

SUMMARY *of* PROCEEDINGS



SELECT COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL FINANCE RECALIBRATION

COMMITTEE MEETING INFORMATION

October 12 & 13, 2017
UW at Casper College
125 College Drive, Room UU322
Casper, Wyoming

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Hank Coe, Co-chairman
Representative Albert Sommers, Co-chairman
Senator Dave Kinskey
Senator Bill Landen
Senator R. Ray Peterson
Senator Chris Rothfuss
Representative Cathy Connolly
Representative Steve Harshman
Representative Bob Nicholas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Representative David Northrup

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Senator Dan Dockstader
Senator Jeff Wasserburger
Representative Garry Piiparinen
Representative Pat Sweeney
Representative Jerry Obermueller
Representative Debbie Bovee
Representative John Freeman
Representative Andy Schwartz

The Committee Meeting Summary of Proceedings (meeting minutes) is prepared by the Legislative Service Office (LSO) and is the official record of the proceedings of a legislative committee meeting. This document does not represent a transcript of the meeting; it is a digest of the meeting and provides a record of official actions taken by the Committee. All meeting materials and handouts provided to the Committee by the Legislative Service Office, public officials, lobbyists, and the public are on file at the Legislative Service Office and are part of the official record of the meeting. An index of these materials is provided at the end of this document and these materials are on file at the Legislative Service Office. For more information or to review meeting materials, please contact the Legislative Service Office at (307) 777-7881 or by e-mail at lso@wyoleg.gov. The Summary of Proceedings for each legislative committee meeting can be found on the Wyoming Legislature's website at www.wyoleg.gov.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Matthew Willmarth, Senior School Finance Analyst
 Matt Sackett, Senior Fiscal Analyst
 Ted Hewitt, Staff Attorney

OTHERS PRESENT AT MEETING

Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) to review the Committee Sign-in Sheet for a list of other individuals who attended the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Select Committee on School Finance Recalibration (Committee) met for two days in Casper. The Committee received a progress update from the Legislature's consultant Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) on APA's work to evaluate the State's educational program and recalibrate the State's education funding model. The Committee received public comment regarding the State's educational program and funding model. The Committee also received information from APA regarding a study comparing the State's education program and the Hathaway Success Curriculum to various measures across other states. Finally, the Committee reviewed information forwarded from the Joint Education Interim Committee regarding computer science education and potential cost savings and efficiencies in Wyoming public education. Wyoming PBS, with the permission of the Committee chairmen, recorded the two-day meeting and day one can be viewed [here](#) and day two can be viewed [here](#).

CALL TO ORDER (OCTOBER 12, 2017)

Co-Chairman Sommers called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. The following sections summarize the Committee proceedings by topic. Please refer to [Appendix 2](#) to review the Committee Meeting Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the July 25, 2017, Committee meeting were approved without change.

UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE RECALIBRATION WORK PLAN

Ms. Amanda Brown, Mr. Justin Silverstein, and Dr. Mark Fermanich of APA discussed APA's progress on each task related to the evaluation of the State's educational program and recalibration of the State's education funding model. [Appendix 3](#) and [Appendix 4](#). They updated the Committee on the progress in implementing alternative funding approaches using a successful schools model, a professional judgment model, and a statistical cost model. Dr. Fermanich discussed the memorandum Dr. Jennifer Imazeki provided the Committee on her progress to establish if a reliable statistical model can be created. [Appendix 5](#). Dr. Fermanich also reviewed the progress of the additional studies requested by the Legislature on special education, transportation, and gifted and talented education. He also discussed the study APA is conducting on efficiencies and cost-effectiveness of consolidating select school districts.

REVIEW OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Ms. Brown, Mr. Silverstein and Dr. Fermanich discussed APA's work to gather feedback from stakeholders around the State regarding the State's educational program and education funding model. [Appendix 6](#) and [Appendix 7](#). They indicated feedback was collected in three primary ways: 1) one-on-one and small group interviews; 2) four practitioner panels held across Wyoming; and 3) an online survey. Ms. Brown reviewed the results of the one-on-one and small group interviews, which included interviews with the Governor's Office, Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), State Board of Education, University of Wyoming, and Wyoming education organizations. She stated the key themes

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL FINANCE RECALIBRATION *Summary of Proceedings*

from the interviews regarding the educational program were: ensuring postsecondary and workforce readiness; developing a 21st century workforce; citizenship readiness; and that the educational program generally includes the right components.

Ms. Brown also reviewed the feedback from speakers at the practitioner panels, stating: thirty-four percent prefer the educational program to stay the same; sixteen percent would like to ensure electives were not cut; fourteen percent requested greater emphasis on career and technical education; ten percent indicated recent budget reductions have had an impact on the ability to provide the educational program; and ten percent felt opportunities need to improve for students with severe special education needs.

