

Approved: 2-1-93
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Duane Goossen at 3:30 p.m. on JANUARY 25, 1993 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Benlon (excused)
Representative Blumenthal (excused)
Representative Lowther (excused)

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Education
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Joyce Harralson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Doug Huxman, Superintendent, USD 408, Marion
Missy Stubenhofer, Director, District Curriculum, USD 408
Lois Smith, Chairperson, District QPA Committee, USD 408
Fred Campbell, Superintendent, USD 234, Ft. Scott
Joyce Sanders, Chairperson, North Central Outcomes
Accreditation, USD 234

Others attending: See attached list

Minutes and an address list were distributed to committee members for consideration.

Doug Huxman addressed the committee regarding his district's experiences, ideas and visions regarding what QPA has done and can continue to do for the education process in Kansas. (Attachment #1)

In concluding Doug stated that "Just as school districts are expected to gather, consider and utilize input from the school community, parents, and the community at large, the state should utilize input from districts in implementing the goals that have been established by the state. It is okay for the 'whats' to be determined at the state level, but the 'hows' should be left to the school districts to determine....as long as the districts are effectively meeting the state outcomes, they should be allowed to establish the methods to reach those outcomes."

Fred Campbell addressed the committee regarding his district's thoughts and concerns regarding Quality Performance Accreditation. (Attachment #2)

Fred said "If people would understand the simplicity and utility of the Quality Performance Accreditation document, they too will see, as USD 234 does, it's great value for the schools of Kansas."

The floor was opened to questions by committee members.

Representative Empson made a motion to approve the minutes from January 19, 20 and 21, 1993.
Representative Bowden seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3:30 pm, January 26, 1993, in Room 519-S.

GUEST LIST

COMMITTEE: House Ed

DATE: 1-25-93

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	ADDRESS	COMPANY/ORGANIZATION
Missy Stubenhofer	1112 Nickerson Marion, KS 66861	USD 408
Doug Huxman	601 E Main, Marion	: USD 408
Lois Smith	518 North Freeborn Marion, KS 66861	USD 408
Fred Campbell, Jr.	5th & Main Ft. Scott, KS 66721	USD #234
Joyce Sinn	10th & Main Ft. Scott, KS	USD #234
Connie Huesel	Topeka	STB & ED
Jim Keule	28420 Old K.C. Rd. Pawley, KS	B.K.F.
ROBIN NICHOLS	Wichita	Wichita Public School
Jacqueline (Jones)	Topeka	S.D.E.
Walter Lee	Manhattan	Ks. Farm Bureau
Gaelen	Gov. Office	
Bruce Goeden	Topeka	Kansas NEA
Roy D. Chappell	2220 SW HUNTSMAN ST TOPEKA, KS 66604-3908	K-NEA
Mark Tallman	Topeka	KASTB
Merle Hice	"	KACC
Tim Schultz	Wichita	K-NEA
Barbara Cole	Topeka	KNEA
Tom Brumbyer	1302 Cresthill Junction City	KNEA
Craig Grant	Topeka	KNEA
CARMEN QUESADA	Denver, CO	NEA
Chuck Tilman	Topeka	KNEA
Lily Kober	Great Bend	KNEA
Christy Levings	Oswatimie	Olathe District Sch
Richard W.	Topeka	AP

MARION UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 408

Testimony on State QPA/School Improvement Plan presented to The Kansas House of Representatives Education Committee January 25, 1993

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Education Committee, it is a pleasure for us to appear before you and share our experiences, ideas, and vision of what QPA and school improvement has done and can continue to do for the educational process in Kansas.

YEAR ONE

During the 1990-91 school year, a plan for school improvement in the Marion school system saw its beginnings through a series of four informational meetings for teachers, administrators, and board of education members. These sessions focused on introducing the participants to concepts of outcomes based education and outcomes based accreditation. Although these sessions were voluntary, approximately 67% of the teachers and administrators were in attendance for at least three sessions. A number of our board members also attended these sessions or watched the videotapes of the sessions.

