

MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

August 13, 2008

Room 783—Docking State Office Building

Members Present

Representative Deena Horst, Chairperson
Senator Jean Kurtis Schodorf, Vice-Chairperson
Senator Marci Francisco
Senator Roger Pine
Representative Barbara Ballard
Representative Steve Huebert
Representative Eber Phelps
Representative Valdenia Winn

Absent

Senator Ruth Teichman
Senator John Vratil
Representative Owen Donohoe
Representative JoAnn Pottorff

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
Dale Dennis, Kansas State Department of Education
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Others Present

Rita C. Cook, Smoky Hills Education Service Center
Dr. Andy Tompkins, Pittsburg State University
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Larry Berg, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees
Dodie Wellshear, USA/Kansas
Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education
Cindy D'Ercole, Kansas Association of Counties

John Dougherty, Emporia State University
Pamela Coleman, Kansas State Department of Education
Susan Helbert, Kansas State Department of Education
Judith Hayes, Wichita State University
Sharon Torio, Wichita State University
Dr. Debbie Mercer, Fort Hays State University
Rozanne Sparks, Pittsburg State University
Marilyn Rhinehart, Johnson County Community College
Leann Ellis, Butler Community College
Richard Samanigo, Kearny & Associates
Susanne Wikle, Kansas Action for Children
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association
Dick Carter, Johnson County Community College
Stuart Little, Shawnee Mission USD 512
Bob Vancrum, Blue Valley USD
Mike Reece, K-12, Inc.

Morning Session

The meeting of the Legislative Educational Planning Committee (LEPC) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairperson Horst.

Chairperson Horst welcomed Committee members and advised Representative Clay Aurand had been placed on another committee and that she would be chairing the LEPC committee. She also advised that Representative Owen Donohoe would be replacing Representative Aurand.

Sharon Wenger introduced Reagan Cussimano, a Fiscal Analyst with the Kansas Legislative Research Department who has replaced Michele Alishahi.

Summary of Legislative and Other Activities in Recent Years to Recruit and Retain Teachers

Martha Dorsey, Legislative Research Department, reported to Committee members on the House Education Subcommittee on Alternative Teacher Licensure to the House Education Committee. The Subcommittee was established to consider the subject of alternative teacher licensure as a means to address the teacher shortage in Kansas, after holding hearings on three 2008 bills that dealt with the issue (HB 2842, HB 2874, and HB 2903). After receiving background information from the Department of Education, Legislative Division of Post Audit, Kansas Board of Regents, and various school officials, the Subcommittee proposed the adoption of a resolution by the full House Committee on Education addressing the issues related to alternative teacher licensure (Attachment 1).

Teacher Training in Kansas

Dr. Andy Tompkins, Dean of the College of Education, Pittsburg State University, spoke to Committee members on teacher preparation in Kansas with a focus on alternative licensing. Dr. Tompkins advised there has been concern expressed about a shortage of teachers in selected fields in Kansas. Most often mentioned are mathematics, science, and special education. This problem

is compounded by a large number of teachers now eligible for retirement (approximately 35 percent) and the attrition of teachers early in their careers (approximately 42 percent in the first seven years).

Dr. Tompkins stated one of the most discussed solutions to this shortage is alternative licensing. Kansas public higher education institutions have a rich history of cooperation in the preparation of educators and work closely with the Kansas State Department of Education in the development of standards and regulations. Because of these relationships, alternative options for teacher licensure have been offered in Kansas since the early 1990s.

The higher education institutions in Kansas are committed to meeting the challenge of the current times by continuing to collaborate with a broad group of stakeholders and provide quality programs to ensure that each child has the opportunity to learn from a highly qualified teacher ([Attachment 2](#)).

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.

Teacher Scholarships (and Other Service Scholarships)

Diane Lindeman, Director of Student Financial Assistance, Kansas Board of Regents, addressed Committee members and gave an overview of programs and funding for the 2008 fiscal year.

Ms. Lindeman told Committee members of the student financial assistance mission statement which states that financial aid should be provided to all qualified students in the State of Kansas to ensure access to educational opportunities. Financial assistance provided by the state must be viewed as a critical component of the larger partnership created to develop a viable system of higher education within the State of Kansas. Other members of the partnership should include, but are not necessarily limited to the students' families, the private sector of the economy, the educational institutions, and other governmental entities ([Attachment 3](#)).

Ms. Lindeman discussed five state-funded student financial assistance programs administered by the Kansas Board of Regents:

- Kansas Comprehensive Grant;
- Kansas Teacher Service Scholarship;
- National Guard Tuition Assistance Program;
- Military Service Scholarship; and
- Nurses Educator Scholarship.

Ms. Lindeman also provided Committee members with a map of Kansas which indicated the State Board of Education district boundaries ([Attachment 4](#)).

Ms. Lindeman provided Committee members with a chart indicating where scholarship recipients were from and where scholarship recipients were teaching ([Attachment 5](#)).

A question-and-answer-session followed the presentation.

