

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dave Kerr at 1:30 p.m. on February 4, 1993 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
LaVonne Mumert, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Dr. Pamela Aschbacher, Project Director, University of California at Los Angeles/CRESST (Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing)

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Walker made a motion to approved the minutes of the February 2, 1993 meeting. Senator Jones seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Chairman Kerr noted that Dr. Tim Witsman, President of the Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce, sent additional comments to be added to his testimony of January 28 (Attachment 1).

Dr. Pamela Aschbacher, Project Director, University of California at Los Angeles/CRESST (Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing), provided information on testing and assessment. She listed basic concerns about the instructional consequences of traditional testing: narrows curriculum (especially opportunities to develop critical thinking skills); reduces teachers professional knowledge, and causes unnecessary student failure and drop-outs. Dr. Aschbacher described the many expectations for assessment: communicate standards; diagnose students to improve learning; motivate students, parents and educators; provide benchmarks to measure progress; hold people accountable; compare students, schools and nations; select students for jobs or higher education; drive school reform, and renew public confidence in schools. She talked about the attempt to build tests more like the real world and discussed trends:

- Basic skills -- higher order thinking skills
- No context -- real life contest
- Timed, multiple choice, one correct answer -- open ended
- Secret -- public criteria
- One shot -- multiple times
- Boring -- personalized
- Individual -- group work
- Normative -- domain-based
- Beat the test -- coach to show
- Separate -- part of instruction
- Product -- process, effort, product
- Paper and pencil -- performance

Dr. Aschbacher gave some examples of process kinds of questions and said at the Center they attempt to use an approach that can encourage teachers to understand, implement and convey the important elements to the students. She described families of performance: explanation, knowledge representation (how people organize what they know), problem solving and team interaction. She discussed the linkage of new knowledge with old information and the differences in responses by novices and experts. Dr. Aschbacher stressed that "to understand the results of any test, we need to know what school experiences are like". She said that school contexts, inputs and processes are the information needed before tests are used for high stakes. She gave the following as a checklist for a good assessment program:

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, Room 123-S Statehouse, at 1:30 p.m. on February 4, 1993.

- take into account opportunity to learn or service delivery system
- results be reported in clear and meaningful ways
- be sure that we are providing positive consequences
- cost-effective, feasible
- integrated with excellent and sustained professional development
- balanced design - assessment methods suited to the purpose
- worthy outcomes - comprehensive, transferrable, meaningful to students
- high quality context
- fair, unbiased

She stated that assessment is not the single cure for all ills, but it is a potent tool.

Dr. Aschbacher responded to questions from Committee members. She said that it is good to have small group activities but they should not be the only measure of assessment. She said education should be individualized as much as possible. Dr. Aschbacher advised that she has done some review of the Kansas assessments and feels it is an ambitious program and is the kind of complex program which states should consider. She added that there are probably six or eight states at the same level as Kansas. She noted that it is important to include professional development and to involve the community. Dr. Aschbacher said that, in addition to looking seriously at the ramifications of professional development, she would recommend that service delivery be measured. For this measurement, she suggested a possible combination of things, such as snapshots of what is going on in classrooms across the state and a series of targeted studies. Dr. Aschbacher said that it is important to have continuing dialogue between the curriculum development and assessment development efforts so that a simultaneous, coordinated process occurs. She noted that basic, factual knowledge can be fairly adequately assessed by multiple-choice type testing.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Friday, February 5, 1993.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

TIME: 1:30 PLACE: 123-S DATE: 2/4/93

GUEST LIST

NAME

ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION

Bruce Goeden	Topeka	Kansas NEA
Barbara Cole	Topeka	K-NEA
Craig Grant	Topeka	H-NEA
Chuck Toman	Topeka	KNEA
La. Ferguson	Topeka	KSBE
Ann Hanson	Topeka	KSBE
Mary Nichols	Manhattan, KS	WSP3P3
Debbie Caster	Coffeyville	Leadership Coffeyville
David Timmy	Coffeyville	Leadership Coffeyville
Jim Brosha	Coffeyville	" " "
Jacqueline Oakes	Topeka	SEI
Robert Aldrine	Topeka	GPA Steering Committee Rochester El. Sch.
Mark Tallman	Topeka	KASB
Debbie Conrad	Coffeyville	Leadership Coffeyville
Cherie Mercer	Topeka	KSBE
Jim Battis	Topeka	KSBE
Debbie Richardson	Coffeyville	Leadership Coffeyville
Jayne Buckner	Coffeyville	" "
Andy Sutherland	Cherryvale	" "
Dona Z. Pendleton	Coffeyville	" "
Kris Fitzgerald	"	" "
JERRY PECKHAM	"	" "
Jim [Signature]	"	" "

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

TIME: _____ PLACE: _____ DATE: _____

GUEST LIST

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
Spil Moshman	COFFEYVILLE KS	LEADERSHIP COFFEYVILLE
Doug Ott	"	"
Cathy Holcomb	Seneca, KS	tax-payer
JOHN OYLER	COFFEYVILLE, KS	"
Bruce English	"	"
Billy Durham	Coffeyville, KS	Educator
Ariana Walker	Osawatomie, KS	wife of Sen Walker

THE CHAMBER

February 2, 1993



Senator Dave Kerr
Chairman, Senate Education Committee
State Capitol
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Senator Kerr:

I greatly appreciate the opportunity you gave me to testify on education restructuring and accountability. I will attempt to briefly respond to your request for specific comments on each of the QPA outcomes.

Outcome 1: This "outcome" describes how assessment will be done. It does not specify a result. More importantly, while it makes assessment mandatory it leaves the choice of particular instruments in the hands of the local districts. In essence, we will all assess ourselves.

Outcome 2: "Outcome 2" is a statement of philosophy, not of expected results.

Outcome 3: This "outcome" describes a condition which is a means to results, but not the results. Nevertheless some of the indicators are important.

Outcome 4: This again describes how not what. At worst it is a vague platitude in place of clear statements of expected results.

Outcome 5: This is much closer to a real outcome. To implement it would require more concrete expressions of results under the three standards.

Outcome 6: The same comments for Outcome 5 apply here.

Outcome 7: I understand what they are trying to do. There are two dangers. If not handled carefully many parents will see this as an attempt to introduce collectivist ideology into the curriculum. Secondly, if they propose to make these separate instructional areas they are substanceless and may become indoctrination. These skills are important. Rather than stand alone it would be better to integrate teamwork into the core area instruction. Sensitivity training is at worst dangerous and at best without content. Sports, music and theatre provide excellent

examples of real tasks where these skills are learned. You might be interested to know that Fort Worth integrates SCANS higher order skills with the core areas.

Outcome 8: This "outcome" is vague and beyond repair. It says little but has attracted much criticism to QPA. If we are talking about teaching civic and work place virtues, then let's be more clear and say so.

Outcome 9: Professional development is terribly important, but it is a how, not a result.

Outcome 10: This "outcome" is really a goal statement. Some of the indicators are useful.

Summary: What does not emerge from reading the QPA outcomes is a clear expression of commitment to preparing students in the most important skills and competencies for a world which is much more competitive than when we were attending school. Someone on the committee used the word, "focus." I believe it should be a guiding principle in revising QPA to make it a more effective tool for achieving the best preparation we can provide for our children.

Respectfully,



F. Tim Witsman
President