

**MINUTES OF THE
EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

Wednesday, October 29, 2014 – 1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. – Room 445 – State Capitol

Members Present:

President Wayne L. Niederhauser, Senate Chair
Speaker Rebecca D. Lockhart, House Chair
Sen. Gene Davis
Sen. Aaron Osmond
Sen. Stuart C. Reid
Sen. Howard H. Stephenson
Sen. Stephen H. Urquhart
Rep. Jack R. Draxler
Rep. Bradley G. Last
Rep. Carol Spackman Moss
Rep. Jennifer M. Seelig

Members Absent:

Sen. Patricia W. Jones
Rep. Francis D. Gibson
Rep. Keith Grover

Staff Present:

Ms. Tiffany A. Stanley, Policy Analyst
Ms. Constance C. Steffen, Policy Analyst
Ms. Allyson Goldstein, 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 1:13 p.m. Sen. Jones and Rep. Gibson were excused from the meeting.

MOTION: Rep. Draxler moved to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2014, meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Speaker Lockhart, Sen. Urquhart, and Rep. Last were absent for the vote.

2. Smart School Technology Program Evaluation

Mr. Brayden Wardrop, Vice President, Business Development, iSchool Campus, said that the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) selected iSchool Campus to perform a three-year pilot program of 1:1 technology deployment. He stated that iSchool Campus provided a comprehensive smart school solution, including wireless infrastructure, devices, software, and professional development for teachers, while taking into consideration each school's existing technology resources. Mr. Wardrop said that in 2012, the program's first year, three schools participated, and in 2013, eight schools participated. He said that iSchool prefers to deploy technology in schools during the summer; however, due to delays in selecting schools, iSchool deployed technology in the fall in both the first and second years of the program.

Mr. Kevin Passey, President, iSchool Campus, referred to a handout, "Utah Smart School Technology Program – Cost Overview," and said that iSchool's per pupil cost of \$1,265 is over three years, which is similar to the cost for a district that implements a technology program without a vendor's assistance. Regarding the program evaluation presented at the September Education Task Force meeting, Mr. Passey said that the program may be too new to cause changes in test scores. In addition, Mr. Passey said that test scores are just one measure, and that the program's effect on student engagement, which is another outcome that the evaluation measured, has been very positive.

Ms. Theresa Foxley, Managing Director, Corporate Recruitment and Business Services, Governor's Office of Economic Development, said that GOED selected the vendor and administered the funding for the Smart School Technology Program, and the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) chose the schools based on an application process. According to Ms. Foxley, GOED issued requests for proposals in 2012 and 2013 to solicit vendors for whole school technology deployment plans, and chose iSchool Campus in

both years based on the company's per pupil bid amount. Ms. Foxley noted that in the first year, three schools participated in the program at a total cost to the state of \$3 million. She said that in the second year, which required schools to provide matching funds, eight schools participated, and the state spent \$2.4 million on the program.

Dr. Sydnee Dickson, Interim Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction, said that the reasons for the program's late deployment differed in the first year and second years. She said that in the first year, USOE waited for contractual information from GOED, and in the second year, USOE faced difficulties recruiting schools to participate in the program due to the match requirement. Dr. Dickson noted that schools do not have staff on site in July, so the application process and deployment for the program should be done either in the spring or the fall. She concluded that the purchasing process, particularly for complicated acquisitions that involve USOE, GOED, and the vendor, can be onerous and time consuming. Dr. Dickson said that USOE would provide the task force with data about the program's deployment.

3. Education Modernization Initiative

Sen. Stephenson introduced the agenda item and introduced presenters to speak about effective deployment of education technologies. He also introduced draft legislation "Digital Teaching and Learning Program" (2015FL-0016/008).

Mr. Scott Drossos, Senior Vice President, Digital Partnerships, McGraw Hill Education, referred to a visual presentation, "District Digital Conversion," and booklet, "District Digital Conversion." Mr. Drossos addressed: (1) lessons learned in previous technology deployments, (2) a framework for successfully deploying education technology programs, (3) the total cost of ownership of personalized learning technology programs, and (4) Utah's proposed program. Mr. Drossos said that lessons learned include that digital conversions should accommodate all teachers and learners, devices used should have a high level of interoperability, and implementation should model programs proven effective.

In regards to the framework, Mr. Drossos said a digital conversion process has four components: (1) the digital learning environment, (2) digital teaching practices, (3) digital change management, and (4) digital access. Mr. Drossos said that districts should understand the total cost of ownership, and some costs or savings from a digital conversion are not immediately apparent. Mr. Drossos concluded that districts participating in a digital conversion should have a comprehensive plan in place and offer professional development for teachers before deploying devices.

Mr. Terry E. Shoemaker, Superintendent of Schools, Wasatch School District, said that the district began deploying personalized learning devices in schools in 2011, but soon realized that devices alone did not provide the results the district wanted. He said that, instead, the district needed a strategy and a plan to comprehensively transform teaching. Mr. Shoemaker said that districts and charter schools need the ability to look at their unique needs, but deployment should occur in a planned way.

