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EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE 67th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Shannon O'Brien
Edith (Edie) McClafferty
Daniel Salomon
Russel (Russ) Tempel

HOUSE MEMBERS

Fred Anderson
Moffie Funk
Sara Novak
Ed Hill
Linda Reksten
Tyson Running Wolf

COMMITTEE STAFF

Pad McCracken - Research Analyst
Bri Nordhagen - Secretary
Laura Sankey - Attorney

MINUTES LOG

September 13, 2021

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Helena, Montana

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MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. Edith (Edie) McClafferty, Chair
Rep. Fred Anderson, Vice Chair
Rep. Ed Hill
Rep. Moffie Funk
Rep. Sara Novak
Rep. Linda Reksten
Sen. Daniel Salomon
Sen. Russel (Russ) Tempel
Sen. Shannon O'Brien

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Rep. Tyson Running Wolf

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Pad McCracken, Research Analyst
Bri Nordhagen, Secretary
Laura Sankey Keip, Attorney

AGENDA: (Attachment 1)

VISITOR'S LIST (Attachment 2)

COMMITTEE ACTION

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

13:00:56 Madam chair Edie McClafferty called the Education Interim Committee to order. The committee secretary took the roll.

Administrative Rule Review

13:05:28 Laura Sankey Keip, Legislative Services Division (LSD) attorney, began her overview of the "Administrative Rule Review" handout. (Exhibit 1)

MUS Fall updates

13:06:44 Helen Thigpen, Executive Director of Government Relations & Public Affairs, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), began her overview.

Questions from the committee

13:14:46 Rep. Reksten asked Ms. Thigpen about apprenticeships and asked if they were partnering with the labor unions and others. Rep. Reksten asked Ms. Thigpen if she could clarify the \$3 billion and how those funds are distributed.

13:16:44 Sen. Salomon asked Ms. Thigpen if most of the students were trying to come back to the campus or were most continuing an online program. Sen. Salomon asked Ms. Thigpen if the budgets were back to normal or was there still mixing and matching of Federal COVID funds in trying to get back to normal.

OPI/OCHE joint presentation Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathways

13:20:02 Jacque Treaster, Director of Dual Enrollment and CTE (OCHE), began her overview of the "Perkins & Montana Career Pathways" slideshow, "CTE" handout. (Exhibit 2) (Exhibit 3)

Questions from the committee

13:32:38 Rep. Funk asked Ms. Treaster if there were any requirements of participation for the grant or does there need to be more work done in getting information out to schools.

13:36:40 Sen. O'Brien asked Ms. Treaster about the ACT and the GEAR Up funding partnered with a match fund, what the status was of that especially pertaining to rural schools, and why weren't students being given the test.

13:39:37 Sen. Tempel asked Ms. Treaster if there were still schools having issues getting access to good internet.

13:40:07 Sen. Salomon asked Ms. Treaster if they've thought about partnering with the Digital Academy etc. to develop courses.

13:42:46 Rep. Funk asked Ms. Treaster if she could give an update on the Grow Your Own Program.

BREAK

13:50:09 Reconvened at 13:58:42

OPI/OCHE joint presentation Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathways (continued)

13:58:46 Sharyl Allen, Deputy Superintendent (OPI), began her overview of the “The Montana Ready Plan for Combined Workforce Investment and Outcomes”, and the “Montana Ready” handouts. [\(Exhibit 4\)](#) [\(Exhibit 5\)](#)

Questions from the committee

14:10:07 Madam chair McClafferty asked Ms. Allen about the number of associates degrees.

14:10:25 Rep. Funk asked Ms. Allen about the Perkins Program, how to qualify for the grant, what the requirements were, compliance etc.

14:13:47 Rep. Reksten asked Ms. Allen about the shortage of CTE teachers and asked what the OPI was trying to do to get teachers.

14:15:29 Sen. Salomon asked Ms. Allen about jobs that haven’t been developed yet.

Public comment

14:18:47 None

OPI Fall updates

14:19:33 Superintendent Elsie Arntzen presented.

Questions from the committee

14:32:53 Rep. Anderson asked Supt. Arntzen if there was any indication about the returning percentages of students versus those that aren’t.

