

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clay Aurand at 9:00 A.M. on January 17, 2008 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Benjamin Hodge- absent
Valdenia Winn- excused

Committee staff present:

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dianne Rosell, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Kansas State Department of Education
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Dr. Alexa Posny, Commissioner, and Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas State Department of Education, spoke to Committee members of the major challenges facing K-12 education in the state of Kansas. Dr. Posny spoke of a number of major challenges which include:

- Produce an adequate number of teachers to fill teacher shortages.
- Integrate academic and career-technical programs to meet the needs of postsecondary education and the business community.
- Develop longitudinal database system, in cooperation with State Board of Regents (higher education), that would provide accountability for the outcomes of both the K-12 and postsecondary educational systems.
- Implement strategies to create and motivate greater student interest in math, engineering, technology, and science to drive our economic engine.
- Meet the needs of the increasing disabled and disadvantaged population both with teachers and financial resources.

Dr. Posny told Committee members that 33 % of the teachers are over the age of 50 and 25% fewer students are choosing education as a career path.

Mr. Dennis told Committee members that based upon a survey conducted in June, 2007, there were approximately 1,144 vacancies for licensed personnel and approximately 476 of these vacancies still existed on August 1, 2007. Teaching areas most affected include special education, mathematics, and science. (Attachment 1) (Attachment 2) (Attachment 3 - on file, Kansas State Department of Education)

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2008.