Mr. Silverstein summarized the results of the online survey, which was fully or partially taken by 1,240 people. Mr. Silverstein indicated some respondents to the survey opined recent funding reductions were leading to school districts not being able to provide needed education services. The Committee discussed the effects of the Hathaway Success Curriculum and how school districts deliver the State's educational program. Staff from the WDE indicated no school districts have requested waivers from the WDE under current law indicating they are not able to provide the Hathaway Success Curriculum.

Mr. Silverstein discussed feedback received on the State's K-12 operations funding model in small-group interviews, which was generally positive. He summarized the key themes from the stakeholders: the funding model worked well before recent budget reductions; salaries paid are higher than the model funds and school districts make tradeoffs to pay those higher salaries; and one hundred percent reimbursement for special education was the best approach. Dr. Fermanich discussed feedback received on the education funding model from practitioners and the survey respondents, who generally believe current funding levels should be maintained and one hundred percent reimbursement for special education and transportation works well.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON EDUCATION PROGRAM AND FUNDING MODEL

Representative Garry Piiparinen discussed creating a school funding model that limits school district expenditures within specified categories, rather than providing the school districts with a block grant. He also questioned the wisdom of certain school facility expenditures.

In response to Committee questions, Justin Chavez, School Finance Audit Manager for the Wyoming Department of Audit, discussed the school district auditing process his agency undertakes. Jed Cicarelli, School Foundation Program Supervisor for the WDE, discussed how the WDE determines how closely school districts deploy resources to the funding model. Representative Harshman requested further information from the Department on how closely school districts adhere to the funding model.

Dicky Shanor, Chief of Staff for the WDE, and Megan Degenfelder, Chief Policy Officer for the WDE, discussed a memorandum from State Superintendent Jillian Balow regarding recommendations to amend the State's educational program. **Appendix 8.** Co-Chairman Sommers requested additional information regarding the cost of adding computer science to the State's educational program.

Janine Bay Teske, School Board Vice-Chairman from Teton County School District #1, discussed the regional cost adjustment and the changing demographics of student populations.

Representative Pat Sweeney discussed computer science education.

Shane Ogden, Superintendent for Park County School District #16, discussed how small districts provide the Hathaway Success Curriculum and student activities.

Diana Clapp, Superintendent of Fremont County School District #6, discussed small districts' ability to staff necessary positions.

David Barker, Superintendent of Fremont County School District #1, discussed Wyoming's National Assessment of Educational Progress scores. He also noted he believes in developing collaborative environments for teachers.

Representative Connolly conveyed comments from Karlee Provenza a Wyoming citizen regarding education in the State.

Erik Trowbridge, Headmaster of the Array Technology School in Cheyenne, discussed the benefits of computer science education.

Charles Auzqui, Superintendent for Sheridan County School District #3, discussed how small school districts provide the State's educational program.

Zachary Opps, Powell Middle School science teacher, Joel Hayano, Powell High School computer science, robotics and math teacher, and three Wyoming public school students addressed the Committee and discussed the benefits of teaching and learning computer science and computational thinking. They further discussed how computer science standards and classes may be included in the State's education system.

Judy Catchpole, Chairwoman of the Accountability Advisory Committee to the Joint Education Committee and former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, discussed the State's educational program.

Tighe Fagan, Principal at Gannet Peak, discussed the benefits of computer science education.

The Committee also received written comments from Dodie Heggie, [Appendix 9](#), Paige Gustafson, [Appendix 10](#), and Ariane Eicke, [Appendix 11](#).

REVIEW OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN OTHER STATES

Dr. Fermanich discussed how Wyoming's educational program compares to the educational programs of regional states (Wyoming's contiguous states and North Dakota) and high performing states (Vermont, Indiana, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Virginia). [Appendix 12](#) and [Appendix 13](#). Mr. Silverstein noted Wyoming's content standards, overall, are similar to standards in the comparison states. Ms. Brown discussed how the State's Hathaway Success Curriculum compares to other states' graduation requirements and other measures. The Committee discussed the State's policy of reimbursing one hundred percent of special education expenses. Representative Harshman requested information on the percentage of overall education spending expended on special education for the last 20 years.

As part of the comparison study, APA provided the Committee with a series of matrices detailing: the content standard areas for the regional comparison states, [Appendix 14](#); the content standard areas for the high performing comparison states, [Appendix 15](#); Hathaway scholarship requirements compared to assorted measures in comparison states, [Appendix 16](#); math standards comparisons for the regional states, [Appendix 17](#); math standards comparisons for the high performing states, [Appendix 18](#); English-language arts standards comparisons for the regional states, [Appendix 19](#); English-language arts standards comparisons for the high performing states, [Appendix 20](#); science standards comparisons for

the regional states, [Appendix 21](#); science standards comparisons for the high performing states, [Appendix 22](#); special education standards requirements for the comparison states, [Appendix 23](#); English language learner standards for the comparison states, [Appendix 24](#); and gifted and talented standards for the comparison states, [Appendix 25](#).

