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Education and Local Government Interim Committee

61st Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

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GARY BRANAE
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BOB HAWKS
DANIEL MCGEE
JIM PETERSON

HOUSE MEMBERS

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ELSIE ARNTZEN
RUSSELL BEAN
BOB LAKE
EDITH MCCLAFFERTY
CHERYL STEENSON

COMMITTEE STAFF

LEANNE HEISEL, Research Analyst
JEREMY GERSOVITZ, Staff Attorney
CLAUDIA (CJ) JOHNSON, Secretary

MINUTES

Subcommittee on Legislative Resolutions

HJR 6 AND SJR 8

November 9, 2009

Rm 137 - Capitol Bldg
Helena, Montana

Please note: These minutes provide abbreviated information about committee discussion, public testimony, action taken, and other activities. The minutes are accompanied by an audio recording. For each action listed, the minutes indicate the approximate amount of time in hours, minutes, and seconds that has elapsed since the start of the meeting. This time may be used to locate the activity on the audio recording.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

SEN. BOB HAWKS, Chair
SEN. JIM PETERSON
REP. BOB LAKE
REP. EDITH MCCLAFFERTY

STAFF PRESENT

CASEY BARRS, Research Analyst
HELEN THIGPEN, Staff Attorney
CLAUDIA (CJ) JOHNSON, Secretary

Visitors/Agenda

Visitors' list, Attachment #1.
Agenda, Attachment #2.

COMMITTEE ACTION

The Education and Local Government Subcommittee approved:

- Rep. Bob Lake as chair of the subcommittee.
- The ex-officio participants to the subcommittee:
 - ▶ Sheila Stearns, Office Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE)
 - ▶ Lynn Hamilton, Board of Regents, Community Colleges (BoR)
 - ▶ Madalyn Quinlan, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
 - ▶ Steve Meloy, Board of Public Education (BPE)
 - ▶ Dan Villa, Education Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

00:00:22 Sen. Bob Hawks called the committee to order at 9:09 a.m. The members and staff introduced themselves. The secretary called the roll. Attachment #3

The representatives from the education agencies in attendance introduced themselves.

AGENDA

00:09:14 Mr. Barrs explained the process on the selection of the subcommittee chairman.

Motion

00:10:00 Sen. Peterson nominated Rep. Bob Lake as Chair. The motion **passed**.

00:11:40 Rep. Lake commented on the direction he would like the subcommittee to take.

Establishing Shared Policy Goals (SPGs) and Accountability Measures (AMs)

Staff Overview and Committee Discussion of Process for establishing SPGs and AMs.

- ▶ Casey Barrs, ELG staff, Legislative Services Division
- ▶ Pam Joehler, Legislative Fiscal Division
- ▶ Kris Wilkinson, Legislative Fiscal Division

00:15:14 Mr. Barrs gave an overview on the direction of the subcommittee. He talked about the purposes of HJR 6 (**Exhibit 1**) and SJR 8 (**Exhibit 2**).

00:20:46 Ms. Joehler distributed and discussed a handout that provided a brief background on the PEPB Subcommittee from the last interim and its policy goals, and how the goals were accomplished. (**Exhibit 3**)

00:22:55 Ms. Wilkinson distributed a handout on a performance measurement quadrant, and explained how they are developed. (**Exhibit 4**) She talked about goal sharing - meaning the legislature, state agencies, and other entities that include OPI, BoR, BPE, OCHE, etc.

ELG Subcommittee comments and discussion

00:34:35 Sen. Hawks wanted to know if the committee will be working simultaneously on K-12 and P-20 goals. The committee discussed how they will work on the goals.

00:35:13 Dr. Sheila Stearns addressed the P-20 goals and said that the K-12 goals can be worked on before the P-20 goals are developed. Dr. Stearns discussed the four areas that the OCHE is currently working on:

- ▶ completion of high school
- ▶ connect data systems
- ▶ executive branch reduce remediation
- ▶ increase the utilization of dual enrollment in Montana

00:40:54 Sen. Hawks and the committee discussed taking the K-12 goals and creating a less detailed set of goals that are more attainable. Rep. Lake commented that it is the responsibility of the Legislature to move this out to an area of transparency.

Subcommittee Decision on Status and Structure of Membership

00:44:41 Mr. Barrs explained the status of the ex officio participants from other agencies on the committee. A motion will be made to approve the representatives of these entities. He noted that the subcommittee only provides recommendations to the full ELG Committee.

