees have mastered elements that come with the job of financial modeling, technical analysis, and can handle problem solving under stress. He discussed global labor markets and the talent pool for high level employees in other countries, which may cost less than employees here.

5. Perspectives on Student Achievement

Dr. Menlove reviewed the USBE vision and mission statement, "Promises to Keep," which includes inspiring students to participate in economic and civil affairs and developing strong moral and social values. He stressed key elements he would like the task force to focus on in future meetings that will have the most impact on students in promoting high standards in instruction and assessment, including the dedication of teachers as committed, caring professionals; a safe and secure learning environment; and involvement of families, agencies, and community.

Dr. Menlove indicated that through effective legislation and adequate funding, the public education community can be properly accountable to stakeholders and parents. He said that his office looks at a balance between control and freedom, what teachers are teaching, and what is important to them to teach. Above all, he emphasized, all who are involved in assessing education factors need to ensure discussion and decisions are focused to be about what is best for students.

Ms. Debra Roberts, Chair, USBE, said that the common, relevant foundational pieces for the USBE and the task force are the same. She claimed that there are no magic bullets for addressing student

achievement, but changes in approach and concentration on individual student achievement are key factors, addressing the challenge to support high quality instruction and giving teachers the support and tools to succeed.

Dr. Tim Beagley, Chair, Utah Charter School Board, referred to his visual presentation “Utah State Charter School Board Perspective on Student Achievement.” He discussed the board’s performance framework to monitor charter schools, which includes academic performance, financial performance, and governance of each charter school. Dr. Beagley reported that charter schools understand how they will be held accountable in order to retain their charter and funding. He said that the board has set standards and given the school administrators freedom to achieve these goals. He assured the task force that the schools will meet these standards and advised against over-monitoring them. Dr. Beagley referred to a study of the competitive effects of charter schools and noted that, in many ways, the academic improvement and success of charter schools has raised public school achievement.

6. Other Items/Adjourn

Chair Niederhauser set the next task force meeting for Wednesday, June 26, 2013.

MOTION: Speaker Lockhart moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, with Sen. Osmond, Sen. Urquhart, Rep. Grover, and Rep. Last absent for the vote.

Chair Niederhauser adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.