

## MINUTES

### 2010 COMMISSION

September 24, 2010  
Room 152-S—Statehouse

#### Members Present

Rochelle Chronister, Chairperson  
Dr. Ray Daniels, Vice-chairperson  
Representative Marti Crow  
Carolyn L. Campbell  
Dennis Jones  
Emile McGill  
Scott Frank  
Dan Gibb

#### Members Absent

Senator Jean Kurtis Schodorf  
Representative Clay Aurand  
Steve Iliff

#### Staff Present

Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Jason Long, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Dale Dennis, Kansas Department of Education  
Dorothy Gerhardt, Committee Assistant

#### Others Present

Senator Steve E. Abrams  
Robin Harris, Kansas State Board of Education  
Berend Koops, Hein Law Firm  
Doug Bowman, CCELDs  
Terry Forsyth, Kansas National Educators Association  
Rachel Whitten, Kansas Reporter  
Patrick Vogelsberg, Kearney and Associates, Inc.

Sean Miller, Capitol Strategies  
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards  
Michelle Butler, Capitol Strategies  
Michelle Blasdel, Advocate  
Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools  
Dodie Wellshear, United School Administrators/Kansas  
Martin Hawver, Hawver Publications

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Rochelle Chronister at 10:00 a.m.

### **Proposed School Finance Plan**

Senator Steve Abrams appeared before the Committee in support of the Relevant Efficient Academic Learning Education Act (Attachment 1). The objectives of the proposal include:

- Create greater opportunities for success for students in graduation and careers with relevance;
- Encourage the concept of Career and Technical Education (CTE) for all students, no matter whether as a brain surgeon, welder, or teacher;
- Create opportunities for the student to maximize the individual's potential;
- Develop a system that will assist students, parents, and educators as they move forward in making the best decisions for the student; and
- Create opportunities for economic development.

A question and answer session regarding implementation and financing followed the presentation.

### **Career and Technical Education Policy Initiatives**

Robin Harris, Assistant Director, Kansas Department of Education Career and Technical Education Program, presented a report on national and state initiatives regarding career and technical education (CTE), stressing that making learning relevant is essential. A review of the five inter-connected principles of career and technical education as developed by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium followed (Attachment 2). These included:

- CTE is critical to ensuring that the United States leads in global competitiveness;
- CTE actively partners with employers to design and provide high-quality, dynamic programs;
- CTE prepares students to succeed in furthering education and careers;

- CTE is delivered through comprehensive programs of study aligned to The National Career Clusters framework; and
- CTE is a results-driven system that demonstrates a positive return on investment.

Ms. Harris presented the outline of the eleven points of the Career and Technical Education Policy Initiatives as developed by the Kansas State Board of Education ([Attachment 3](#)), along with a brief comparison to Senator Abrams' proposal.

Presentations of the Kansas Career Fields and Clusters Model and the Kansas Secondary-Level Career Clusters and Pathways ([Attachment 4](#)) also were given.

Discussion of financing and implementation of the sixteen clusters in schools followed.

## **Review of the School Finance Formula**

Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education, presented a brief review of the education funding formula for the state. The presentation began with a demonstration of the school finance formula ([Attachment 5](#)). Items addressed included the weighting for various factors such as bilingual education enrollment, low enrollment and high enrollment, vocational education enrollment, at-risk student enrollment, virtual enrollment, new facilities, transportation, ancillary facilities weighting, special education, declining enrollment, and cost of living weighting, among others.

## **Kansas Revenue Estimate Update**

Alan Conroy, Director, Kansas Legislative Research Department (KLRD), presented a brief update of the State General Fund (SGF) Revenue Estimate ([Attachment 6](#)). Statistics reviewed included FY 2010 SGF revenues at \$98.6 million below the estimate, with the majority of this amount, \$91.8 million, being a result of a reduction in individual income tax revenues. A major source of revenue above estimates was retail sales at \$12 million.

FY 2011 total receipts of July and August are \$10 million above the estimate with a majority of this being from retail sales. Mr. Conroy indicated that there were no tax sources below the estimates by more than \$1.0 million. It also was pointed out that property values across the state generally are lower. Another factor was the unemployment rate in the state which is now at 6.7 percent; and until this improves tax revenues will struggle.