ELG comments and discussion

00:48:38 Sen. Peterson stated that he would like the executive branch to address this subcommittee on their direction of the educational budget.

00:49:27 The subcommittee members and the education representatives discussed the future status of the letter on the subcommittees. Ms. Quinlan, Ms. Stearns, Sen. Hawks and Mr. Meloy discussed the ex officio participants on the committee are by virtue of the office that they serve. It was discussed how the consensus of the committee and the information will be acted upon before being presented to the full ELG Committee.

00:52:47 Dr. Stearns talked about how the PEPB Subcommittee worked last session and how the ex officio participants were included in discussion and voting for recommendations to the full committee.

00:54:59 Rep. Lake explained how the recommendations from this subcommittee will be presented to the full ELG committee. There was discussion how the voting might only include the ELG Committee Members. Sen. Peterson talked about the separation of power between the Legislature, the agencies, and the public.

01:00:25 Dr. Stearns informed the committee that the education policy advisor from the Governor's Office was available at the PEPB Subcommittee from the last interim meetings.

Motion

01:01:06

Sen. Peterson made the motion to include ex-officio participants on the subcommittee. He said that ex officio participants are full members of the committee and fully active in all of the discussions. The following is a list of the ex officio participants to be voted on;

- ▶ Sheila Stearns, Office Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE)
- ▶ Lynn Hamilton, Board of Regents, Community Colleges (BoR)
- ▶ Madalyn Quinlan, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
- ▶ Steve Meloy, Board of Public Education (BPE)
- ▶ Dan Villa, Education Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

The motion **passed** unanimously.

Postsecondary Panel: SPGs & AMs Present and Future

- ▶ Tyler Trevor, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE)
- ▶ Regent Lynn Hamilton, Board of Regents, BoR
- ▶ Sen. Bob Hawks, former PEPB Subcommittee Chairman

01:03:14

Mr. Trevor distributed a handout and explained the Montana Board of Regents 2008 Strategic Plan on shared policy goals. **(Exhibit 5)** He discussed the Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education (WICHE) on how their policy goals compare to Montana. He said when compared to the western states Montana is above average, and when compared to the nation Montana is below average. He explained that Montana is compared to the western states for data, regional trends, and how higher education is made up in its makeup and tradition which separates them from eastern universities.

01:13:05

Dr. Stearns and Regent Hamilton informed the committee that the strategic plan is a working plan that is in constant progress. They discussed Montana's sister state, North Dakota (ND), and how ND and Montana are not very different. They talked about ND's dual enrollment and double dipping and how they have invested in distance education.

01:13:39

Mr. Trevor continued with his overview on the data collected by OCHE.

ELG Subcommittee Discussion

01:17:56

Rep. Lake wanted to know if the OCHE looks at other states for the economic factors.

01:20:46

Dr. Stearns directed the committee to pages 24 and 25 of Exhibit 4 where she explained the 2-year certificate for an Associate's Degree.

01:22:46

Rep. Lake talked about the committee working toward education attainment and its goal of enrollment. He wanted to know if an individual continues on to the higher education system with the goal of receiving a specific education for their life work and they achieve that goal, but go on to something else, are they considered a drop-out or an achieved education. He said one of the goals the committee should look at and establish is "what is education?"

- 01:24:00 Deputy Commissioner Moe discussed measuring Montana's matrix rates with other states regarding the number of students going on to achieve a higher education and those that do not. Sen. Hawks, Mr. Trevor, and Deputy Commissioner Moe discussed data collected on the school systems and why students leave the system and the reasons they do not come back.
- 01:28:39 Regent Hamilton and the committee discussed productivity measures, the budget situation, and incentives for education. Sen. Hawks commented that the goals worked on by the committee are not the same as the goals the Regent sets. He addressed stimulus funds that will assist with newly developed education programs.
- 01:32:31 Break
- K-12 Panel: Envisioning SPGs & AMs -- (HJR-6)**
- ▶ Madalyn Quinlan, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
 - ▶ Steve Meloy, Board of Public Education (BPE)
- 01:47:32 Ms. Quinlan distributed and explained two handouts: 1) Components of Montana's Basic System of Quality Public Schools, 20-9-309, MCA, **(Exhibit 6)**, and 2) Proposed Shared Policy Goals for K-12. **(Exhibit 7)**
- Rep. Steenson talked about a program called Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), which increases awareness for post-secondary education. She said it is a federal initiative with a mission to level the playing field for low-income students and increase their participation in post-secondary schools.
- 01:55:59 Rep. Lake wanted to know if it is possible to have parents involved in the students education process. Ms. Quinlan discussed the access for parents. Dr. Stearns talked about parental involvement, and a program called the Taylor Plan that assist students and parents by signing off on the student's curriculum course. She said there are numerous national programs for the schools that she would like Montana to adopt.
- 02:01:05 Rep. McClafferty wanted to know when the GEAR UP Program started. Dr. Stearns said that OCHE is the lead in this program and they are in their 5th year of a 6-year grant. She said they had a 5-year GEAR UP grant before the one that is currently in place. Ms. Quinlan said it is geared for middle school students. There are only 25 schools that are involved with this program and are the most at-risk middle schools.
- 02:03:14 Rep. McClafferty wanted to know if there was data to verify if the GEAR UP program is working. Mr. Trevor said the schools that have this program have higher college continuation rates than the state average.
- 02:04:02 Regent Hamilton discussed several other programs that complement the GEAR UP Program: Student Assistance Foundation, which has a Know How to Go campaign and, the Montana College Access Network, plus many more.

