

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN EVE FRANKLIN**, on January 10, 2005 at 8:15 A.M., in Room 102 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Eve Franklin, Chairman (D)
Sen. Don Ryan, Vice Chairman (D)
Sen. John Esp (R)
Rep. Bill E. Glaser (R)
Rep. Verdell Jackson (R)
Rep. Carol C. Juneau (D)

Members Excused: Sen. Carol Williams (D): Arrived at 8:20 A.M.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Mike Burke, OBPP
Amy Carlson, OBPP
Marilyn Daumiller, Legislative Branch
Diana Williams, Committee Secretary
transcribed by Kim Leighton

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed. Tape counter notations refer to the material immediately preceding.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted: Montana State Library;
Montana School for the Deaf & Blind
Executive Action: None

Opening Remarks by MADAM CHAIR FRANKLIN:

CHAIR FRANKLIN opened the meeting with general housekeeping issues.

LFD Comments:

Marilyn Daumiller, Legislative Fiscal Division, asked the Subcommittee to turn to page E-52 which had some chart statistics. She added that these statistics relate to DP 7002. She also touched on Pages E-53 - E-58.

EXHIBIT(jeh06a01)

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 8}

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION HEARING**OVERVIEW**

Darlene Staffeldt, Montana State Library, provided a brief overview of the State Library. She discussed what is available in terms of technology and resources. She provided the Subcommittee with a packet of information highlighting their separate issues. She added that the State Library Board is composed of seven members. The commission meets every other month. She commented on information technology and the effect it has.

EXHIBIT(jeh06a02)

Ms. Staffeldt mentioned that there are three major divisions within the State Library: the Talking Book Library; the Digital Library; and the division dealing with Library Development. She explained the specifics of each of these divisions. She distributed a handout outlining the PowerPoint presentation. She also distributed a hand-out in regard to the separate divisions within the State Library.

EXHIBIT(jeh06a03)

EXHIBIT(jeh06a04)

EXHIBIT(jeh06a05)

EXHIBIT(jeh06a06)

EXHIBIT(jeh06a07)

After discussing the individual divisions, **Ms. Staffeldt** referred to another handout which dealt with highlights and statistics.

EXHIBIT(jeh06a08)

Ms. Staffeldt spoke about the Library Development Division. She provided a document to aid this discussion. She walked the subcommittee through this information.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a09\)](#)

Ms. Staffeldt explained to the subcommittee what kind of library information services are available. She also had some materials to help in this explanation.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a10\)](#)

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 8 - 26.6}

BUDGET REQUESTS

Ms. Staffeldt went on to discuss the DP's that would help with the budget of the State Library. She provided her presentation in the form of a document as well as a verbal presentation.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a11\)](#)

She discussed these at length with the subcommittee. **Ms. Staffeldt** concluded her presentation by thanking the Subcommittee for all their help. She stressed the importance of this budget for the State Library.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a12\)](#)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Al Randall, Commission Chairman, Montana State Library, stressed the importance of this budget. There are programs that are already being put in place. He stated that these monies are critical to the State Library. He talked about the funding equation. He added that the State Library is resource-poor. He stated that three years ago the Montana State Library did a federal evaluation of the staff and it's programs. He reiterated part of that evaluation to the subcommittee. He also distributed his testimony.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a13\)](#)

Jim Smith, Montana Library Association, stands in support of the State Library. He said there are satisfied customers and user groups in regard to the State Library. He stated that this is a small agency. He said it's hard when they have to get involved in budgetary politics. He added that these necessities are priorities. It is however just partial restoration.

Lois Fitzpatrick, Director, Carroll College Library, stated, "A strong State Library leads to strong libraries in the state." She also shared the invitation to the State Library reception.

She asked that the Subcommittee please say yes to the State Library budget and decision packages.

There was a short response to DP 8 from the Governor's Office. A document was also provided that dealt with the presentation on the Montana State Library Budget.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a14\)](#)

CHAIR FRANKLIN asked Kris Schmidt to also speak about the per capita square mile grants.

