

MINUTES

2010 COMMISSION

October 2, 2009
Room 535-N—Statehouse

Members Present

Rochelle Chronister, Chairperson
Dr. Ray Daniels, Vice-chairperson
Dennis Jones
Carolyn Campbell
Emile McGill
Terry Canfield
Barb Hinton
Stephen Iliff

Members Absent

Senator Jean Kurtis Schodorf
Representative Clay Aurand
Representative Marti Crow

Staff Present

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Reagan Cussimano, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Kristen Kellems, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Kansas Department of Education
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Others Present

Scott Frank, Legislative Division of Post Audit
Tom Krebs, Kansas Association of School Boards
Dodie Wellshear, United School Administrators/Kansas
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association
Mike Reecht, K12, Inc.

Martin Hawver, Hawver Publications
Jennifer Crow, Topeka USD #501
Terry Forsyth, Kansas National Education Association
Sue Storm, Kansas State Board of Education
Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education
Shannon Bell, Little Government Relations
Doug Bowman, Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Development Services
Doug Moeckel, Kansas Association of School Boards
Tiffany Fisher, KCSR
Senator Mary Pilcher Cook

Morning Session

The meeting of the 2010 Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Chronister.

Presentation on Race to the Top Federal Funding

Dr. Alexa Posny, Commissioner of Education, Kansas State Department of Education, spoke to Commission members about Race to the Top (RTTT) federal funding for education. Dr. Posny told Commission members that almost 100 years ago, fewer than five percent of the total student population graduated from high school. Today, that number has increased to approximately 80 percent. She emphasized there is more work to be done for the remaining 20 percent of our students who do not graduate.

Dr. Posny noted that one of the biggest things is that we are no longer talking about “reforming” education, we’re talking about “transforming” education. She stated the funds for this program will only be going to 10-12 states and will be going to states who are doing the best job. Kansas is among the top 10-12 states, she added.

Dr. Posny advised Race to the Top must be applied for by the state. But, in terms of the dollars and how they come back, 50 percent of all of the money that would be given, would have to go directly to the districts. However, they must all sign a memorandum of agreement as a part of this application, and they must agree to follow the plan in terms of what they are going to do and how to spend the money. That plan must be a part of the application process.

In discussing the Race to the Top program, there are four areas that will be focused on completely and every state must do the exact same thing:

- **Standards and Assessments**
 - Participate in a consortium of states to develop a common set of K-12 standards;
 - Adopt the common set of K-12 standards by June 2010;
 - Participate in a consortium of states to implement common, high quality assessments aligned with the common set of K-12 standards; and

- Align high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new assessments.

- **Effective Teachers and Leaders**

- Allow alternative routes to certification for teachers and administrators;
- Have a high-quality plan and annual targets to:
 - Measure student growth;
 - Differentiate the effectiveness of teachers and principals using multiple rating categories;
 - Provide these data and ratings to each teacher and principal; and
 - Use this information when evaluating, annually compensating, promoting, granting tenure or dismissing.
- Increase the number and percentage of highly effective teachers and principals in high poverty schools;
- Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects (math, science, special education, English Language Learners [ELL]);
- Implement incentives and strategies in recruiting, compensating, career continuum and human resources practices;
- Have a high-quality plan and annual targets to:
 - Link student achievement data to the student's teachers and principal;
 - Link this data to the preparation programs where they were credentialed;
 - Publicly report the findings for each credentialing program that has 20 or more graduates annually;
- Use rapid-time student data to inform and guide the supports (professional development, time for planning) to:
 - Improve the effectiveness of the instruction; and
 - Continuously measure and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of these supports.

- **Data Systems**

- Ensure that the statewide longitudinal data system is used to inform and engage key stakeholders;
- Ensure that the statewide longitudinal data system supports decision-makers in the improvement of instruction; and
- Have a high-quality plan that:

- Increases the use of instructional improvement systems;
- Makes these data available and accessible to researchers.

- **Struggling Schools**

- Have the authority to intervene directly with persistently low-performing schools;
- Identify the five percent of schools or five schools (whichever is larger) that are the lowest achieving and support them by:
 - Putting in place new leadership, new staff, new governance and improved instructional programs;
 - Converting them to charter schools or contracting with educational management organizations;
 - Closing the school; and
 - Implementing a school transformation model.
- Employ a school transformation model that includes:
 - Hiring a new principal;
 - Measuring teacher and principal effectiveness;
 - Rewarding effective teachers and principals;
 - Improving recruitment, retention, and professional development;
 - Implementing comprehensive instructional reform; and
 - Extending learning time and community-oriented supports.
- Have a charter school law that does not prohibit or inhibit increasing the number of charter schools;
- Have guidelines to approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize and close charter schools based on student academic achievement;
- Ensure charter schools receive equitable funding; and
- Ensure charter schools receive facilities funding, able to share in bonds and mill levies that are the same as traditional schools.

Dr. Posny described to Commission members the many accomplishments already implemented in Kansas schools ([Attachment 1](#)).

A question and answer session followed the presentation. Commission members inquired of Dr. Posny as to what the 2010 Commission could do in support of this program. Dr. Posny advised letters of support from as many Commission members as possible would be extremely helpful.

Annual Yearly Progress

Dr. Posny and Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas State Department of Education, spoke to Commission members of the requested information on the 2009 Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) status of Kansas school districts (Attachment 2).