02:06:01 Mr. Meloy added that the BPE supports the OPI goals. He said there are several things that need to be done:

- ▶ The full time kindergarten that will take effect in approximately 7 years.
- ▶ Dual enrollment that will encourage accelerated learning, and
- ▶ Distance learning that will help with remediation and credit recovery.

Mr. Meloy talked about the BPE working with the Legislative Finance Committee and they are turning schools around that have been in a deficiency status and have now come into compliance with the BPE standards.

02:09:51 Sen. Hawks discussed collateral training and gave an example of a girl that was very bright and not doing well in high school, but the school allowed her to go to the community college where she excelled. Mr. Meloy described dual enrollment.

Deputy Commissioner Moe said she has had students from high schools that have taken college courses.

02:16:02 Rep. Lake talked about students who has conflicts with high school instructors and do not do well in school but go on to graduate, and he wanted to know if that student can come back and clean up their record by submitting better grades. Ms. Quinlan responded that credit recovery will become expanded when the Montana Virtual Academy goes online.

02:18:37 Sen. Hawks talked about students being set up to fail and the need to find a way to keep them in the school system. Regent Hamilton commented about finding ways to make students successful by identifying learning outcomes and measuring a student who has reached that outcome so they can be placed in the next level course work and not fail. Mr. Meloy discussed alternative learning in the Helena school system and how the ratings for accreditation standards are handled by the Board of Trustees.

02:24:07 Mr. Barrs and Mr. Meloy talked about Exhibit 6 - Shared Policy Goals submitted by OPI. Mr. Barrs asked if the BPE agrees with the proposed shared policy goals for K-12. Mr. Meloy said they do.

02:29:11 Ms. Wilkinson asked if there is a way to track students that do not go on to college. Mr. Meloy said that is where the dual enrollment works. Dr. Stearns replied that dual enrollment is an option, and stated that many states are offering this. By the time a student graduates from high school, they could be close to an Associate Degree. On Exhibit 6, Dr. Stearns said she would like to include a (c) on number 1 - an expansion of joint grades 12 and 13.

K-20 Panel: Envisioning SPGs & AMs -- (SJR-8)

- ▶ Madalyn Quinlan, Office of Public Instruction
- ▶ Steve Meloy, Board of Public Education
- ▶ Tyler Trevor, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
- ▶ Regent Lynn Hamilton, Board of Regents

02:33:53 Ms. Quinlan distributed and explained a handout addressing 5 proposed K-20