OBPP Comments

None

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 20.3}

QUESTIONS FROM SUBCOMMITTEE

REP. JUNEAU asked how public schools and tribal colleges are utilizing the State Library.

Ms. Staffeldt claimed that many schools participate in the statewide library services as well as the bibliography services that are available.

CHAIR FRANKLIN asked her to expand on vacancy savings.

Ms. Schmidt stated that they have kept one position completely vacant for about a year. They experienced a great deal of vacancy savings.

CHAIR FRANKLIN inquired into which position they will keep open.

Ms. Staffeldt discussed the duties of her old job, which will be the position to be vacant.

CHAIR FRANKLIN asked in what ways this shift has affected her functions.

Ms. Staffeldt claimed that it does slow down services a little bit.

REP. JACKSON asked for more details on the contingency fund for the vacant position.

Ms. Staffeldt attested that there is a fund available if there cannot be a vacant position. She stated that in the past they have utilized this when they were fully staffed.

REP. JACKSON spoke about DP 7001 and the figure of \$18 for loaning out an item at the library. He wondered how they were able to compute that.

Ms. Staffeldt stated that it is taken from a national library reference tool. It is based on staff time that is involved in locating and preparing the item.

Ms. Daumiller attested that it is a straightforward budget. She emphasized the need for the Subcommittee to address what services are needed by the State.

[Recessed at 9:15 and returned at 10:00]

Opening Remarks by MADAM CHAIR FRANKLIN: Did not get taped.

LFD Comments:

Marilyn Daumiller, Legislative Fiscal Division, provided some information on the budget for the School for the Deaf and Blind. This included money that was appropriated from former Governor Martz as well as new proposals from Governor Schweitzer. She discussed these at length.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a15\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a16\)](#)

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 11.5}

MONTANA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND (MSDB)

OVERVIEW

Steve Gettel, Superintendent, Montana School For Deaf & Blind (MSDB), introduced himself and provided several documents to aid his testimony. He provided some background information on the school and supplied budgetary figures. He discussed these documents in detail.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a17\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a18\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a19\)](#)

Mr. Gettel discussed teacher training that is necessary for these students. He added that the problems they are faced with is outlined in the document. It deals with Full-Time Equivalents (FTE). He stated that Montana University system does not have any training programs in this area.

BUDGET REQUESTS

Mr. Gettel signified the need for this budget. They have had trouble with attaining technology, recruiting and retaining teachers and thus providing a quality education for these children. He added that the Office of Budget Policy Planning (OBPP) has done a lot to help them in recruiting and retaining teachers. He spoke about a letter they received which praised their early toddler program. This document was passed out previously to the subcommittee. He added that they need more outreach programs; there is a problem with attracting professionals to teach these children.

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 11.5 - 28}

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Bill Sykes, Business Manager, MSDB, explained the budget proposals and why they are necessary. He added that the maintenance in the buildings needs to be addressed.

Terry Minow, Montana Education Association-Montana Federation of Teachers (MEA-MFT), expressed her support for Governor Schweitzer's proposals for the budget. She stated that they are very pleased at the proposed amount of \$150,000 to be appropriated for teacher salaries. This is an attempt to resolve a long-standing problem at MSDB.

Steve Meloy, Board of Public Education (BPE), explained his position at BPE. He also explained the primary functions of BPE and their relationship with MSDB. He added that he came today representing the Board and Dr. Kirk Miller. They stand in full support of this proposed budget.

Carl Schweitzer, Montana Association for the Blind, stands in full support of this budget. He stated that there are some additional needs that this committee should look at. He spoke about his niece who is blind and her relationship with braille. He added that the technology associated with individuals that are blind is growing more and more everyday.

OBPP Comments

Mike Burke, OBPP, stated that the DP's that were put through former Governor Martz's office will carry through. He reiterated that Governor Schweitzer's proposals have made some great strides forward. He explained the money that has been allocated for teacher salaries, computers and repair and maintenance.

