

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Terrie Huntington at 1:30 p.m. on January 26, 2009, in Room 786 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Mary Galligan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Rena Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Kay Scarlett, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Linda Fund, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees
Dr. Ed Berger, President, Hutchinson Community College

Others attending:

See attached list.

There were no requests for introduction of committee bills.

Linda Fund, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees, provided an overview of the nineteen community colleges with a power point presentation stating that each community college is unique and is governed by locally elected boards of trustees. She stated that community colleges are responsive to business and industry, unified school districts, universities, developmental education, and community based organizations. They provide access on campus or at service area centers, with interactive video, through on line classes, by providing classes on site for business and industry, by making mobile classrooms available, and by keeping tuition costs affordable.

Dr. Ed Berger, President, Hutchinson Community College, reported that tuition at the state's community colleges has increased nearly 50 percent since 2000 with fees seeing a similar increase. He explained that approximately half their funding comes from local taxes with tuition and funding from the state making up the other half. Passage of SB 345 in 1999, moving community college coordination from the State Board of Education to the reconstituted Kansas Board of Regents, was designed to reduce local mill levies. He reported that the mill levy was reduced in years one and two, but increased dramatically in years three and four with frozen state funding. Enrollment has generally increased over the past four years with 30 percent of the students enrolled in technical education and 70 percent in academic education. Community colleges in Kansas are currently serving nearly 170,000 Kansans. He believes that coordination of community colleges by the Kansas Board of Regents has improved efficiency.

Dr. Berger said their only legislative initiative this session is SB 11 to allow community colleges to acquire or accept land and land and improvements within their service areas. Currently they cannot. (Attachment 1)

The committee requested information on enrollment, tuition and fees, credit hours, degrees earned, and the number of faculty and non-faculty staff at each individual community college in the state. The percentage of students participating in distance learning was also requested.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. The next meeting of the House Higher Education Committee is scheduled for January 27, 2009.