Shared Policy Goals. **(Exhibit 7)**

- 02:36:14 Mr. Trevor expanded on Ms. Quinlan's comments and discussed the career fields model on the back of Exhibit 7. The model shows how career pathways work when students are taking college courses while still in high school.
- 02:45:36 Deputy Commissioner Moe talked about parents understanding benchmarks. T.J. Eyer, Division Administrator for Career and Technical Advisor for Adult Education, OPI, discussed non-duplicated classes that will lead to post-secondary education and careers. He distributed and addressed a handout showing on Accelerated Pathway for an ASN-Nursing course**(Exhibit 8)**, and a handout showing an example on Montana Career Clusters and its pathway options. **(Exhibit 9)**
- 02:52:52 Rep. Lake addressed Exhibits 8 and 9, and how the schools can start working on these career programs. Rep. Lake suggested that this information also include the Board of Trustees.
- 02:58:04 Rep. Lake wanted to know how many courses the Regent will be offering and if there will be a general course that will help the students determine which degree they want to pursue.
- 03:00:16 Mr. Barrs asked if Exhibits 8 and 9 are on the website. Mr. Eyer said the website is currently under construction and they hope to have it up soon.
- 03:01:53 The committee asked questions of Dr. Stearns who talked about the Montana Career Information System (MCIS). Dr. Stearns wanted to know what the number of hits have been on the MCIS website. Mr. Eyer responded that the hits have been high, but they don't know if those visiting the website are students, faculty, parents, or other.
- 03:06:00 Mr. Meloy talked about a group that has just formed called: The Learning First Alliance, who will bring various partners together including the Legislature to look at school reform in Montana. Some of the groups involved are teachers, PTA, and school counselors.
- Public Comment**
- 03:09:44 Marco Ferro, Director of Public Policy, Montana Education Association - Montana Federation of Teachers (MEA-MFT), encouraged the committee to review the Regent's Strategic Plan.
- 03:11:55 Conrad Stroebe, Billings, offered several suggestions that would assist the committee in developing policy for goals that are currently in place; one is funding policy when schools are at their limit, and 2) the funding law. He distributed several handouts explaining his issues. The first handout is an article from the Billings Gazette called: "Guest Opinion: Bigger isn't cheaper for quality schools." **(Exhibit 10)** He asked the committee to look at budgeted funds, and allow school boards to unify their budgeted funds. He urged the committee and panel members to give the schools the opportunity to spend the funds where the

money is needed the most. Mr. Stroebe's second handout is a memo he had written to Steve Meloy, BPE explaining his two shared policy goals. **(Exhibit 11)**

Pre-Submitted Questions

- 03:24:28 Mr. Barrs distributed and explained a handout that has pre-submitted questions from members of the ELG Committee. **(Exhibit 12)**
- 03:25:35 The committee addressed Rep. McClafferty's question about high school credits transferring from one high school to another high school. Ms. Quinlan responded that each high school has their own policy.
- 03:28:47 Rep. Lake said that question three - regarding promotion of reading - is a concern with parents across the state. Parents are worried about the money being put into the school system and not being used appropriately.
- 03:30:47 Sen. Hawks said that the accountability falls with the school boards. He wanted to know if the School Board and the Board of Trustees are aware on what is being spent line-item by line-item. Rep. Lake suggested that when the students and parents are informed regarding the child's needs for the next level then a lot of the problems will be solved.
- 03:32:39 Dr. Stearns and the committee discussed a handout that Ms. Joehler had distributed earlier (see Exhibit 3) regarding shared goals and accountability. Dr. Stearns suggested that the agreement should have more signature lines for the parties, and she also said it would be better to present the goals and accountability measures in an easy to read format and have them posted to the website.
- 03:35:22 Ms. Quinlan said she would like more information on how to demonstrate accountability.
- 03:36:40 Mr. Meloy distributed a handout **(Exhibit 13)** that addresses Rep. Steenson's question on Class 8 Certification and explained that it is working now that there are statewide expectations for dual enrollment. Mr. Meloy re-iterated that the Virtual Academy process is going great.
- 03:39:15 Rep. McClafferty talked about transferability from 2-year institutions to 4-year colleges and wanted to know if enrollment is higher now than it has been in the past. Mr. Trevor replied that they have not noticed much difference at this time, but felt that in a couple of years the numbers will be more noticeable.
- 03:42:48 Rep. Lake asked Deputy Commissioner Moe if the economy has a lot to do with people staying close to the 2-year colleges. Deputy Commissioner Moe said there are two reasons: 1) staying close to home, and 2) making the dollars stretch further. Rep. Lake asked about using the WICHE and having access to disciplines. Deputy Commissioner Moe said the BoR has on-line collaboration with WICHE.
- 03:45:44 Dr. Stearns commented that the BoR is including community leaders in their

meetings. Rep. Lake commented that it sounds like there are many directions, but the education representatives and legislators all want the same goal.

03:54:02 Sen. Hawks said that the comments made here today need to be relayed to the full committee. He commented that the ex-officio participants that are here today should be included when the report is presented to the full ELG Committee that will be held on December 11, 2009.

04:12:10 There being no further business Rep. Lake thanked everyone for their input and adjourned the committee at 1:20 p.m. The next subcommittee meeting will take place on December 10, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. in room 102.

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