



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGH SCHOOL

Room 411 South
State Capitol

November 19, 2012
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the November 19, 2012 meeting of the Special Committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lc>.]

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Olsen called the committee to order. The roll was called and a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. Luther Olsen, Chair; Rep. Paul Farrow, Vice Chair; Sens. Tim Cullen and Glenn Grothman; Rep. Sondy Pope-Roberts; and Public Members Joni Burgin, Joe Garza, Robert Hein, William Hughes, Suzanne Kelley, Jim Leef, Jeff Monday, Harry Muir, Sheila Ruhland, and S. Mark Tyler.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Public Members Bill Fitzpatrick, Patricia Hoben, Mark Kaiser, and Patricia Neudecker.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Jessica Karls-Ruplinger and Rachel Letzing, Senior Staff Attorneys.

APPEARANCES: Beth Swedeen, Executive Director, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities; and James Golembeski, Executive Director, Bay Area Workforce Development Board.

Presentation by Invited Speaker on Students With Disabilities

Beth Swedeen, Executive Director, Wisconsin Board for People With Developmental Disabilities

Ms. Swedeen began her presentation by explaining that the Board for People With Developmental Disabilities focuses on employment for people with developmental disabilities. She

noted that 12 to 15% of students have developmental disabilities and that those students may not access career readiness opportunities. She also described the “Let’s Get to Work” project, which looks at research-based practices to change employability for people with developmental disabilities and works with employers and school districts across the state.

Ms. Swedeen provided four recommendations to the committee. First, she stated that she commends the request for an audit of work-based programs that includes students with disabilities. Second, she stated that academic and career plans should be coordinated with individual education plans. She said that there is a discrepancy in the use of workforce preparation between students with disabilities and students without disabilities. She also said that the coordination should be similar to what was done for the technical education high school diploma.

Third, Ms. Swedeen recommended community-based work assessments for those students with disabilities whose plan indicates an employment outcome. Fourth, she recommended policies to enhance or encourage specialization for special education teachers, including a transition endorsement for teachers to prepare students for career development.

In response to questions from committee members, Ms. Swedeen explained that curriculum leading to a transition endorsement has been developed in other states. She also explained that an increase in categorical aid and partnering with other entities, such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), would assist students with disabilities in obtaining career readiness opportunities. Lastly, she explained that the amount of supervision for a student with a disability in a workplace differs based on the needs of the student and that perceptions of students with disabilities change once employers meet and interact with the students.

Approval of the Minutes of the Special Committee’s October 24, 2012 Meeting

Mr. Tyler moved, seconded by Ms. Ruhland, to approve the minutes of the Special Committee’s October 24, 2012 meeting. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Presentation by Invited Speaker on Technical Education

James Golembeski, Executive Director, Bay Area Workforce Development Board

Mr. Golembeski described four initiatives of the Bay Area Workforce Development Board relating to education and business partnerships in Northeast Wisconsin: (1) manufacturing alliances; (2) computer integrated manufacturing mobile lab; (3) Northwoods Regional Learning Lab; and (4) Second Chance Partners for Education. For the manufacturing alliances, he described the NEW Manufacturing Alliance, which aligns manufacturers, workforce development, and education; and he also described the North Coast Marine Manufacturing Alliance, which aligns ship and boat manufacturers, workforce development, and education.

Mr. Golembeski explained that the computer integrated manufacturing mobile lab is a partnership among the Bay Area Workforce Development Board, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), and Lakeshore Technical College. He described the contents of the mobile lab, which includes a computer numerical control (CNC) lathe, CNC mill, smart board, and diesel engine. He explained that the mobile lab visits 10 high schools per semester and involves 12 students at each high

school. He explained that each participating high school incurs a \$5,000 operating fee per semester and that high school instructors are trained at NWTC. He also described how the mobile lab visited state prisons in Oshkosh and Taycheedah, giving inmates information on and demonstrations of CNC careers. He stated that the initial cost of the mobile lab was \$380,000 and that it incurs operating expenses of \$90,000 each year. In addition to the manufacturing mobile lab, he also described the Electro-Mechanical Mobile Lab, which will be the second mobile lab and is a partnership among the Bay Area Workforce Development Board, Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Lakeshore Technical College, Rockwell Automation, and Curt G. Joa.

Lastly, Mr. Golembeski described the Northwood Regional Learning Lab, which is a partnership among the Wausaukee School District, Pembine School District, Crivitz School District, and NWTC that provides skills training for students in welding, automotive, and practical nursing; and he described the Second Chance Partners for Education Program, which is an alternative education model that provides certain students with the opportunity to earn a high school diploma in an employment setting.

In response to questions from committee members, Mr. Golembeski explained that mobile labs could be set up on a regional basis and that schools could offer courses prior to the hands-on experience provided by the mobile labs. He also stated that the mobile lab began in the fall of 2011 and that the equipment in the lab is not replaced as often as equipment might be replaced by a business.