APA also provided recommendations to revise the State's educational program. [Appendix 26](#). The Committee requested information on how to facilitate additional career and technical education.

Public Comment

Daniel Meyer, Special Education Director for Region V BOCES, discussed special education funding and Department rules on who can receive Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services. After discussion, the Committee requested information comparing the relative number of IDEA lawsuits among the states.

Summer Stephens, Weston County School District #7 Superintendent, discussed the State's common core of skills.

Tammy Schroeder, Governmental Affairs Director for the Wyoming Education Association, addressed changes to the common core of knowledge and common core of skills recommended by WDE.

Representative Garry Piiparinen expressed concern about expanding the State's educational program.

Paige Fenton Hughes, Superintendent for Converse County School District #1, discussed the State's educational program.

Michael O'Donnell, Wyoming Attorney General's Office, discussed potential difficulties created by amending the State's educational program.

Boyd Brown, Superintendent for Campbell County School District #1, suggested the common core of skills should be updated, but the funding model should also be updated. He discussed his district's work to incorporate computer science into its curriculum.

Jay Curtis, Superintendent for Park County School District #1, supported the idea of creating stand-alone content and performance standards for computer science education.

Brian Farmer, Executive Director for the Wyoming School Boards Association, discussed amending the common core of knowledge and skills.

John Lyttle, Laramie County School District #1 Superintendent, discussed successful schools in his district and incorporating computer science within the State's educational program.

Gerry Chase, Superintendent for Johnson County School District #1, discussed his district's work to incorporate computer science education in his district's curriculum and the difficulties of incorporating computer science into the State's educational program.

Kimberly Condie, School Board Trustee for Park County School District #1, expressed support for creating computer science education opportunities for all public school students.

MEETING RECESS

The Committee recessed for the day at 5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER (OCTOBER 13, 2017)

The Committee reconvened at 8:35 a.m.

The Committee engaged in a discussion regarding the quality of education in Wyoming and the cost of providing that education.

JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION

Dr. Laurel Ballard, Student and Teacher Resource Team Supervisor at WDE, discussed the work of a WDE task force to create a plan to increase computer science education offerings in Wyoming. The recommendations of the task force are contained within a report presented to the Joint Education Committee (JEC) at JEC's September 2017 meeting, which JEC requested be shared with the Committee. [Appendix 27](#). Dr. Ballard also discussed an earlier report submitted by WDE to JEC at JEC's June 2017 meeting regarding computer science education, which is contained in [Appendix 27](#).

Nick Bellack, Assistant Director for the Professional Teaching Standards Board, updated the Committee on the work of the Professional Teaching Standards Board in licensing teachers and how changes in federal law have increased the Board's flexibility in licensing teachers without losing federal funds.

Public Comment

Carla Hester-Croff, Assistant Professor of Information Technology for Western Wyoming Community College, discussed the benefits of computer science education.

Shaun Roberts, State Government Affairs Director for Code.org, discussed computer science education. He stated Code.org has committed to provide training for two hundred fifty computer science teachers to the State free of charge.

Committee Directives

The Committee directed LSO to draft legislation: to eliminate "keyboarding" and include "computational thinking" in the State's educational program; to allow a computer science class to count as a science class for high school graduation; and to allow a computer science class to count towards the fourth year of math for Hathaway scholarship eligibility.

The Committee also directed LSO to draft a letter from the Committee's Co-chairmen to the WDE recommending the WDE prioritize Wyoming Education Trust Fund grants to enhance professional development opportunities relating to computer science and computational thinking and to increase computer science course offerings.

Senator Kinskey requested staff provide a list of education requirements contained in Wyoming Statute not included in W.S. 21-9-101 and 102.

JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: COST SAVINGS AND EFFICIENCIES

Matthew Willmarth, LSO Senior School Finance Analyst, reviewed possible cost savings and efficiency options for K-12 school finance operations and major maintenance recommended by JEC for the Committee's consideration. **Appendix 28**. Mr. Willmarth explained these options include the following: adjust the method to calculate average daily membership in the funding model; modify the health insurance allocation through the funding model; eliminate charter school average daily membership adjustments; eliminate certain aspects of funding for co-located schools; eliminate or modify funding for interim/formative assessments; modify funding for groundskeepers; modify the extra-hazardous worker's compensation coverage for special education employees; require the WDE to revise its rules on special education and transportation; eliminate bus lease purchase agreements and provide full reimbursement for bus purchases; modify statutorily required advertising costs; repeal teacher extra compensation adjustments provided through W.S. 21-13-324; and adjust building lease payment mechanisms for charter schools.

