

**MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

Friday, November 1, 2013 – 9:00 a.m. – Room 445 State Capitol

Members Present:

President Wayne L. Niederhauser, Senate Chair
Speaker Rebecca D. Lockhart, House Chair
Sen. Gene Davis
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. Bradley G. Last

Rep. Carol Spackman Moss
Rep. Jennifer M. Seelig

Members Absent:

Rep. Keith Grover

Staff Present:

Ms. Tiffany A. Stanley, 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 9:13 a.m. Rep. Grover was excused from the meeting.

MOTION: Sen. Osmond moved to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2013, meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Rep. Gibson was absent for the vote.

2. Academic Performance Standards

Sen. Stephenson gave a presentation comparing the percentage of students proficient as measured by Utah's statewide assessments and as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). He asserted that the data suggest that the rigor and cut scores of the NAEP are higher than the rigor and cut scores of the statewide assessments.

Ms. Steffen reviewed "Education Accountability Commission," a proposal of Sen. Stephenson to create the Education Accountability Commission. She explained that the commission would be responsible for establishing proficiency levels, proficiency level descriptors, and cut scores for statewide assessments and ensuring accuracy and widespread availability of data on the Utah State Office of Education Data Gateway. Sen. Stephenson addressed committee members' questions about the proposal.

Dr. Martell Menlove, Superintendent of Public Instruction, noted that the NAEP is a national test, and there may be some concern with aligning Utah's curriculum and standards with a national test.

Ms. Debra Roberts, Chair, Utah State Board of Education, explained that the NAEP and statewide assessments serve different purposes. She stated that Utah's new standards and tests are designed to

prepare students for college and careers and that the NAEP is designed to be a touchstone to compare the achievement of a state's students to the achievement of students in other states and the nation.

Mr. Kory Holdaway, Associate Director, Utah Education Association, expressed concerns with the Education Accountability Commission having the expertise to set cut scores.

3. Utah Data Alliance and Utah Futures

Sen. Stephenson gave a presentation, "Governance of Utah Futures and Utah Data Alliance," which highlighted features of Utah Futures and the Utah Data Alliance.

Ms. Stallings reviewed a handout, "Governance of the Utah Data Alliance and Utah Futures," a proposal of Sen. Stephenson that created the Utah Data Alliance Governing Board, which is responsible for the oversight and administration of the Utah Data Alliance and Utah Futures.

Mr. Nick Lange, Washington County resident and former employer, discussed the potential use of the database maintained by the Utah Data Alliance by an employer.

Mr. Holdaway commented on the proposal.

Supt. Menlove noted the proposal formalizes the Utah Data Alliance that is currently operating. He stated that additional resources beyond the \$1.8 million in the proposal may be needed to accomplish the transparency that Sen. Stephenson envisions.

MOTION: Sen. Reid moved to have Sen. Stephenson bring a bill on the governance of the Utah Data Alliance and Utah Futures to the task force at the next meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Davis and Rep. Gibson absent for the vote.

4. Discussion of Future Task Force Direction and Recommendations

Rep. Last said the state should focus on targeted initiatives that will improve performance in grade 4 reading, grade 8 math, and high school completion. To accomplish this, he suggested providing:

- 1) early childhood education focused on high risk students;
- 2) targeted professional development to improve math instruction in grades 4 - 8 and instructional software for math; and
- 3) more counseling and support for students to monitor progress to graduation and assistance in developing college and career plans.

Rep. Moss expressed concurrence with Rep. Last's suggestions. She said that there should be more emphasis on local school governance, more time for professional development and collaboration, and less testing.

Speaker Lockhart urged that professional development money be directed to schools, so schools can decide the best use of professional development resources.

Sen. Stephenson gave an example of providing local control and flexibility in professional development. He explained that Canby School District in Oregon gave \$2,000 research and development grants to teachers who then shared their research with other teachers. He urged the task force to invite the Canby School District next year to discuss the research and development initiative.

Sen. Draxler questioned what the role of the Legislature in education is and whether the Legislature can provide incentives to schools to use best practices.

Sen. Davis suggested taking a long-term view of public education, including looking at future enrollment. He urged the task force to consider funding and noted that technology is not a panacea but a tool. He also expressed that the role of education should be to teach students how to learn, not teaching to a test.

Sen. Reid said the Legislature needs to focus on:

- 1) providing funding for the inputs that the education community determines are necessary for student achievement;
- 2) identifying the desired outputs of public education; and
- 3) determining how to measure the outputs.

Sen. Reid also expressed the need to create an infrastructure to force agencies to work together to address the outside factors that affect student achievement so that a teacher isn't placed in the role of a social worker.

Sen. Osmond asked the chairs if the purpose of the task force is to create a long-term vision for what the Legislature wants to accomplish for public education, which may be used as guidance in developing and considering future legislation.

Speaker Lockhart responded that it is the chairs' intention to bring a draft document to the task force at its next meeting. She said that the document will reflect what is discussed at today's meeting and will address the principles and the factors that will lead to student success.

Rep. Moss brought up the importance of teacher mentoring, both for new teachers and struggling teachers. She noted that the Peer Assistance and Review program, which she and Sen. Osmond sponsored, includes teacher monitoring. Rep. Moss also asserted the need for funding and discussed a proposal that Colorado voters will be voting on to increase funding for education.

Rep. Last suggested that a goal would be to return to the top 10 rankings in reading, math, and high school graduation.

President Niederhauser said that the funding model for the future is funding for outcomes. He also suggested that, by providing greater flexibility, dollars can be stretched. Statutes and rules that are a distraction or constraint need to be eliminated, according to President Niederhauser.

5. Other Items/Adjourn

MOTION: Speaker Lockhart moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Jones, Sen. Reid, Sen. Urquhart, Rep. Gibson, and Rep. Seelig were absent for the vote.

Minutes of the Education Task force

November 1, 2013

Page 4

Chair Niederhauser adjourned the meeting at 11:49 a.m.