It became apparent at that point that it would be necessary to select and appoint a District Chairperson and members from each building to serve on a district school improvement team. The administrative team selected a chairperson who was a self-starter, organized, and possessed the ability to get things done. From practical experience and after reading material on developing effective school improvement plans, I knew nothing would be gained by selecting school improvement team members who were not interested in change.

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With the assistance of the District Curriculum Director, the Professional Development Council Chairperson, and the newly appointed District QPA Chairperson, the administrative team appointed a group of teachers to the District School Improvement Team. All administrators were included on the team. Training for these team members was provided by ESSDACK (Educational Services and Staff Development Association of Central Kansas/Interlocal 622) through the Schools for the Future plan developed by their staff.

Our focus from the beginning was to develop a school improvement plan that had its foundation at the district level and would move to the building level. In order for this process to be successful at the building level, we felt it was essential that the district have a vision and mission for the future in place. With the district concept in mind, we made application to be a pilot district in the Kansas QPA process. We were one of five applicants not selected, and the reason given was that our application indicated we wanted to enter this process as a district and not as building level teams which was the original requirement. The focus of the QPA process has been changed and now has more of an emphasis on district participation.

YEAR TWO

During the 1991-92 school year the district team received training on the school improvement process. At the same time all teachers participated in inservice activities that focused on school improvement. Separate awareness and consensus building activities were held for teachers, classified staff, community members, and students in grades 8 - 12. Various committees began to develop a district vision statement, district mission statement, and district exit outcomes.

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Despite feeling within our district that we should continue working at the district level, we felt it necessary to move to the building level because of stipulations in the state QPA plan. Members of the district team were assigned to building level teams. Additional representatives were selected to serve on the building teams. Other stakeholders included on the building level teams were classified employees, parents, community members, business people, and high school students. At the end of last year, we again applied to become part of the Kansas QPA process as a district. This time we were accepted.

An important part of the school improvement process in USD 408 was to provide information and training for our local Board of Education. Special meetings provided by ESSDACK as well as monthly reports to the Board by the District QPA Chairperson are two examples of how this was accomplished.

In addition, the Board of Education held a retreat this past summer which focused on school improvement, curriculum and instruction, and technology. This format allowed open dialogue between the Board and the professional staff.

YEAR THREE

The process of training the new members of the building teams and the continuation of training for those involved as members of the district team during year two has been accomplished through workshops and inservice meetings provided by ESSDACK.

The staff members in each building are now involved in collecting data from which building and district profiles can be created. We have selected a district level team which is working in the area of curriculum and assessment. This team is receiving training through ESSDACK.

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It is important to mention at this point that our district feels it is extremely important that Curriculum Development, Staff Development, Assessment, Instruction, and Technology be closely intertwined as we work through the school improvement process.

THE FUTURE

As we look toward the future, a number of thoughts come to mind. School Improvement is a continuous process. Constant evaluation accompanied by appropriate change will need to take place if it is to be successful.

We must move toward more site-based decision making. Input from the teachers parents, students, and community members must be asked for and utilized.

We plan to have a select group of staff members trained as trainers in a variety of instructional and assessment strategies. This will allow us to have the necessary expertise available in our own district.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

One of the problems we have not experienced but have heard that others have is a problem created by some language in the QPA document. There is wording in the document which could be changed to ease the conflict being created without compromising the intent of the outcomes. Some have even indicated that the term Quality Performance Accreditation (QPA) may be creating a problem. By calling it exactly what it is, School Improvement, we may generate a better understanding of the process, thus alleviating misunderstandings by the general public.

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A second problem we must address next year concerns the demands on time this process places on those individuals involved, whether they be teachers, administrators, students, or patrons. Our staff has worked very hard over the past two years. Our district is hoping to add additional inservice days in order to address this problem.