Mr. Willmarth noted JEC requested draft legislation to implement a majority of the options contained in **Appendix 28** with the following caveats. The JEC requested separate draft bills for the options specifically related to charter schools and health insurance, including one bill requiring school districts to participate in the State's health insurance plan and a second bill modifying the amount of health insurance funding provided through the funding model based upon prior year actual expenditures. The JEC also directed staff to not include the options to: 1) calculate average daily membership on prior year average daily membership only; and 2) eliminate certain aspects of funding for co-located schools. The JEC also directed LSO staff work with the Department of Workforce Services to refine amendments to the extra-hazardous workers compensation provisions for special education employees.

Representative Nicholas requested information regarding the impact of potential health care legislation for each school district. Senator Peterson requested information regarding co-located schools in Big Horn County.

Public Comment

Don Dihle, Supervisor of Information Systems and Fiscal Services, Campbell County School District #1, encouraged the Committee to allow APA to perform the work it is contracted to do for the Legislature.

Ed Geotz, Business Manager for Albany County School District #1, expressed support for allowing school districts to maintain flexibility in offering health insurance.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Co-Chairman Coe adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Sommers, Co-Chairman

Committee Meeting Materials Index

Appendix	Agenda Item	Appendix Description	Appendix Provider
1	Committee Sign-In Sheet	Lists meeting attendees	Legislative Service Office
2	Committee Meeting Agenda	Provides an outline of the topics the Committee planned to address at meeting	Legislative Service Office
3	Update on the Progress of the Recalibration Work Plan	Study of the Wyoming Educational Program and Recalibration and Reevaluation of the Wyoming Education Resource Block Grant Funding Model: Update on Work Plan, October 12, 2017	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
4	Update on the Progress of the Recalibration Work Plan	Memorandum dated September 29, 2017, Progress Report on School Finance Recalibration Study	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
5	Update on the Progress of the Recalibration Work Plan	Memorandum dated September 28, 2017, Wyoming Cost Function Feasibility Study	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
6	Review of Education Stakeholder Feedback	Study of the Wyoming Educational Program and Recalibration and Reevaluation of the Wyoming Education Resource Block Grant Funding Model: Key Themes from Stakeholder Feedback, October 12, 2017	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
7	Review of Education Stakeholder Feedback	Memorandum dated September 28, 2017, Stakeholder Feedback Process and Key Themes	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
8	Public Comment on Education Program and Funding Model	Memorandum dated October 12, 2017, The "Basket of Goods"	Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
9	Public Comment on Education Program and Funding Model	Written Comments	Dodie Heggie

Appendix	Agenda Item	Appendix Description	Appendix Provider
10	Public Comment on Education Program and Funding Model	Written Comments	Paige Gustafson
11	Public Comment on Education Program and Funding Model	Written Comments	Ariane Eicke
12	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Study of the Wyoming Educational Program and Recalibration and Reevaluation of the Wyoming Education Resource Block Grant Funding Model: Task 1A: Educational Program Comparison	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
13	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Memorandum dated September 28, 2017, Educational Program Comparison	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
14	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Cross-State Overview of Content Standards Areas – Regional States	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
15	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Cross-State Overview of Content Standard Areas – High Performing States	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
16	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Hathaway Scholarship Requirements	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
17	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Math Standards: States in the Region	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
18	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Math Standards: Selected States Based on High Academic Performance	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
19	Review of Education Programs in Other States	English Language Arts Standards: States in the Region	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
20	Review of Education Programs in Other States	English Language Arts Standards: Selected States in the Region Based on High Academic Performance	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
21	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Science Standards: States in the Region	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
22	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Science Standards: Selected States in the Region Based on High Academic Performance	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)

Appendix	Agenda Item	Appendix Description	Appendix Provider
23	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Special Education Comparison	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
24	Review of Education Programs in Other States	English Language Learners Comparison	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
25	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Gifted and Talented Comparison	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
26	Review of Education Programs in Other States	Memorandum dated October 10, 2017, Conclusions and Recommendations Related to Education Program	Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)
27	Joint Education Committee Recommendations: Computer Science	Memorandum dated September 29, 2017, Wyoming's Education Program: Computer Science Recommendations	Legislative Service Office
28	Joint Education Committee Recommendations: Cost Savings and Efficiencies	Memorandum dated September 29, 2017, Potential Efficiencies and Cost Saving Options in Wyoming Public Education – 2017 Interim Priority #1	Legislative Service Office