

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:35 p.m. on January 18, 2005, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Committee members absent:

Committee staff present: Carolyn Rampey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Kathie Sparks, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Shirley Higgins, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, State Board of Education

Senator Schodorf began the meeting by introducing a newly assigned committee member, Senator Ralph Ostmeier. She explained that he was replacing Senator Dennis Wilson who was reassigned to another committee.

On behalf of Senator Barnett, Senator Schodorf requested the introduction of a bill concerning math and science teacher scholarships. She explained that the bill would amend the current teacher service scholarship program to give preference to math and science teachers.

Senator Ostmeier moved to introduce the bill, seconded by Senator Steineger. The motion carried.

Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, State Board of Education, requested the introduction of a bill concerning the distribution of driver's license fees. He explained that a percentage of driver's license fees goes to schools for driver education. Currently, the statute provides that no more than \$1,540,000 can be appropriated to schools for driver education. The money is building up in the fund due to the statutory limitation. The bill would strike the limiting language.

Senator Steineger moved to introduce the bill, seconded by Senator Teichman. The motion carried.

Mr. Dennis requested the introduction of a bill which would amend the statute concerning teacher certification fees to allow the State Board to set the amount of the fee.

Senator Steineger moved to introduce the bill, seconded by Senator Teichman. The motion carried.

Mr. Dennis introduced the 2005 Kansas Teacher of the Year, Brett D. Potts, who teaches 9th grade biology at Blue Valley Northwest High School in Overland Park. Mr. Potts noted that the other teachers with him decided as a team that their fundamental beliefs include (1) Kids come first, and they should be the center piece to all decision making, (2) Kansas public schools are excellent and can continue to improve, and (3) It is very important that quality educators be recruited and retained. He then related his experiences with special education students in his classroom.

The following 2005 Regional Teachers of the Year related their classroom experiences and teaching challenges: Anne Farmer, Terry M. Hedge, Joyce C. Anschutz, Marilyn Bolton, Alma Cook, Jeff Handley, and Gary Wilkerson. (Attachment 1)

Committee members questioned the teachers with regard to the role of school administrators. All of the teachers agreed that the administrators are the principle instructional leaders and that further elimination of administrative positions would result in teachers having to undertake administrative duties, which would mean they would have less time for their teaching duties.

Senator Schodorf asked the teachers for their opinion with regard to closing the gap for bilingual and at-risk students. It was suggested that staff be increased to allow for smaller classes and more one-on-one help.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Education Committee at 1:35 p.m. on January 18, 2005, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Senator Vratil asked the teachers to suggest things which the Legislature might do to recruit and retain good teachers. Suggestions included the following: provide for good staff and professional development, provide a mentoring program for new teachers, smaller classes, more para professionals, salaries that are competitive with other states and other occupations, and affordable health insurance plans.

Senator Schodorf called the Committee's attention to the minutes of the January 11 and 12 meetings.

Senator Teichman moved to approve the minutes of the January 11 and 12, 2005, minutes, seconded by Senator Apple. The motion carried.

Senator Schodorf called attention to copies of the Kansas Supreme Court ruling on *Montoy, et al. v. State of Kansas*, which had been distributed to members for their information. (Attachment 2)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2005.