Dr. Rita Cook, Executive Director, Smoky Hill Education Service Center, spoke to Committee members and stated Kansas schools are facing a critical shortage of teachers. In response to this crisis, there has been a lessening of restrictions on current licensure and efforts have been made to offer an "alternative" certification pathway to encourage the hiring of mid-career individuals.

Dr. Cook stated for alternative certification to become a viable conduit for those wishing to enter the teaching profession, state legislatures and state departments of education should:

- Limit the amount of course work required of new teachers, especially in the first year;
- Restrict course content in alternative programs to areas immediately relevant to new teachers;
- Require programs not exceed two years with licensure granted upon completion;
- Allow candidates to “test out” of required content course work;
- Ensure that all candidates receive intensive on-going mentoring and support;
- Hold programs accountable; and
- Allow other entities to offer programs or partner with institutes of higher education so long as teacher performance and longevity are demonstrated.

Kansas education service centers are geographically positioned to provide support, training, and course work for those interested in alternative certification. A proposed model would include the following.

- A five-week summer institute to orientate new candidates. Topics over the course of the institute would include:
 - Lesson planning/classroom management;
 - Understanding young children/adults as learners;
 - State standards in specific content areas;
 - Instructional technology; and
 - Rigor/relevance/relationships in the classroom.
- Classes would be taught by master teachers or university faculty.
- At the beginning of school, each participant would be assigned a mentor supplied by the employing district or education service center, or both.
- During the first year, the education service center or university faculty would conduct observations and follow-up with new teachers four times throughout the year. During the second year, observations and follow-up would occur two times during the year (Attachment 6).

Dr. Cook also gave an overview of a publication entitled *The Role of Educational Service Agencies in Supporting Alternative Teacher Certification Programs* (Attachment 7).

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.

Afternoon Session

Brief Autism Task Force Update

Senator Julia Lynn told Committee members the Kansas Autism Task Force was established by SB 138 and the Task Force continues to work toward completing its mandated final report by

November 2008. She also requested the Committee consider introducing legislation extending the Task Force for another year.

Dr. Bill Craig, Chairperson, Kansas Autism Task Force, told Committee members the Task Force, in its preliminary report last fall, created a vision statement for autism support and services to which Kansas should aspire. The statement includes the following goals.

- All children in Kansas will receive screening for a developmental delay within the first year of life and for an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) within the second year of life. Children with a positive ASD screen will be referred for evidence-based intensive intervention immediately, while undergoing a thorough diagnostic assessment within six months.
- Evidence-based intervention services (defined as 25 hours a week of systematic intervention for a period of three years for a child under the age of eight) will be readily available for all Kansas children with an ASD.
- Families, public schools, state and federal programs, and private health insurance must each be fully participating partners in the achievement of this vision.

Dr. Craig also advised that the Task Force has focused the majority of its efforts in four areas:

- Development of a Best Practices Handbook;
- Introduction of legislation to create a scholarship program to provide an incentive to human service professionals to become autism specialists agreeing to work in underserved areas of the state;
- Introduction of legislation to ensure open access to health insurance for Kansans with autism; and
- Full funding of the Autism Waiver (Attachment 8).

Presentation by Legislative Post Audit Performance Audit

Ivan Williams, Legislative Post Audit, gave an overview of the publication, *Assessing the Quality of English as a Second Language Preparation in Kansas Teacher Education Programs*. (On file in Legislative Division of Post Audit)

Alternative Teacher Certification

Dr. Leann Ellis, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Butler Community College, and Dr. Marilyn Reinhardt, Vice-President, Instruction, Johnson County Community College, spoke to Committee members of the crucial role of community colleges in teacher preparation and professional development.

Committee members were told that community colleges play a key role in teacher preparation through:

- Offering baccalaureate degrees in teacher shortage areas;

- Offering professional development to pre-K-12 teachers in the areas of math, science, English as a Second Language (ESL), and special education;
- Providing early childhood programs for birth through four years and licensure degrees for teaching in pre-K-8 schools;
- Providing post-baccalaureate certification in many states;
- Providing alternative routes to certification in many states; and
- Providing affordable, accessible education for all students (Attachment 9).

Committee members were provided handout material entitled, "Teaching by Choice, Community Colleges Expand K-12 STEM Pathways and Practices" (Attachment 10).

Additional handout material also was provided to Committee members regarding community college teacher preparation programs (Attachment 11).

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation.

Sharon Wenger, Legislative Research Department, provided handout material to Committee members regarding recent changes in alternative teacher licensure, via the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE), in Missouri (Attachment 12).

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards, provided handout material to Committee members regarding opening and closing dates of school for the 2008-2009 school year (Attachment 13).

An overview of topics for review for the LEPC 2008 Interim Session was distributed to Committee members (Attachment 14).

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 14, 2008, and will be a joint meeting with the 2010 Commission.

Prepared by Janet Henning
Edited by Sharon Wenger

Approved by Committee on:

September 17, 2008
(date)