{Tape: 2; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 9.6}

QUESTIONS FROM SUBCOMMITTEE

SEN. ESP asked Mr. Meloy what kind of input they have, as the Board of MSDB, when it comes to teacher salaries.

Mr. Meloy stated that the only salary they have any input on is that of the Superintendent. He believes it is important that the BPE has more authority in the collective bargaining.

SEN. ESP asked Mr. Gettel if the teacher's salary is negotiated between them or strictly by a state employee.

Mr. Gettel stated that there is an individual from the Department of Personnel Administration that negotiates these salaries.

SEN. ESP inquired about different aspects of the negotiations.

Mr. Gettel stated that the negotiations lead to a pay matrix in the past; now they use a system that deals with minimum and maximum.

SEN. ESP asked how he envisions using the additional \$150,000.

Mr. Gettel attested that the money will be subject to negotiation.

SEN. ESP inquired why there was such a drastic increase in premiums in regard to the workers compensation issue.

Mr. Gettel claimed that there is more liability with a 24-hour facility. These are students that need more attention and care; accidents happen.

{Tape: 2; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 9.6 - 17.7}

SEN. ESP asked about the price for premiums in regard to workers compensation with trained professionals versus non-professionals.

Mr. Gettel distinguished between non-professionals and trained professionals. They can attempt to negotiate better rates when classifying these positions.

Mr. Sykes stated that the amount they spend on facilities and resources tends to be higher than what they pay for premiums.

REP. GLASER inquired into how large of a pool they could enter into for a better rate.

Mr. Gettel stated that they never discussed that particular issue.

REP. GLASER asked if they increased the rate or gave them a factor.

Mr. Gettel provided a figure.

REP. GLASER confirmed that it would be three times the mode factor.

Mr. Gettel said it takes about three years to work through everything.

REP. GLASER inquired what would happen if the legislature released their obligation to remain in the state pool and allowed them to enter into a private pool.

Mr. Gettel stated that it is a possibility that they would need to look into. He mentioned that they could work with the Governor's Office and perhaps the legislative staff could do some research.

REP. JUNEAU inquired into Page E-32 on the proposed budget. She wondered about funding for resources such as computers.

Mr. Sykes discussed federal funding that they receive. He explained where the money is applied and how it helps. He also responded to her inquiry about computers.

Ms. Daumiller asked Mr. Sykes about the vacancy savings.

Mr. Sykes stated that in the past the legislature has lowered the vacancy savings rate.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 0 - 1}

CHAIR FRANKLIN asked what happened this last biennium in regard to vacancy savings.

Mr. Sykes said they had to lay off some staff.

CHAIR FRANKLIN asked about the problem of laying off staff in regard to vacancy savings. She wondered how that affects the services for children.

Mr. Gettel attested that they grouped more kids together. He provided some statistics from recent years compared to when he first started. He added that they have lost four FTE positions in 20 years. They could really use these extra employees.

CHAIR FRANKLIN summarized what Mr. Gettel had told her. She also spoke about ideologies involved.

SEN. RYAN spoke about declining populations on campus. He reiterated that they should not assume that the school can function on less FTE's as a result of this.

Mr. Gettel stated that he was correct in that assumption; there is no correlation.

SEN. RYAN asked how No Child Left Behind has impacted his school.

Mr. Gettel said that it is impacting his school just the same as it affects other schools. They do not receive Title I funds. He said they will receive some technical assistance from OPI. He reiterated that the focus is the same.

CHAIR FRANKLIN asked Mr. Gettel to discuss the structure of the outreach program.

Mr. Gettel stated that it is involved in the educational program. He discussed how these programs work and what they involve.

CHAIR FRANKLIN clarified his statement in regard to the outreach program.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 1 - 19.6}

OTHER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS

CHAIR FRANKLIN closed the meeting with announcements about the next meeting.

There were two additional documents on the proposed budget.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a20\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh06a21\)](#)

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 11:15 A.M.

REP. EVE FRANKLIN, Chairman

DIANA WILLIAMS, Secretary

EF/dw

Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([jeh06aad0.PDF](#))