

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Duane Goossen at 3:30 p.m. on January 18, 1994 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Lisa Benlon (excused)
Patricia Pettey (excused)
Bruce Larkin (excused)
Marvin Smith (excused)
Kenny Wilk (excused)

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

Conferees appearing before the committee: **1994 Kansas Teacher of the Year:** Nancy J. Costigan
Kennedy Middle School, Hays, KS
District 1994 Finalists:
Rex E. Babcock - Chanute Sr. Highschool
Cynda A. Carr - Anthony Elementary School
Beverly B. James - Beloit Elementary School
Richard W. Luckert - Olathe East Highschool
Marli Y. O'Brien - Harmony Elementary, Overland Park
Jo Ann Schutte - Curtis Middle School, Wichita
Mary Ellen Titus - T. Roosevelt Elementary, Manhattan

Others attending: See attached list

Duane A. Goossen, chairperson, called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. Committee members were encouraged to look over the minutes for January 11, 12, and 13, 1994, for approval at a later date.

Nancy J. Costigan, 1994 Kansas Teacher of the Year, stated Kansas has become a model for Teacher of the Year recognitions. In most states it is only an honor. In Kansas, the eight district finalists travel as a team working with Deans of Education, school districts and business.

The District Finalists were introduced. The floor was opened to questions from Committee members to the teachers.

Responses to the question: "If I had students in your class, what three things could I expect these students to know?", included "reading, writing, problem solving, sense of community, social responsibility and academically have a broad, integrated concept of what education is."

A question from a committee member who was a former teacher who left classroom teaching in 1979 was: "What difference exists in the raw material today?" The responses were students come from broken homes, single family parenting or foster homes with lack of sense of who they are, television having more influence on pupil's time, more isolation, and lack of self esteem. Other differences were lack of parental involvement in education, broader spectrum of education than 1979, problems more out in the open where hidden in the past, more difficult challenges, such as need for child care for children of highschool students. One teacher stated at the start of the '93-94 school year in 8th grade, four girls were pregnant. Another stated in the same time frame, there had been five attempted suicides with one successful.

Today classroom structure is different. Work is done in groups, students are more accepting of others opinions, more support for one another, and they no longer sit in straight rows ignoring everyone else. Use of computers in the classroom is the favorite course of 6th graders. Increasing numbers of students are working at paying jobs outside school hours. Some work out of need, but others because of life style--payments on car, gasoline, etc.

To question, "How is transition going toward QPA?", responses were some teacher feel vulnerable; it is opening doors for sharing, but common thread was there is too much for teachers to do. To the question, "Is QPA working?", the responses were both positive and negative. A positive being collecting data, giving leadership and focus; the negative is the time involved-not enough hours in the day. Grass root teachers don't want changes in outcome. Process demands flexibility.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE meeting January 18, 1994, at 3:30 p.m. in Room 519-S, Statehouse

The subject of gender bias was raised. Comments were "unintentional," but see need to deal with the reality 7th and 8th grade girls are stepping back to let boys go ahead, Girls need to be encouraged in Science beyond 8th grade. Calculators are equalizers in mathematics. Teachers do not realize they are gender biased. Responding to the fact that girls disappear in higher math classes, there is a need to bring in doctors and other professionals to impress the importance of math and how it is used in business.

The teachers were urged to give feed back to schools of education: " Be a mentor; ask hard questions; use your influence."

How safe is the classroom today? Are students at risk? The answer was school is as safe as anyplace today. School administrators realize the need for a safe school environment.

A final question was, "What would you tell future teachers?" Answers were (1) If you are not sure, don't try it, (2) You can't give, if you don't know, (3) Take risks, (4) Be willing to work hard, (5) Have a positive attitude and (6) like children.

Chairman Goossen expressed appreciation to all for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

The next meeting of the Education Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, January 19, 1994, in Room 519-S.

GUEST LIST

Committee: Education

Date: 1-18

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