Mr. Paul Sweat, Director, Secondary Education, Wasatch School District, referred to a visual presentation, "Digital Conversion," and said that digital conversions enable schools to provide differentiated instruction and represent a fundamental change in how schools provide education. Mr. Sweat said that the district's digital conversion program has four critical components: (1) digital curriculum, (2) job-embedded ongoing professional development, (3) 1:1 devices, and (4) digital-friendly classrooms. Mr. Sweat said that digital devices allow students to develop a deeper level of understanding

and can fundamentally redefine learning if used effectively; however, he cautioned that technology should not replace other teaching methods.

Ms. Cathy Cavanaugh, Director, Teaching and Learning, Worldwide Education, Microsoft, discussed how Microsoft partners with schools through a visual presentation, "Transforming Education with Cloud and Mobile Learning Environments." Ms. Cavanaugh said that research shows that access to technology has a positive impact on students and learning, leads to better economic indicators for communities, and has social benefits. She said Microsoft's education programs include access to software, professional development for teachers, and research on innovative teaching practices. Ms. Cavanaugh said that the Microsoft Information Technology Academy, which currently partners with Utah schools, has awarded approximately 6,000 certificates to Utah students to date. She also referred to handouts, "See what's APPening in Education," "The Economic Case for Digital Inclusion in Utah," and "Holistic Education Transformation – Empower School Leaders with a Transformation Framework."

Mr. Tony Franklin, Education Technologist, Microsoft, demonstrated Microsoft technologies that teachers can use in classrooms to enhance learning.

In response to task force member questions, Mr. Scott Kennedy, Microsoft, said that all participants in the Microsoft Information Technology Academy program have access to Microsoft Office, and all of the applications that Mr. Franklin demonstrated during his presentation are free and available to Utah schools.

Sen. Stephenson described details of draft legislation "Digital Teaching and Learning Program" and said the bill is based on the Smart School Technology Program but further focuses on content and personalized learning. He said the bill provides an incentive for schools to develop a plan, and schools receive state funding for up to one-quarter of the funding required for a digital conversion. He said the state grant will be awarded on a competitive basis and eventually be phased out. Sen. Stephenson noted that Rep. Gibson is also working on the bill and requested that the task force review the bill draft for discussion during the next task force meeting.

4. Governance: Election of Utah State Board of Education Members

Mr. Thomas R. Vaughn, Associate General Counsel, Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel, reviewed a visual presentation, "State Board of Education," and briefed the task force on a recent federal court ruling related to Utah's candidate selection process for Utah State Board of Education (USBE) members. Mr. Vaughn said that the judge ruled that Utah's process may be unconstitutional because it violates candidates' rights to free speech. Mr. Vaughn discussed the history of Utah's process for selecting members of the USBE and described options for the Legislature's consideration.

Following the briefing, the task force discussed legislative options.

5. Parent Observations on the Direction of Education in Utah

Ms. Autumn Cook, parent, said that she and Ms. Wendy Hart, parent, are concerned about the direction of education in Utah. Referring to a visual presentation, Ms. Cook said their concerns fall into four focus areas: (1) school grading and teacher accountability, (2) alignment of education with the workforce, (3) data collection, and (4) 1:1 technology. Ms. Cook said that these trends in education lead to four outcomes: (1) reduction of local control of education, (2) education as an industrial process, (3) marginalization of parents and teachers, and (4) centralization of education decision-making.

Ms. Hart said she is concerned about the amount of data schools collect about children and that parents should have more control over the data collected. She said she also has concerns about federal education reforms, and said that centralization of education policy reduces parents' abilities to be involved in local education decisions and makes schools more accountable to statewide testing than to parents.

Ms. Cook and Ms. Hart referred to three handouts in their presentation: "Paper beats computer screens," "Mental Wealth," and "A Silicon Valley School that Doesn't Compute."

6. Advanced Placement United States History Course

Ms. Alisha Jensen, parent and former teacher, offered her perspective on the redesigned Advanced Placement United States History course. She referred to a handout, "APUSH Comparison Chart," which she used to contrast the new framework with the former Advanced Placement United States History framework and Utah's United States history standard. She said that the new framework is too prescriptive, limits teacher flexibility, and offers a revisionist view of history.

Chair Niederhauser opened the floor for public comment.

Ms. JaKell Sullivan, parent, Canyons School District, said that the task force has not recognized that federal education reform has imposed a centrally planned education agenda. She also said that schools are receiving unprecedented levels of federal funding, and that new standardized testing and technology programs force teachers to teach revisionist history. She asked the task force to work with USBE to address these issues.

Mr. Wendell W. Ashby, parent, Canyons School District, said education lacks accountability, and when he tries to discuss his concerns with groups involved with education, such as teachers, local school boards, and USBE, each group says that another group is responsible for addressing his concerns. In regards to the Advanced Placement United States History framework, he suggested that Utah could develop its own method to provide college history credit to high school students.

Mr. Jared Carman, parent, said that he has worked directly with publishers that create textbooks and material for 1:1 devices who have told him that the information in the materials is politically driven. In regards to student data collection, he said that parents should have to opt in at the local level rather than opt out.

7. Other Task Force Business/Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Last moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Davis, Sen. Osmond, Sen. Stephenson, Sen. Urquhart, Rep. Moss, and Rep. Seelig were absent for the vote.

Chair Niederhauser adjourned the meeting at 5:53 p.m.