Committee Discussion on Memo No. 2, *Options for Consideration by the Special Committee*; Draft Letter to the Joint Committee on Audit; and Other Options for Further Consideration by the Committee

Ms. Karls-Ruplinger and Ms. Letzing described the contents of Memo No. 2., *Options for Consideration by the Special Committee*. The committee discussed the options in the Memo and requested that some items be drafted as legislation and that others be drafted as letters to certain individuals or agencies. The draft legislation and letters will be further considered by the committee at its December meeting.

Options for Legislation: The Youth Apprenticeship Program

The committee discussed the Youth Apprenticeship program and options for legislation relating to that program.

Mr. Tyler stated that the program is appropriate for some industries but not others and that he is reluctant to make changes to the program. Chair Olsen asked whether the committee should direct the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to form a taskforce to study the program. Mr. Garza said that the program should be considered as part of an audit request. Mr. Leef said that program should be more effective so it appeals to employers. Senator Cullen emphasized that representatives of employers should be included in any taskforce to study the program. Senator Grothman suggested that the program be studied by a new Legislative Council study committee or by a subgroup of the Special Committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School, rather than DWD, so that changes to the program could be recommended prior to enactment of the budget. Representative Pope-Roberts said that she wants a comprehensive approach to studying the program. Ms. Ruhland said that the study should also look at awareness of the program and participation by employers.

Chair Olsen said that staff would figure out a mechanism to study the program and present that to the committee at its December meeting.

Options for Legislation: The Youth Options Program

The committee discussed the Youth Options program and options for legislation relating to that program. Ms. Letzing described the issues that might arise under the Wisconsin Constitution on the options that require a student to pay for post-secondary courses taken for high school credit.

Representative Pope-Roberts said that she does not want changes to the program. Chair Olsen stated that some of the options would reduce opportunities for high school students. Mr. Monday said that he would support creating a mechanism by which high school teachers can teach post-secondary courses to high school students. Mr. Hughes asked whether the program is a major cost for school districts. Ms. Burgin noted that schools have to cut other programs because of the cost of the Youth Options program. Mr. Garza stated that the program should be focused and courses taken under the program should be attached to a student's academic and career plan. Senator Grothman said that cutting programs decreases opportunities for high school students. Representative Pope-Roberts said that courses should be focused under the program but that she values the program. Mr. Muir stated that having academic and career plans would bring many of the committee's recommendations together. Senator Grothman said that the program could exclude physical education classes, but he stated that it is not the purview of the Special Committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School to address the Youth Options program. Ms. Burgin asked the committee to address the inclusion of private, for-profit colleges in the program. Mr. Hein expressed concern about limiting courses under the program to those in the academic and career plan; he also noted that a mechanism already exists for high school teachers to teach post-secondary courses. Vice-Chair Farrow suggested that some programs, including Youth Apprenticeship and Youth Options, should be renamed. Ms. Kelley asked for information on statewide enrollment in the Youth Options program. Mr. Ruhland asked for data on the number of Youth Options students who complete a college degree. Senator Grothman suggested an audit of the Youth Options program.

The committee requested legislation that: (1) requires that a course under the Youth Options program be connected to a student's academic and career plan; (2) provides a revenue limit exemption for the program; and (3) provides categorical aid for the program.

Options for Legislation: The Number of Mathematics and Science Credits Required for a High School Diploma

The committee discussed the number of mathematics and science credits and options for legislation relating to mathematics and science credits.

Mr. Tyler said that the number of mathematics and science credits should be increased to three and that most school districts already require at least three. He also said that schools should be provided with more flexibility regarding applied credits. Senator Grothman said that the number of credits is not the problem. Mr. Garza said that he is not ready to support three credits given the uncertainty with how the common core requirements will be implemented. Senator Grothman suggested decreasing English credits to three. Ms. Burgin said that schools should offer multiple ways to get credit, including through applied mathematics. Representative Pope-Roberts said that the committee should appropriate funding if the number of credits is increased.

The committee requested legislation that: (1) increases the number of mathematics and science credits to three; (2) allows flexibility for what courses count as mathematics and science credits; (3) decreases the number of English credits to three; and (4) appropriates funding.

Options for Legislation: Academic and Career Plans (ACPs)

The committee discussed ACPs and options for legislation relating to ACPs.

Senator Grothman said that he does not favor any of the options in the Memo relating to ACPs. Mr. Tyler suggested providing a letter encouraging the use of ACPs. Mr. Garza said that if the committee wants schools to use ACPs, it should use the word “require.” Ms. Burgin said that if ACPs are encouraged, they will not be used in every school district. Ms. Ruhland stated that accountability is important, and she said that ACPs should make students aware of high-demand careers. Chair Olsen asked in what grade ACPs should be used. Ms. Garza said that ACPs should be used before high school, beginning in 7th grade. Ms. Burgin said that incentives and pilot programs might be more effective than requiring or encouraging ACPs. Representative Pope-Roberts said that funding should be provided to school districts. Mr. Garza stated that the committee cannot create the details of ACPs without guidance counselors and that the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) should create the details of ACPs.