## **School District Efficiency Audits**

A summary of seven school district efficiency audits was presented by Laurel Murdie, Principal Auditor, Legislative Division of Post Audit. ([On file - Kansas Legislative Division of Post Audit, August, 2010](#)) The seven districts reviewed included Derby, Ellinwood, Renwick, Winfield, Concordia, Riley County, and Clifton-Clyde.

These efficiency audits were conducted at the direction of the 2010 Commission to be voluntary at the school district level. It was noted that none of the districts had a systematic process for managing efficiency. A number of opportunities for districts to operate more efficiently were

found, the largest of these savings coming from reducing the number of teachers. All seven districts potentially could save money by changing their high school class schedules or course offerings and by using their buildings more efficiently. In addition, several districts could save money by making their food service programs more self-sufficient.

Suggested changes included changing from a block schedule to traditional scheduling, increasing class sizes, more efficient use of buildings, and recommending food service programs be self-supporting. Other areas where savings potentially could be realized included:

- Automating paper-driven business processes;
- Competitively purchasing transportation-related services;
- Better use of information technology;
- Sharing resources with other entities;
- Reducing cell phone costs by reducing the number of phones or using stipends;
- Maximizing the use of business procurement cards; and
- Reducing overtime costs by hiring full-time staff.

A summary of recommendations was included ([Attachment 7](#)).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

## **National Test Data and Improvement in Kansas Schools**

Mark Tallman, Assistant Executive Director/Advocacy, Kansas Association of School Boards, presented a summary of state and national testing and Kansas achievement results. The summary of results of testing on both state and national levels ([Attachment 8](#)) indicated student achievements in Kansas are rising. He pointed out that the percentage of low income students tested has risen substantially as compared to national figures, which means Kansas schools must improve achievement for a more challenging student population.

Mr. Tallman noted actual American College Testing (ACT) results also demonstrate student achievement has increased in Kansas. In fact, Kansas posted the highest average composite score among the 13 states where at least 75 percent of graduates participated in the exam.

Mr. Tallman presented a summary of graduation and college readiness among Kansas students. He pointed out that high school completion is at an all-time high with over three-fourths of students graduating in four years, with most of the remaining students finishing by age 24. Studies indicate that more education increases individual earnings. As a result, states with higher levels of educational attainment tend to rank higher in per capita income. Mr. Tallman stated the single most important thing to do to improve educational outcomes is to improve professional development.

A review of the Kansas tax structure as it relates to educational funding was provided. The results of his research indicate that, despite the changes in education and all the additional funding they require, school district expenditures have not changed significantly as a percentage of Kansas personal income in 50 years ([Attachment 10](#)).

He presented the following concerns regarding tax policy and education funding in the State of Kansas:

- The rise in income has not been shared equally;
- Tax policy has shifted the tax burden and led to higher rates;
- Efforts to reduce property tax reliance have been undercut.

Mr. Tallman stated that the more the Legislature allows school finance to shift to local revenue sources to meet state educational requirements, the harder it will be to provide constitutionally suitable funding to meet the state's education outcomes for all students, regardless of where they live. More unequal local funding will lead to more school finance litigation.

### **Approval of Minutes**

*Dr. Ray Daniels moved to approve the minutes of August 16, 2010 as written. The motion was seconded by Representative Marti Crow. Motion carried.*

### **Discussion of Final Report**

Chairperson Chronister initiated discussion regarding the contents and format of the final 2010 Commission Report for 2010. The Chairperson suggested the following be included in the report:

- The statute establishing the Commission;
- A list of what one mill tax levy will produce for the five lowest and five highest school districts in the state;
- The same information for the five lowest and five highest in income levels;
- The same information for the five lowest and five highest in poverty level;
- A list of all commissioners, separated by voting and non-voting, to include those who started but are no longer on the Commission, to include: who appointed them, their educational background, and who they represent to show the diversity of the membership;
- A list of school districts and educational organizations visited when the Commission was established, with a synopsis of what was seen and learned in the tours (such as the change in diversity as far as languages, property values compared to condition, populations, consolidations going on, and amount of ESL at the time);
- A list of audits; and
- A list comparing spending now to that set by the Supreme Court.

Chairperson Chronister stressed this type of information should be included in the report in order for people to understand the diversity of the state itself and the diversity of the educational

system within the state. Each Committee member was asked to select one to three recommendations along with supporting backup from the list provided (Attachment 11), as being the most important and submit them to the Legislative Research Department for summary.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Prepared by Dorothy Gerhardt  
Edited by Martha Dorsey

Approved by the Commission on:

December 3, 2010

(Date)