



First Meeting
2004 Interim
June 21, 2004

LCR 1 & 2
State Capitol Building
Pierre, South Dakota

Monday, June 21, 2004

The first meeting of the interim Public University Curricula Study Committee was called to order by Chair Representative Jean Hunhoff at 9:07 a.m. (CT), June 21, 2004, in LCR 1 and 2 of the State Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota.

A quorum was determined with the following members answering the roll call: Senators Jerry Apa, Robert Duxbury, Marguerite Kleven, and Clarence Kooistra; and Representatives Rebekah Craddock, Cooper Garnos, Jean Hunhoff, Alice McCoy, and Thomas Van Norman. Representative Stanford Adelstein, Ben Nesselhuf, Hal Wick, and Ron Williamson were excused.

Staff members present included Annie Mehlhaff, Principal Fiscal Analyst, and Teri Retrum, Senior Legislative Secretary.

(NOTE: For sake of continuity, the following minutes are not necessarily in chronological order. Also, all referenced documents are on file with the Master Minutes.)

Remarks from the Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Representative Jean Hunhoff commented that the intent of the committee's study is to review information, develop direction and possible action on what should be the preparation for teachers in South Dakota to teach our children—interaction, outcomes, how South Dakota can do better, etc.

Vice Chair Senator Marguerite Kleven referenced an article from the Sunday, June 20, 2004, *Rapid City Journal* concerning evaluation of an individual's ability to teach children. She said that perhaps university students who are pursuing a teaching degree should be evaluated at an earlier stage in their study.

Senator Clarence Kooistra asked Chair Hunhoff if the committee possibly would develop legislation to move forward or provide recommendations to the education entities. Chair Hunhoff responded affirmatively.

Chair Hunhoff asked if there were additions or changes to the agenda. There being none, Chair Hunhoff declared the agenda approved.

Review of Teacher Certification Standards and Procedures

Board of Regents

Ms. Lesta Turchen, Senior Administrator and Academic Officer, Board of Regents, distributed copies of a booklet detailing answers to questions previously sent to the participants in the roundtable discussion portion of this meeting (**Document #1**).

Ms. Turchen said that South Dakota has five public institutions with approved teacher programs—Black Hills State University (BHSU), Dakota State University (DSU), Northern State University (NSU), South Dakota State University (SDSU), and University of South Dakota (USD). She said that the programs are approved by the South Dakota Board of Regents and by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). There are thirty-five teacher programs throughout the regental system.

In terms of how to know whether a prospective teacher has the ability to educate and relate to children in the classroom, Ms. Turchen said that the prospective teacher is evaluated at several levels. Ms. Turchen listed the following among some of the evaluation tools:

- Student must meet the grade average required to enter the college of education at each university in South Dakota;
- Student must successfully complete the PRAXIS exam; and
- Student must successfully complete the pedagogical exam.

Ms. Turchen explained that the Board of Regents maintains an on-going partnership with the South Dakota Board of Education, local teachers, local schools, etc., for continuing professional development. She said that one of the most challenging steps in teacher professional development is assessment.

Ms. Turchen said that there is a great deal of work and cooperation between the Board of Regents and the Department of Education to provide children in South Dakota a quality educational opportunity.

Department of Education

Dr. Rick Melmer, Secretary, Department of Education, distributed copies of the department's responses to committee questions (**Document #2**). He briefed the committee on how the Department of Education works with public schools and with tribal and private schools in South Dakota. Dr. Melmer listed the following among the responsibilities of the Board of Education:

- Approval and awarding of teacher certification;
- Licensing and renewal of teaching certificates; and

- Professional development opportunities—local school district and local teachers decide in which opportunities to participate.

Dr. Melmer said that the state needs to become more involved in recruitment and retention of teachers. To take a proactive approach in recruitment and retention, Dr. Melmer said that the state is participating in the "Teach for America Program." Dr. Melmer stated: "We are going to go out and find and recruit teachers to work in lower income areas of South Dakota."

Dr. Melmer asked if there were specific individuals or information that the committee wants from the department to address committee concerns.