The committee requested legislation that: (1) requires/encourages the use of ACPs (providing an option between “requires” and “encourages”); (2) begins ACPs in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade (providing an option between “6,” “7,” and “8”); (3) appropriates funding; and (4) requires DPI to decide the criteria and accountability for ACPs.

Options for Legislation: EXPLORE/PLAN/ACT (ACT Suite) and WorkKeys and Agenda 2017

The committee discussed the ACT Suite and options for legislation relating to the ACT Suite.

Mr. Hein asked what the alternatives are to the ACT Suite and pointed out that the committee has not considered alternatives. Mr. Garza said that Superintendent Evers has probably considered alternatives. Mr. Monday said that EXPLORE may be necessary in 8th grade, too, to determine growth. Mr. Tyler said that he supports the ACT Suite and that EXPLORE should be used earlier rather than later. Mr. Muir said that he would support EXPLORE in 8th grade and would support reevaluating the use of the ACT Suite in the future. Senator Grothman suggested that too much emphasis is placed on the importance of testing. Senator Cullen asked what percentage of college students change majors, and he noted that the ACT Suite path may require students to decide career options earlier. Ms. Burgin said that the ACT Suite is an academic planning tool.

The committee requested legislation that: (1) requires all high school students to take the ACT Suite and WorkKeys, as proposed by DPI, and also requires school districts to administer EXPLORE in 8th grade; and (2) appropriates funding. In addition, the committee requested a letter to the Governor and DPI supporting items (1) and (2), above.

Options for Legislation: The PLAN Test and the Smarter Balanced Assessments in 10th Grade

The committee discussed the PLAN Test and Smarter Balanced Assessments in 10th grade and options for legislation relating to 10th grade testing.

Mr. Garza said that prohibiting DPI from requiring that students take both the PLAN test and the science and social studies assessment in 10th grade would overturn the No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

waiver. Chair Olsen asked if the committee should be silent on the issue of 10th grade testing. Ms. Ruhland said that she was not sure how recommendations regarding assessments improve educational opportunities for high school students. Mr. Hein suggested that the committee not address the issue of 10th grade testing. Mr. Leef said that testing measures competency. Mr. Tyler stated that he is in favor of testing, which helps understand how to make a student successful.

The committee requested a letter to DPI asking DPI to look into expanding the ACT or PLAN to include science.

Options for Legislation: Alternative Certification for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Teachers

The committee discussed alternative certification and options for legislation relating to alternative certification.

Tammy Huth, Teacher Education, Professional Development, and Licensing Team, DPI, explained that many of the options in the Memo already exist in the administrative code and that DPI is working to increase flexibility in teacher certification with respect to interdisciplinary instruction. Mr. Garza said that DPI should help school districts better understand the licensing options. Mr. Tyler stated that the committee should provide a letter to DPI encouraging continued efforts on licensing.

The committee requested a letter to DPI encouraging DPI to continue its effort regarding alternative certification and requesting that it make schools aware of the alternative certification options.

Options for Additional Issues

In addition to the legislation and letters described above, the committee also requested that the following letters be prepared for further consideration at its December meeting:

- Letter to the Joint Committee on Audit requesting an audit of work-based learning programs.
- Letter to the Joint Committee on Audit requesting an audit of Youth Options, dual enrollment, and transcribed credit programs.
- Letter to DPI requesting that DPI increase outreach to school districts regarding programs and options available to high school students.
- Letter to DWD requesting that DWD increase outreach to businesses regarding opportunities to mentor, involve, and assist high school students.
- Letter to DPI and DWD encouraging them to create a website that consolidates all programs regarding high school students.
- Letter to DPI requesting that DPI continue its taskforce to examine how to increase the methods of earning high school credits by demonstrating competencies.
- Letter to DPI requesting that DPI form a taskforce to examine how to incorporate the use of core abilities as a measure of competency in high school.

- Letter to the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities requesting that they review their respective teacher training programs to ensure that the programs include instruction in 21st Century learning skills.
- Letter to the Joint Legislative Council co-chairs requesting that the Council appoint a Special Committee in 2014 to review teacher training programs.
- Letter to the Joint Legislative Council co-chairs requesting that the Council appoint a Special Committee in 2014 to review the 20 education standards to determine whether the standards should be revised or eliminated.
- Letter to DPI supporting DPI's budget proposal to award grants for industry certifications.
- Letter to the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) recommending that WASB advise its members to consider using mobile technical education labs as a way to offer more technical education opportunities in high school.
- Letter to the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) encouraging WTCS to increase the availability of online courses available to high school students.
- Letter to each of the Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs) encouraging each one to serve as a regional technical education center for high school students.
- Letter recommending the creation of a taskforce comprised of representatives from school districts, post-secondary institutions, and businesses to coordinate information and resources regarding work-based learning programs, career opportunities, and post-secondary options for high school students. The committee will discuss at its December meeting who is the appropriate recipient of this letter.
- Letter recommending the creation of an online resource to facilitate communication and coordination among school districts, post-secondary institutions, and businesses regarding work-based learning programs, career opportunities, and post-secondary options for high school students. The committee will discuss at its December meeting who is the appropriate recipient of this letter.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

JKR:ty