



Education and Local Government Interim Committee

60th Montana Legislature

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BOB HAWKS
SAM KITZENBERG
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DAVE LEWIS
JIM PETERSON

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BOB LAKE
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JOHN WARD

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CASEY BARRS, Lead Staff
LEANNE HEISEL, Research Analyst
EDDYE MCCLURE, Staff Attorney
FONG HOM, Secretary
ALAN PEURA, Fiscal Analyst

K-12 Subcommittee MINUTES

March 13, 2008

Room 137, Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Please note: These minutes provide abbreviated information about committee discussion, public testimony, action taken, and other activities. The minutes are accompanied by an audio recording. For each action listed, the minutes indicate the approximate amount of time in hours, minutes, and seconds that has elapsed since the start of the meeting. This time may be used to locate the activity on the audio recording.

An electronic copy of these minutes and the audio recording may be accessed from the Legislative Branch home page at <http://leg.mt.gov>. On the left-side column of the home page, select *Committees*, then *Interim*, and then the appropriate committee.

To view the minutes, locate the meeting date and click on minutes. To hear the audio recording, click on the Real Player icon. Note: You must have Real Player to listen to the audio recording.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

SEN. SAM KITZENBERG
SEN. DAVE LEWIS
REP. WANDA GRINDE
REP. JOHN WARD

LINDA MCCULLOCH
PATTY MYERS
JAN LOMBARDI

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED

KIRK MILLER

STAFF PRESENT

CASEY BARRS, Lead Staff
EDDYE MCCLURE, Staff Attorney
FONG HOM, Secretary

Visitors

Visitors' list, Attachment #1.

COMMITTEE ACTION

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

00:00:03 Sen. Kitzenberg called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. The committee secretary noted the roll visually. The minutes of December 13, 2007 meeting were approved as read.

AGENDA

Montana Quality Education Coalition Court Filings - Eddy McClure, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division

00:01:19 Ms. McClure talked about the Montana Quality Education Coalition court filing (**Exhibit 1**). Ms. McClure discussed ways to call a special session when not in a regular session. She said that it is the job of the education committee to continue working on the funding formula. The state is represented by counsel and it is the job of the Attorney General to defend what the state did in 2005 and 2007. In conclusion, Ms. McClure said that she doesn't not know as far as timing, when the Court is going to act on those motions.

Funding Adjustments for Small, Remote or Shrinking Schools - Casey Barrs, Research Analyst, Legislative Services Division

00:16:32 Mr. Barrs talked about six neighboring states that have funding mechanisms for rural schools: Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Mr. Barrs also talked about the document "Wyoming Funding Adjustments" (**Exhibit 2**) that provides descriptions of the source documents that Mr. Barrs used.

00:20:47 **Jim Standaert, Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Fiscal Division**, talked about Small School Adjustments in Montana and Other States (**Exhibit 3**).

Questions

01:06:18 Patty Myers asked if a budget that has been set by a school district can be amended after the vote has been taken, if by chance there are additional funds found. **Madalyn Quinlan, OPI**, said that there is in statute a set of reasons for which a district could adopt a budget amendment. A district has to adopt the budget first and then the budget can be amended.

Taxation and School Funding - Jeff Martin, Lead Staff, Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee

01:08:44 Mr. Martin said that the SJR 31 Study was specifically designed to (1) examine future demographics of property taxpayers, school-aged children, retirees, and

other factors relating to the viability of property taxes to fund education, (2) examine the distribution or mal-distribution of classes of taxable property in counties and school districts, (3) study the feasibility of the statewide equalization district with property tax levies against particular classes of property and other sources of statewide revenue, and (4) study the use of certain taxes to replace property taxes and to provide tax relief for homes, commercial properties, and agricultural and forest lands.

Public Comment

None at this time.

BREAK FOR LUNCH

Facilities Inventory Update - Joe Triem, Planning Manager, Architecture and Engineering Division, Department of Administration

03:29:40 Mr. Triem gave an update on the K-12 Public School Facility Condition Assessment Project. He discussed the graph (**Exhibit 4**) showing status of the assessment of schools. He said that the final report will be submitted on or before June 30, 2008.

Montana K-12 Test Rankings - Casey Barrs, Research Analyst, LSD

03:42:20 Mr. Barrs talked about Montana's overall placement in national and international test scores (**Exhibit 5**), drawings on documents from the New York Times, American Institutes for Research news release on international scores, and the American Institutes for Research report entitled "Chance Favors the Prepared Mind".

Questions

04:02:09 Patty Myers asked Casey Barrs for the rankings of the ACTs scores. Mr. Barrs said that the Composite was 18th, English was 23rd, Math was 18th, Reading was 10th, and Science was 13th.

Indian Education Achievement Gap - Chris Lohse, Research Director, American Indian Student Achievement, NCSL

04:03:27 Mr. Lohse talked about providing educational opportunities to students who have not experienced it. In Montana, that need is most pressing for its American Indian students. Some of the topics Mr. Lohse discussed, along with his slide presentation, were:

- International context that changed in the early 1990s when more people became a part of a capital market.
- The labor market that has changed such that it is now possible to move work to the worker, resulting in fewer job opportunities available for our most disadvantaged students.
- The United States ranked first in baseline qualifications (equivalent to a high school diploma) 40 years ago, but now ranks 13th.
- Investing in education that will result in large returns for their economy.
- The demands for skills in the U.S. is changing. The number of jobs that require non-routine analytic or non-routine interactive work are on the rise

while routine work is on the decline, making a strong case of building young people with strong critical thinking skills.

- Data on American Indians in the United States, comparing incomes, states having Indian reservations, and concentrated poverty having an impact on learning.
- Impacts of local and state policies on education for all Montanans, taking advanced and college preparatory courses in high school.
- Desegregation in Montana schools that could help narrow the achievement gap.
- Early childhood education.

(NOTE: Chris Lohse's slide presentation will be made available online at a future date)

Public Comment

None at this time.

Adjournment

05:30:31 Sen. Kitzenberg adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

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