Mr. Dennis told Commission members there were 21 schools in Kansas in which every student made proficiency. There also were over 100 schools that had 100 percent proficiency in reading and math. There were 1,217 schools that made AYP and 172 schools that did not. There were 261 school districts that made AYP and 34 school districts that did not. Mr. Dennis told Commission members that one school district that did not make AYP missed it by two students.

Handout material was presented to Commission members entitled *Kansas Education Summary - A Snapshot of Kansas by the Numbers* (Attachment 3).

Handout material also was given to Commission members regarding average salaries of public school teachers in the United States. Kansas is ranked 38th in the nation (Attachment 4).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Presentation on Activities and Results

Bill Sailors, Director of the Center for Innovative School Leadership (CISL), gave an overview to Commission members of the activities and results of the Center for Innovative School Leadership. Mr. Sailors told Commission members the function of CISL is to conduct effectiveness and efficiency reviews for volunteer school districts. The goal of CISL is to identify best practices, cost savings, and potential effectiveness and efficiency strategies for school districts in the four protocol areas of facilities management, human resources, leadership, and teaching and learning. The identified best practices, cost saving measures, and efficiency suggestions could be utilized by other districts for self-analysis of school operations (Attachment 5).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Chairperson Chronister asked Commission members if there were any changes or additions to the minutes of August 7, 2009. Mr. Jones advised he was not present at the August 7 meeting and requested the minutes be corrected to reflect this change.

Dr. Daniels moved to accept the minutes as approved without the proposed addition from Mr. Iliff. The motion was seconded by Carolyn Campbell.

Chairperson Chronister asked for discussion on the motion. After discussion between Commission members regarding the comments submitted by Mr. Iliff and Ms. Campbell, Chairperson Chronister ruled that neither of the comments submitted would be appropriate for the minutes but that they will be included with the Commission minutes only as testimony and therefore would be attachments.

Comments from Commission member Stephen Iliff to the 2010 Commission on August 7, 2009 (Attachment 6).

Comments from Commission member Carolyn Campbell in response to Mr. Iliff's comments (Attachment 7).

The motion carried.

Afternoon Session

Chairperson Chronister advised Commission members the next meeting for the 2010 Commission would be Monday, November 9, 2009.

Proposal for Resolution of the Catastrophic Aid Issue

Bruce Givens, Legislative Chairperson for the Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators (KASEA), spoke to Commission members regarding revisions to the "catastrophic aid" formula. Mr. Givens told Commission members the group had met on several occasions to discuss catastrophic aid and the complexity of the issues associated with this concept.

Mr. Givens indicated each KASEA region has been requested to vote on the proposed revisions to KSA 72-983:

- Everywhere the phrase "in excess of \$25,000" appears in the statute, replace it with "**two times the average cost of a full-time special education student of the preceding year**";
- Add language that would require the district to **subtract any state revenue** tied specifically to the resources provided in the application (excluding any revenues associated with Medicaid);
- Add a limit to the amount of appropriations that districts can receive *via* this statute that would be one-half of one percent of the state's total special education expenditures of the previous year;
- Add language that any funds left unapplied for shall be applied to the state's special education fund for all schools;
- Refer to this type of funding as Extraordinary Cost rather than "catastrophic"; and
- The revisions to KSA 72-983 should be enacted for the 2009-2010 school year (Attachments 8 and 9).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Summary of School Districts' Actions to Increase Efficiency

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department, gave an overview to Commission members of recent surveys and studies conducted by various entities. This study consisted of cost-cutting or efficiency measures being taken by Kansas school districts. Ms. Wenger told Commission members that as might be expected, the largest cost savings have come from elimination of staff. It should be noted that professional development and new teacher orientation and induction have been cut in many districts when recent studies indicate these are areas needed the most for the best outcomes.

Ms. Wenger told Commission members the Standard & Poor's Efficiency Study makes the point that one of the most important "investments" a school district can make is in good professional development. The Study describes how this investment "optimizes returns (*i.e.*, student achievement) on resources."

Ms. Wenger also told Commission members that while comparing the cost-cutting and efficiency measures with the items included in the performance audit entitled "*K-12 Education: School District Efficiency Audits*" as examples of things districts could do to reduce various costs, it was found that the majority have been done by at least one school district, and in all likelihood several districts (Attachment 10).

A question and answer session followed the presentation

Possible Topics for Inclusion in the Final Report

Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department, gave an overview of topics discussed during the 2009 Commission meetings. Commission members were told this information could be used when considering topics to include in the final report. Commission members also received a Summary of 2010 Commission Recommendations to the Legislature from 2006-2009 and the statutory charge of the 2010 Commission (Attachments 11 and 12).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Status of 2010 Commission

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, spoke to Commission members regarding the status of the 2010 Commission. Ms. Kiernan told Commission members the 2010 Commission expires on December 31, 2010, unless the 2010 Legislature acts to extend its existence (Attachment 13).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Performance Audit Update

Scott Frank, Kansas Legislative Division of Post Audit, summarized for Commission members the Legislative Post Audit summary of school district performance audits currently under way or approved (Attachment 14).

Chairperson Chronister announced the next meeting for the 2010 Commission will be November 9, 2009. The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Prepared by Janet Henning
Edited by Martha Dorsey

Approved by Commission on:

November 9, 2009
Date