In response to Dr. Melmer, **Representative Rebekah Craddock** requested information in regard to implementing the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). **Representative Thomas Van Norman** said that he is interested in hearing whether anyone works with the tribal universities and colleges and whether there is someone who is involved in teaching Lakota language and culture.

Ms. Melody Schopp, Department of Education, said that the intent of the Department of Education is to "raise the bar" of education in South Dakota. She explained that teachers must renew a teaching certificate every five years by completing six hours of coursework, of which three hours must be college transcribed hours. Also, Ms. Schopp said that out-of state candidates applying for a teaching certificate in South Dakota must complete three hours of both Indian Studies and Human Relations.

Regarding the "Teach for America Program," Ms. Schopp said that all recruits will be hired to teach in the Todd County school district for a two-year commitment. Ms. Schopp also advised the committee that the state's private and tribal schools have been invited to attend the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Academies held at Alverno College in Wisconsin.

Representative Craddock asked: "Within our regulation policy of South Dakota, what is the role with the tribal schools?"

Ms. Schopp said that certification is the same for tribal schools as public schools; however, the department does not track whether a teacher has "highly qualified" status in a tribal school. She said that there is not a clear demarcation between public schools and tribal schools in South Dakota.

Responding to Senator Kleven, Ms. Schopp listed the following among the federal requirements for a teacher to fit the definition of a "highly qualified" determination:

- Fully certified by the state;
- Bachelor's degree; and
- Proficient in content knowledge.

Also, Ms. Schopp said that each state can develop their own rules called "house rules." In South Dakota, the "highly qualified" endorsement is given to teachers who have been teaching in South Dakota for three years and that "highly qualified" status is specific to courses taught.

Ms. Schopp said that paraprofessionals in South Dakota are eligible to be highly qualified also. To be a highly qualified paraprofessional in South Dakota, Ms. Schopp said that the individual must have:

- An associate degree;
- Forty-eight hours of collegiate coursework; and
- Successfully completed a paraprofessional test.

Responding to Chair Hunhoff, Ms. Schopp said that a paraprofessional is an individual who supports the teacher—for instance, a teacher's aide. Ms. Schopp said that each school district can develop its definition of paraprofessional.

South Dakota Board of Education

Ms. Glenna Fouberg, President, South Dakota Board of Education, said that the Board of Regents and the South Dakota Department of Education approve the certification for teachers. She said the Board of Education is apprised of everything that they develop. Ms. Fouberg noted that the Board's comments are included in the comments from the Department of Education (Document #2).

Representative Van Norman asked Ms. Fouberg whether the Board of Education is working on increasing educational opportunities in reservation communities in South Dakota. He said that the reservations have difficulty in retention of students. Representative Van Norman said that he would like to have continuing dialogue with the state's education entities regarding education of reservation children.

Ms. Fouberg said that an Indian Education Advisory Council has been established. The Department of Education is in the process of hiring an Indian Education Coordinator. Ms. Fouberg encouraged more collaboration among educational entities in South Dakota.

Representative Van Norman asked what the mechanism would be for having daily dialogue in the future.

Ms. Fouberg responded that the state is working on the concern.

At this time, Vice Chair Kleven said that she would like to note that students from Dupree, South Dakota, won the First Place Award at the National History Contest in Washington, D.C., and commended them for that honor.

Senator Duxbury commended the state for its efforts to open communication among all the entities involved in education in the state.

The committee recessed at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened at 10:45 a.m.

South Dakota Education Association

Mr. Robert Whitehead, Executive Director, South Dakota Education Association (SDEA), distributed copies of written responses to committee questions (**Document #3**) and a brochure titled "NEA's Teacher Quality Agenda Advocating Quality Teaching that Ensures Quality Learning" (**Document #4**).

Mr. Whitehead began his remarks by stating that he is impressed with all the education entities in South Dakota and how they continue to communicate with each other in their efforts to education children.

Mr. Whitehead said that enhancing teacher programs, eliminating redundancy, and making sure teachers have the necessary tools to educate children are some of the responsibilities of the SDEA. He said that the SDEA offers programs to members and non-members alike and also provides follow-up surveys of what teachers would like to have in the professional development area.

