

MEETING SUMMARY
JOINT MEETING
OF THE
HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION

ADEQUACY

Tuesday, September 9, 2014

9:00 A.M.

Room 171, State Capitol

Little Rock, Arkansas

Senator Joyce Elliott, the Vice Chair of the Senate Interim Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Joyce Elliott, Vice Chair; Senator Eddie Cheatham; Senator Alan Clark; and Senator Uvalde Lindsey.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative James McLean, Chair; Representative Charles L. Armstrong; Representative Les Carnine; Representative Robert Dale; Representative Gary Deffenbaugh; Representative Charlotte Vining Douglas; Representative Jon Eubanks; Representative Debra Hobbs; Representative Karen Hopper; Representative Sheilla Lampkin; Representative Mark Lowery; Representative James Ratliff; and Representative Brent Talley.

NON-VOTING MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ATTENDANCE: Representative Randy Alexander; Representative Stephen Meeks; and Representative Reginald Murdock.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE: Senator Linda Chesterfield; Senator Jonathan Dismang; Senator Jane English; Senator Michael Lamoureux; Senator Bill Sample; Senator Larry Teague; Senator Eddie Joe Williams; Senator Jon Woods; Representative Denny Altes; Representative Scott Baltz; Representative David Branscum; Representative Andy Davis; Representative Jeremy Gillam; Representative Douglas House; Representative John Hutchison; Representative Stephanie Malone; Representative David Meeks; Representative Micah Neal; Representative Jim Nickels; Representative Betty Overbey; Representative Sue Scott; Representative Mary Slinkard; Representative Butch Wilkins; Representative Hank Wilkins IV; and Representative Marshall Wright.

Remarks by the Co-Chairs

Senator Elliott stated that in today's meeting the Committees would be discussing technology and Adequacy as it relates to technology. She invited Dr. Lawrence O. Picus to make opening remarks.

Dr. Lawrence O. Picus, Principal, Picus Odden and Associates, was recognized. Dr. Picus recalled working with the Committees in 2003 and presenting a report with recommendations at that time. He said the model now funded as the Matrix came out of that report. He stated the role of Picus Odden and Associates (Picus Odden) today is to work with the Committees on two issues: 1) understanding technology and Broadband access for schools, and 2) providing a desk audit of the funding Matrix, taking into consideration the evolution of the Evidence-Based (EB) model. Dr. Picus introduced other members of the Picus Odden team.

Discussion of Issues Related to Bandwidth

Presenter:

Dr. Scott Price, Picus Odden and Associates, was recognized. Dr. Price discussed the current status and future goals of Broadband in Arkansas. He emphasized that the state already understands the importance of having Broadband in schools to enable student participation in interactive programs, video conferencing, scientific experiments, and collaboration on group projects, among other things. He commented on The Digital Learning Act, Act 1280 of 2013, and the Arkansas Digital Learning Study. Dr. Price described the four (4) current networks in Arkansas: 1) Department of Information Services (DIS), 2) Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN), 3) the Compressed Interactive Video (CIV) System, and 4) Arkansas Research Education Optical Network (ARE-ON). His commentary continued on Broadband service goals, the FASTER Arkansas Task Force, and the Governor's Partnership with EducationSuperHighway (ESH). Dr. Price stressed the importance of the Request for Proposal (RFP) sent out by the Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) seeking vendors to do a survey of bandwidth in school districts. He said the RFP will provide sufficient data to clear any confusion going forward about estimating the connection, installation, and new equipment costs in bringing schools and districts up to standards. He said once the RFP is analyzed and information is provided, legislators will have to decide what funds are available, which districts will get help first, and will K-12 districts be allowed to attach to the ARE-ON Network.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Mr. Richard Wilson, Assistant Director, Research Services, Bureau of Legislative Research

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- RFP to deliver contrast of provider costs if available,
- understanding the investment that's necessary before savings are realized,
- types of research used for presentation,
- provider contracts having any prohibition for K-12 hooking onto the ARE-ON Network,
- rate structure worked out by ARE-ON for K-12 schools,
- allowing local providers vs. a centralized network to provide internet services on a case-by-case basis,
- state stepping up and providing the "middle mile" for schools without fiber optic connections,
- timeline for completion of the RFP report,
- relationship of the technology to Adequacy,
- making sure efforts are not duplicated,
- Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (B-TOP),
- billing processes in Arkansas,
- considering differences in districts when making decisions,
- handling the costs in the Matrix, and
- determining standards for bandwidth; and if any standards are driven by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test.