STRENGTHS

The support the Board of Education has given us during the past two years is an important reason for the success we have experienced to this point. An example of this support came just last month when the school board approved a proposal made by the District School Improvement Team that allows students to be released an hour and a half early twice a month so staff members can work on school improvement activities.

The community has also been supportive. A great deal of this support is due to the fact that we have been open about the school improvement process. This has been accomplished by articles in school newsletters, the local newspaper, and public meetings.

The support of ESSDACK in providing the needed inservices and assistance has been helpful.

We were fortunate that our district already had a curriculum council, written curriculum guides, and a professional development council in place before we began the school improvement process.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

As a district, USD 408 is supportive of QPA and the school improvement process. We feel this entire process is having a positive effect on the school district. It has raised the

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level of interest and concern in terms of the content and effectiveness of the educational programs we offer and what should be done to improve our school system.

There are those who say the state should not be dictating specific outcomes to local school districts. Although there may be some truth to that idea, it can be argued that until the state set these outcomes little or no movement toward change was seen in some school districts.

In my opinion, the involvement of the state in this process has been and can continue to be a positive element by encouraging and expecting a higher level of accountability from the school districts and those charged with educating the students of Kansas.

However, just as school districts are expected to gather, consider, and utilize input from the school community, parents, and the community at large, the state should utilize input from districts in implementing the goals that have been established by the state. In other words, it is OK for the "What's" to be determined at the state level, BUT the "How's" should be left to the local districts to determine. As long as districts are effectively meeting the state outcomes, they should be allowed to establish the methods used in reaching those outcomes.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts and experiences concerning QPA and school improvement. Marion USD 408 has a commitment to school improvement and to the improvement of the education we provide our students.

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HOW QUALITY PERFORMANCE ACCREDITATION HAS BEEN OF BENEFIT TO THE U-234 SCHOOL DISTRICT

In 1982 the U-234 School District in Fort Scott embarked on a school improvement program based on the Effective Schools principles. We have developed an objective-based curriculum, criterion referenced mastery test system (computerized grading and reporting), districtwide discipline program, and districtwide teaching and clinical supervision models. We have increased our norm-referenced achievement test results at all grade levels in grades 1-11, in reading, from 59% in 1980, to 67% in 1990, and in mathematics, from 61% in 1980, to 77% in 1990.

We welcomed the advent of Quality Performance Accreditation last year because it gave our district the affirmation of the Effective Schools research and a vehicle to continue our school improvement program on a cyclical basis.

The basic premise of Quality Performance Accreditation is based on a continuous improvement cycle. As we have learned in our district, this is the most productive and reasonable approach to school improvement.

The Quality Performance Accreditation is a dichotomy. First there is the process to follow to improve your school program. Secondly, there is the product to which the process must be interrelated.

The process calls for a needs assessment to determine in which areas a school needs to improve. The areas to be assessed are determined by the

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ten outcomes (product) of the Quality Performance Accreditation document. The results of the needs assessment are reported in a school profile. The next step in the process is the creation of a school improvement team to prepare a school improvement plan to improve the areas of weakness. The process calls for an evaluation of the school improvement plan and proper reporting of the results to the media, local board of education, and the state board of education.

A final step of the process will be a visit by an audit team to ascertain the schools progress in improving its instructional program. The process is based on a four-year cycle which will be repeated. Thus, an instructional program of continuous improvement will be in place.

The U-234 School District's two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school have taken the process and product of the Quality Performance Accreditation document as our guide to continue our school improvement program.

The fact that the first four outcomes of the product of Quality Performance accreditation are based on the original five correlates of the Effective Schools process have made our acceptance of the document so very easy.

If people understand the simplicity and utility of the Quality Performance Accreditation document, we believe they too will see, as we in the U-234 School District do, its great value to the schools of Kansas.

Fred Campbell, Jr., Superintendent

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