Noting some of the demographics concerning education in South Dakota, Mr. Whitehead said that there is a steady decline in male teachers—they make up thirty percent of the work force. Also, Mr. Whitehead said that there is a concern about the number of minority teachers. He said that the SDEA has requested a \$15,000 grant so SDEA members can go into schools to talk to the minority paraprofessionals about how to get them into the teaching profession, if they are interested. Mr. Whitehead said that the Indian Studies Program required for all teachers needs to be updated, particularly in the Lakota language area. He said that education service agencies need the opportunity to provide professional development programs for teachers and be able to respond to what teachers really need rather than what "we think they need."

Mr. Whitehead commented that the SDEA has strived to work with all school districts to maintain the high quality of education in South Dakota and to make improvements where and when necessary.

Representative Cradduck asked if the SDEA tracks teachers who are leaving the profession.

Mr. Whitehead responded that fifty percent of graduating teachers will leave the profession within five years. He said that the percentage does not include those who move to another school district or those who leave the state. Regardless of the reason for those who are leaving, Mr. Whitehead said that it is a disturbing trend.

Representative Van Norman asked what the Legislature can do regarding teachers' salaries. He also asked for suggestions for a scholarship program to keep teachers in South Dakota.

Mr. Whitehead said that South Dakota teachers have the lowest salaries in the nation—salaries have been the lowest in the last fifteen years. He said that it would depend on how much authority the Legislature would want to "wrest away from the local school districts" because the local school district sets teacher salaries for that district. Mr. Whitehead said that the Legislature could give teacher bargaining units a more fair and equitable exchange at the bargaining table. He said that the SDEA does not have statistics on whether low salaries are the cause of teachers leaving the profession in South Dakota. Mr. Whitehead said that many teachers have to pay for their own college credits, so scholarships might be an incentive to stay in the profession as long as they are accessible to all. He said that South Dakota students perform very well nationally.

Responding to questions posed by **Senator Jerry Apa**, Mr. Whitehead said that the SDEA is opposed to merit pay because the determination of who receives merit pay is subjective and not accessible to everyone. He said that many teachers have jobs for the summer but there are also teachers who work at a second job after school. Mr. Whitehead said that typically teachers receive a pay upgrade when they further their education by taking a college class for credit; however, the practice does depend on the contract with the local school district.

Vice Chair Kleven asked for clarification on access to professional development programs. Mr. Whitehead responded that all teachers have access to programs to continue accreditation; however, some do not necessarily have access to their specific program for development.

Vice Chair Kleven also asked Mr. Whitehead for the SDEA's position on alternative certification. Mr. Whitehead responded that the SDEA is a strong supporter of traditional certification.

Senator Kooistra asked how the decline of male teachers could be reversed.

Mr. Whitehead responded that it is not only a trend in South Dakota but also nationwide. He said that the salary is part of the reason but not the only reason. He said that the SDEA is trying to encourage men and minorities to enter the teaching profession.

Senator Apa noted that there are other professions in which male employees are declining. Mr. Whitehead agreed that more women are now pursuing more traditionally male careers.

Representative Van Norman asked about the remarks made by **Dr. Wayne Evans** at the Legislature's September 29 and 30, 2003, interim State-Tribal Relations Committee when he said that recruitment and training of Lakota teachers to teach in public schools would be a positive element for Indian and non-Indian students in the public schools.

Mr. Whitehead agreed and said that working with the paraprofessionals in the public schools to become classroom teachers and finding out if they are interested in becoming teachers and finding out what tools may help them to become teachers would be a positive endeavor. He

said that there are many Native American children in public schools throughout South Dakota and Native American teachers in the public schools would be a positive role model.

Mr. Whitehead offered the services of the SDEA in any manner that the committee deems useful.

Curriculum and Assessment in South Dakota

Ms. Tammy Bauck, Department of Education, distributed copies of a graph denoting the curriculum for Intensive Teacher Development Activities and General Teacher Development Activities in the subjects of Reading, Math, and Science, and Electronic Instructional Resources, and assessment tools (**Document #5**).