Discussion of Recent Developments in the Evidence-Based Model and Potential Applications for the Arkansas K-12 Funding Matrix

Presenter:

Dr. Allan Odden, Principal, Picus Odden and Associates, was recognized. Dr. Odden stated that Picus Odden has compared the ratios and formulas and per pupil amounts in the current funding Matrix to the Picus Odden EB model as it has evolved over the past ten to twelve years. In getting to the desk audit, he said Picus Odden wanted to: 1) stress the EB model tries to link level and use of dollars with improvements in student learning, and 2) compare our current ratios and formulas with those in Arkansas's Matrix. He commented that answers to hypothetical questions regarding effective use of dollars or sufficient dollars in the system depend on how Arkansas assesses current levels of student performance in the state. He said there are differences shown in the

desk audit, and the next step depends on whether the current level of performance is satisfactory, or whether higher performance can be achieved out of the system. Dr. Odden stated that the Picus Odden desk audit review shows evidence of where Arkansas is now, where Arkansas should be, and what might be done going forward. Dr. Odden discussed the school improvement model that is embedded in the formula. He said the model has held up quite well over time; and there has been no research that counters what Picus Odden reported in 2003 and 2006. He did state that for some of the more complex areas of the model, there has been new research, a lot of it randomized control trials, that has reinforced that element of the model. He stated the Picus Odden view is that the model is stronger today than in 2003 and 2006. Dr. Odden gave a quick overview of how schools boost student performance and reduce achievement gaps and then went on to discuss the ten areas included in the Picus Odden EB model. Dr. Odden briefly discussed comparisons between the original EB recommendation and the current Arkansas policy, and the current Picus Odden recommendations made for the four components of the funding matrix.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- what Vermont is doing with regard to student achievement,
- a performance-based definition of Adequacy,
- parental involvement and leadership in the report,
- anticipating depreciation of assets in the report,
- achieving savings with regard to technology and equipment vs. instructional materials in the line item,
- testing that provides the best results, and
- districts spending more than in the model.

Review of Results of the Desk Audit of the Arkansas Adequacy Study Process

Presenter:

Dr. Lawrence O. Picus, Principal, Picus Odden and Associates, was recognized, and concluded the discussion of the desk audit with a review of Dollars per Student Resources, Carry Forward, and Staffing for Struggling Students.

Contributor to the Discussion:

Dr. Allan Odden, Principal, Picus Odden and Associates

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- definition of “academic learning,”
- funding for students in juvenile correctional units,
- wisdom of using “step” funding for “at risk” students,
- move toward better certification for teachers in alternative schools,
- recommendations for transportation,
- repercussions to Adequacy if something is moved out of the Matrix and dealt with separately, and
- cost to the State of Arkansas of adopting all recommendations.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Picus Odden & Associates Desk Audit of the Arkansas School Funding Matrix and Developing an Understanding of the Potential Costs of Broadband Access for All Schools

Handouts:

Broadband RFP (Request for Proposal)
Picus Odden Associates Desk Audit
Picus Odden Associates PowerPoint

Senator Elliott emphasized the importance of reading the Picus Odden Desk Audit which complements the PowerPoint presentation. She stated that the present system being used has been deemed by the courts as something that can be used without getting in trouble. She requested that Mr. Richard Wilson give a synopsis of the next steps to be taken.

Mr. Richard Wilson, Assistant Director, Research Services, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized. Mr. Wilson presented a timeline for going forward:

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| <i>June 2013</i> | first report before the Committees for the Adequacy Study |
| <i>September 8, 2014</i> | all statutorily required reports completed; all requests from Committee members fulfilled |
| <i>Period of time to digest the recommendations from Picus Odden and make determinations to any structural changes in each line item of the Matrix or money changes per line item of the Matrix as it currently exists or provide inflationary adjustments to certain line items or the Matrix as a whole.</i> | |
| <i>October 1, 2014</i> | discuss proper adjustments to consider for inflationary pressure for the next two years; further structural adjustments |
| <i>October 14, 2014</i> | Draft Report to Speaker and President Pro Tem about deliberations and recommendations of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education |
| <i>November 1, 2014</i> | Statutory deadline |

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Wednesday, October 1, 2014, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 171 of the State Capitol in Little Rock

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Approved: 10/13/14