14:39:07 Rep. Funk asked Supt. Arntzen about testing and if it would be cut back through ESSA.

14:43:27 Madam chair McClafferty asked Supt. Arntzen if the goal was to eventually get rid of SBAC.

14:44:45 Sen. O’Brien asked Supt. Arntzen about kindergarten readiness.

14:49:32 Madam chair McClafferty asked Supt. Arntzen if OPI would be tracking the children regarding the Waterford project who have moved from the program from last year and are now into the schools for the next 4 – 5 years.

14:52:38 Sen. O’Brien asked if Supt. Arntzen could speak regarding Waterford in particular, soft scales versus hard and how that’s taught without face-to- face interaction.

14:54:57 Rep. Hill asked Supt. Arntzen about the Waterford Program and if she could discuss it further.

14:56:57 Rep. Funk asked Supt. Arntzen if the second-year data would be available.

14:58:43 Rep. Reksten asked Supt. Arntzen what work was being done to help teachers interpret the assessments she discussed.

15:01:51 Sen. Salomon asked Supt. Arntzen about the maintenance of effort, if it’s died down regarding having Montana statute and the situations that are being looked at.

15:10:08 Madam chair McClafferty asked Supt. Arntzen how many positions didn’t get filled and what the school districts will do to make up for that.

OPI Fall updates (continued)

- 15:12:03 Jay Phillips, Chief Financial Officer (OPI), gave an overview of the “Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds I” handout. [\(Exhibit 6\)](#)
- 15:21:53 Jeff Kirksey, ESSER Program Manager, began his overview of the “ESSER Allocation and Use Information” handout. [\(Exhibit 7\)](#)

Questions from the committee

- 15:31:20 Rep. Funk asked Mr. Kirksey about getting the tests done on the same date, what OPI was doing to help each school do their plans and guidelines and can either funds be used as bonuses for teachers.
- 15:37:16 Rep. Hill asked about instructional time versus the amount of proficiency.
- 15:39:58 Sen. Tempel asked if there was a way to show a percentage of where they were at and where the numbers were.
- 15:40:32 Sen. O'Brien asked Mr. Kirksey about the educational leadership and what has been seen with that funding.
- 15:45:19 Madam chair McClafferty asked about funds being used to keep class size smaller.

OPI Fall updates (continued)

- 15:47:41 Mr. Phillips continued the presentation.

OPI Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) presentation

- 15:55:18 Susan Court, School Health Coordinator (OPI), began her overview of the “2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)” presentation. [\(Exhibit 8\)](#)

Questions from the committee

- 16:19:08 Sen. Tempel asked Ms. Court if the committee could get a copy of the report to share with the counties.
- 16:22:41 Rep. Reksten asked Ms. Court if there was any good news on some of the issues, are counties and school districts taking this data seriously and putting together programs that will address these issues.
- 16:24:53 Sen. O'Brien asked Ms. Court the age and population of the students who took the test.

OPI Fall updates (continued)

- 16:26:17 Supt. Arntzen presented the “Waterford Upstart” handout. [\(Exhibit 9\)](#)

Questions from the committee

- 16:27:48 Rep. Funk asked Supt. Arntzen if OPI sent out something to schools to help them interpret the mask mandates etc. Rep. Funk asked Supt. Arntzen if her presence at the protest in Billings with people that did not want to follow the school board rules was representing OPI or herself.

DPHHS school masking rule update

- 16:34:59 Ms. Sankey Keip reviewed the “Frequently asked Questions DPHHS”, and the “Before the Department of Public Health and Human Services of the state of Montana” handouts. [\(Exhibit 10\)](#) [\(Exhibit 11\)](#)
- 16:35:18 Paula Stannard, Chief Legal Counsel (DHPPS), began her presentation.

Questions from the committee

- 16:45:28 Rep. Funk asked Ms. Stannard if she could get the committee information from where these reports came from.
- 16:46:33 Sen. O'Brien asked Ms. Stannard if she could speak to any of the process, interface learning of the emergency rule in and of itself and why not a recommendation or statement.

Public comment

- 16:54:15 Kirk Miller, Helena, MT citizen

RECESS

- 17:04:38 Madam chair McClafferty called the Education Interim Committee to recess to be reconvened on September 14th, 2021.