Ms. Bauck said that the federal "Reading First Program" is not available to all districts; however, the "South Dakota Reads Program" is open to all districts in the state. The Department of Education has hired a South Dakota Reads Director. Ms. Bauck said that the findings of the first evaluation of the South Dakota Reads Program showed the program to be positive but not strong. South Dakota has contracted with McREL and a woman who is a former employee of McREL to conduct a "high stakes" evaluation of the South Dakota Reads Program. Ms. Bauck said that the elements that the state will collect will show evidence of both programs being very beneficial. She stated: "We will never know if South Dakota Reads is the right answer, but we will know if we are going in the right direction. Ms. Bauck said that the Reading First Program is very intensive and that the South Dakota Reads Program is less so.

Chair Hunhoff asked whether the program is already in the teacher curriculum so that the state does not have to continually provide funding.

Ms. Turchen said that the Board of Regents deals with teacher preparation and the Department of Education and the South Dakota Board of Education deal with professional development. She said that reading has been a part of the curriculum for education instruction—currently a minor in reading is offered in South Dakota.

Chair Hunhoff asked: "If we find a deficiency in this area, what do we have to do to continue funding?"

Ms. Bauck said that South Dakota Reads is a professional development program for teachers to receive further credit to go toward the six credit hours required for recertification and to further continue their professional development.

Senator Apa said: "It bothers me that we are spending all these dollars on teaching teachers to read." He asked if this perhaps is a new fad such as the "new math" turned out to be.

Ms. Turchen said that reading research has not really been ignored. There has always been an emphasis to train teachers to understand how students learn to read.

Senator Apa asked what has gone wrong that the scores have trended downward.

Dr. Melmer said that students come to school less prepared to learn now—students are suffering from family troubles; the raw material is not as good. Also, Dr. Melmer said that some teachers might not be of the same quality as they used to be. He said that the brightest women used to go into teaching because that was one of the few career choices available. Now the brightest women are becoming doctors, lawyers, and scientists. Dr. Melmer said that the best quality people need to be found to teach.

The committee recessed at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

Round Table Discussion

Participants in the round table discussion were individuals from the South Dakota Department of Education, South Dakota Board of Regents, South Dakota Board of Education, South Dakota Education Association, and the committee members.

Chair Hunhoff read the topic for the Round Table as follows:

Is there coordination between those who educate our teachers; regulate and license our teachers; and represent our teachers?

Representative Craddock asked what tracking mechanism is in place to evaluate whether the reading program is meeting its goals from a teacher's perspective and a student's perspective.

Ms. Turchen commented that there are five teacher education programs in the state and said that a matrix of approved education programs that have received approval and accreditation from the Department of Education can be found on page 7 of Document #1. The Department of Education conducts a review every five years by NCATE and state reviewers. Ms. Turchen said that the Board of Regents does not have a reading standard, but the Department of Education does, and the Board of Regents relies on the department to guide the board on what to do.

Ms. Turchen said that the Board of Regents also conducts post-graduate surveys and, if permitted, will also survey employers. However, there is no requirement that the graduate complete and return the survey or provide a forwarding address. Ms. Turchen said that, typically, the graduate is helpful and takes the survey seriously.

Representative Craddock asked what process is in place to correct deficiencies in a precepting teacher.

Ms. Turchen said that the Board of Regents has programs for cooperative teachers and advisory councils with K-12 teachers. Often, the principal makes the decision which teacher meets the qualifications to be a cooperative teacher. Ms. Turchen said that the Board of Regents can terminate a contract with a cooperating teacher.

Responding to a question posed by Senator Apa, Ms. Schopp said that she would provide the number of teachers graduated by the private sector.

Representative Cooper Garnos asked: "What can the state do to become correct our reading deficiency? What about pre-kindergarten? If other states are doing it, is it effective?"

Dr. Melmer responded that there are a number of states that are doing more in the reading area than South Dakota. Also, Dr. Melmer said that the state needs to do more in preschool education, particularly with at-risk children and families. He said that the state could require preschools to be accredited and fund the preschools. Dr. Melmer said that all-day kindergarten would also be a step in the right direction.

Further responding to Representative Garnos, Dr. Melmer said that these steps would not alleviate all the problems down the line but they would help.

Vice Chair Kleven asked: "Don't Head Start Programs meet the needs of at-risk children and families?"

Dr. Melmer replied that Head Start meets the needs of "only the neediest of the needy."

