

Approved: 1.29.10
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Deena Horst at 9:00 a.m. on January 19, 2010, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Clay Aurand- excused
Representative Bob Brookens- excused
Representative Ed Trimmer- excused
Representative Valdenia Winn- excused

Committee staff present:

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Reagan Cussimano, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas State Department of Education
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

2010 Kansas Teacher of the Year:

Karen M. Tritt, Shawnee Mission West High School, Overland Park

2010 Kansas Regional Teachers of the Year:

Arthur R. Commons, Baxter Springs High School, Baxter Springs

Rose M. Nemchik, Riverview Elementary School, Shawnee

Cathy Durano, Cottonwood Elementary School, Andover

Beth Slawson, Cottonwood Elementary School, Paola

Jeline D. Harclerode, Emporia Middle School, Emporia

Tracey B. Repp, Andover Central Middle School, Andover

Joan L. Moore, Lincoln Elementary School, McPherson

2010 Kansas Teacher of the Year Team

Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas State Department of Education, introduced the members of the 2010 Kansas Teacher of the Year Team to Committee members. Mr. Dennis also told Committee members there are eight Committee members who are or were in the Education field and a former Teacher of the Year - Representative Shirley Palmer. (Attachment 1)

Joan L. Moore, Lincoln Elementary School, McPherson, told Committee members that she is a first grade teacher and described the various abilities, disabilities and personalities of her 22 member "class family". She told Committee members she asked herself "what does it take to keep this class family together?" And the answer was 'quality education, quality teachers, and staff' who are all working together to do the best for Kansas' kids.

Jeline D. Harclerode, Emporia Middle School, Emporia, told Committee members she is an eighth grade connect teacher which is an integrated computer technology class. She is part of a team of science, social studies, math, English, and teacher of ELL which allows her to teach these subjects within a computer lab setting. Ms. Harclerode told Committee members that it is time to move into the 21st century and utilize the technology that has been developed and which these students use the most.

Tracey B. Repp, Andover Central Middle School, Andover, told Committee members he was a seventh grade math teacher of at-risk and Special Education students. He told Committee members that students deserve a teacher who serves as a positive role model. Mr. Repp told Committee members that before entering the Education field, he spent more than a decade in law enforcement to include the Wichita Police Department and as a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He told Committee members this experience has helped him understand the many problems facing our young people today.

Mr. Repp told Committee members of a program in their school called "W.E.B." which stands for "Where Everyone Belongs". This is a transitional program for incoming sixth grade students and utilizes eighth grade students as leaders in order to develop a connection with other students in school. Unfortunately, this program is in jeopardy because of funding shortages.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the House Education Committee at 9:00 a.m. on January 19, 2010, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

Cathy Durano, Cottonwood Elementary School, Andover, told Committee members that she is a third grade teacher. She spoke to Committee members of the importance of professional development. She told Committee members that research has found that quality instruction is vital to the success of learners. In order to ensure a world class education for all Kansas kids, teachers have to be given the opportunity to develop excellence, fundamental to improving instruction for teachers to learn the best practices.

Beth Slawson, Cottonwood Elementary School, Paola, told Committee members she is a reading specialist at her school. She stated one of the benefits of being a reader is so that one becomes a productive member of society. Reading abilities directly relate to drop out rates, attendance, and many times, bigger issues. It is best to make an investment in Kansas kids early through early intervention.

Arthur R. Commons, Baxter Springs High School, Baxter Springs, told Committee members he is a high school science teacher. He advised he works in one of the most poverty ridden districts in the state, however, the high school is doing well. Their high school has been named a national Blue Ribbon school and most recently has been named by US News as one of the nation's top high schools. He told Committee members their high school has been successful in leveling the playing field in many areas, namely technology.

With the help of private donors, each high school student is issued a laptop computer and is trained on how to use the technology effectively. Mr. Commons told Committee members there is a network in place to encourage each student to use the resources available to them appropriately. The high school students have also benefitted with the use of unique programs and a high school staff that simply teach their students "how" to think. He stated Kansas students, from pre-K through college, need to be taught "how" to think and not "what" to think. Our system needs to be less focused on emotion, political correctness, and opinions and more focused on intellectual analysis, logic, and reason. Only by learning how to think rationally, logically, and analytically can we get what we want in a global marketplace of ideas.

Rose M. Nemchik, Riverview Elementary School, Shawnee, told Committee members she is a Special Education teacher. She spoke to Committee members of the need for collaboration and that no matter where one is or what one does, working together is what is necessary to be successful and for the success of the student. She advised our children are the most important valuable thing we have and collaboration is the ownership of all of the staff, parents, social workers, ELL aides and others.

Karen M. Tritt, Shawnee Mission West High School, Overland Park, told Committee members she is a Spanish teacher and a building mentor. Ms. Tritt told Committee members she has been a curriculum mentor for fifteen foreign language teachers as they come into the Shawnee Mission district. She advised each first year teacher is provided all information needed and teacher development does not end with that first year.

Ms. Tritt told Committee members one of the most colorful ways to improve teacher instruction is through a program called "Professional Learning Community" or "PLC". She told Committee members that through PLC, teachers of a 'like content area' or 'like grade level' are put together and they are given four questions to answer. The questions are:

- What do you want the kids to know?
- How are you going to know if they have learned it?
- What are you going to do if they have learned it?
- What will you do with those who already know it?

With the power of collaboration, each member plays a role, regardless of experience, years of teaching, regardless of age, and it is extremely empowering.

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

Vice-Chairperson Horst thanked all of the team members for their presentations.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2010.



Kansas Teacher of the Year Program



2010 Kansas Teacher of the Year



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House Education Committee
 Date 1-19-10
 Attachment # 1