Vice Chair Kleven asked how the state is involved in Head Start.

Dr. Melmer could not provide any further details on the state's involvement; however, he said that there is someone in the Department of Education who works with the Head Start Program.

Chair Hunhoff asked: "What are these people who are out there teaching telling us on surveys—If something is broken, what are we doing to fix it?"

Ms. Turchen said that the Board of Regents contracted with the Chiesman Foundation to provide feedback from teachers. She said that she will provide the committee with copies of **The Practitioners' Voice Round Table Discussion by K-12 Teachers and Administrators**.

Ms. Donna DeKraai, South Dakota Education Association, said that teachers tell the Association that first- and second-year teachers mostly express concern about classroom management and are concerned about whether the time spent by a student teacher in the classroom is adequate.

Ms. Turchen explained a pilot project between BHSU and the Rapid City School District where the fourth year of an education student is devoted entirely to the classroom to find out whether this will help with classroom management.

Senator Duxbury asked about the number of South Dakota education graduates who are getting their first-year teaching job outside South Dakota. He noted Northern State University's efforts on recruiting highly qualified professors to teach education courses.

Dr. Melmer said that continued funding will be an on-going concern. He said that distance learning will become more important rather than less important. Dr. Melmer said that funding distance education will be a concern for the Legislature in the future.

Responding to Senator Kooistra, Ms. Turchen said that the Governor wants a curriculum redesign, improvement of quality, and improvement in efficiency of delivery in regard to distance education. The Governor's staff reviews the proposals and makes the final determination on what gets funded.

Representative Garnos asked how the state can retain teachers.

Dr. Melmer said that most people get into the teaching field because they want to teach. He said that the support that a teacher will receive from an administration is probably the key to retention. Dr. Melmer said that teachers need a support system and need to know that they are making a difference in the lives of people.

Ms. Fouberg said that parental support is also very important.

Dr. Melmer said that the Governor's 2010E Initiative focuses on preschool education, high school initiatives, administrator and teacher quality, and innovative ideas.

Representative Van Norman asked whether reservation schools could be factored in when considering distance education. Also, Representative Van Norman commented that it would be helpful if all education entities would invite tribal officials to meetings and provide them with minutes of the meetings.

Representative Craddock agreed and said that the state needs to reach out to all areas of the state as it develops programs.

Representative Van Norman asked what the higher education facilities are offering for classes in Native American language and culture.

Ms. Turchen said that all teacher candidates are required to take a Native American studies course and that there are courses and support programs at all the colleges.

Representative Garnos asked each participant his opinion on what is the most important or innovative idea for education.

Dr. Melmer said that his main concern is administrator and teacher quality.

Ms. Fouberg said that closing the achievement gap, putting more focus on preschool education, and going to everyday all-day kindergarten are among her concerns. She also said that the principal is very important to a school's atmosphere.

Ms. Turchen said that teaching a student teacher how students learn, how to assess progress, and how to construct a curricula or a course is important.

Ms. DeKraai said that learning how to teach and work with the various socio and economic groups in South Dakota is important.

Representative Craddock asked who else involved in the education arena should be invited to the committee's next meeting.

Some of the responses included: MAPLE Group, Association of School Boards, private universities, tribal universities, School Administrators of South Dakota, and homeschoolers.

Regarding homeschoolers, Dr. Melmer said that there does not seem to be a spokesperson. He said that the department is trying to find someone to report on the homeschool area. Dr. Melmer also asked the committee to give him a list of what groups it wants to hear from and the department will help with the names.

Vice Chair Kleven said that the groups could also be asked to provide names.

Meeting Dates

The committee set August 9 and 10, 2004, as its second meeting date and September 20, 2004, as its third meeting date.

Adjournment

SENATOR APA MOVED, SECONDED BY REPRESENTATIVE CRADDUCK, THAT THE COMMITTEE ADJOURN. The motion prevailed unanimously on a voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.



All Legislative Research Council committee minutes and agendas are available at the South Dakota Legislature's Homepage: <http://legis.state.sd.us>. Subscribe to receive electronic notification of meeting schedules and the availability of agendas and minutes at **MyLRC** (<http://legis.state.sd.us/mylrc/index.cfm>).