



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGH SCHOOL

Room 413 North
State Capitol

December 17, 2012
10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the December 17, 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; Sen. Paul Farrow, Vice Chair; Sen. Glenn Grothman; Rep. Sondy Pope-Roberts; and Public Members Bill Fitzpatrick, Joe Garza, Robert Hein, Patricia Hoben, William Hughes, Suzanne Kelley, Jim Leef, Jeff Monday, Harry Muir, Patricia Neudecker, and S. Mark Tyler.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Senator Tim Cullen; Public Members Joni Burgin, Mark Kaiser, and Sheila Ruhland.

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

APPEARANCES: Jennifer Kammerud, Legislative Liaison, Department of Public Instruction

<p>* ATTENTION: This was the final meeting of the Special Committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School. Committee members are requested to send any corrections regarding these Minutes to the Legislative Council staff. After the incorporation of any corrections, these Minutes will be considered approved by the committee.</p>

Approval of the Minutes of the Special Committee's November 19, 2012 Meeting

Vice Chair Farrow moved, seconded by Mr. Fitzpatrick, to approve the minutes of the Special Committee's November 19, 2012 meeting. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Review and Discussion of Bill Drafts

Chair Olsen and Mr. Fitzpatrick described their recent tour of regional technical high schools in Massachusetts and New Hampshire with a group comprised of legislators and representatives of school districts, technical colleges, and workforce development groups.

Chair Olsen stated that Legislative Council staff would explain the bill drafts and that if the committee wanted any modifications made to a draft, the staff would make those modifications and the revised draft would be sent to the members for their approval by a mail ballot.

WLC: 0052/1, relating to the number of English, mathematics and science credits required for a high school diploma and making an appropriation; and WLC: 0060/1, relating to the number of mathematics and science credits required for a high school diploma and making an appropriation

Ms. Karls-Ruplinger described WLC: 0052/1 and noted that WLC: 0060/1 is identical to WLC: 0052/1 except that WLC: 0060/1 only increases the number of mathematics and science credits required for a high school diploma.

The committee discussed whether the current equivalency process under the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is enough to ensure that alternative courses that incorporate common core standards will be offered in high schools. The committee also discussed whether requiring three math and three science credits will make it harder for certain students to succeed in high school, the challenges of offering additional math and science courses in small school districts, and whether \$250,000 in total grant funding would be enough to make a difference to most school districts.

Ms. Neudecker noted that English classes do not only include literature, but also include a broad array of skills such as communication and writing.

The committee directed staff to make the following modifications to WLC: 0052/1 and WLC: 0060/1:

1. Delete the requirement that DPI award grants to school districts for the purpose of implementing the increased number of mathematics and science credits.
2. Delete the \$250,000 appropriation for the grant program.

WLC: 0054/1, relating to academic and career plans

Ms. Karls-Ruplinger described the draft. Ms. Kammerud explained that the recommendation of the Academic and Career Plan (ACP) Subgroup of the Governor's Council on College and Workforce Readiness includes the following:

- All students should be required to have an ACP beginning in 6th grade.

- The ACP requirement will be phased-in over five years in order to allow time for districts to implement ACPs and to coincide with the implementation of the new statewide student information system.
- DPI should purchase ACP software and provide it to school districts in order to ensure that all districts are using the same platform and should provide training and professional development for districts.
- ACPs must be reviewed once a year.

Vice Chair Farrow explained that the intention of the subgroup recommendations is to codify the ACP requirement in 6th grade and the five-year phase-in, but to have other more specific requirements included in DPI administrative rule. The committee discussed whether the ACP requirement would apply to students with disabilities. Vice Chair Farrow stated that the recommendations recognize that school counselors would be an integral part of the ACP phase-in and review processes but that other school staff would be engaged in the ACP process.

The committee directed staff to make the following modifications to the draft:

1. Require ACPs for pupils beginning in 6th grade.
2. Provide for a five-year phase-in of the ACP requirement.
3. Specify that an ACP is required for each pupil, including pupils who have individualized education plans.

WLC: 0056/1, relating to pupil assessments and making an appropriation, and WLC: 0062/1, relating to pupil assessments and making an appropriation

Ms. Letzing described both drafts. Chair Olsen stated that he was told that if the state did not adopt the Smarter Balanced assessments in high school that the state risked being removed from the governing board of the consortium. He noted that because the Smarter Balanced assessments for the high school grades are not complete yet, it was recommended that the state begin administering the ACT right now but reevaluate whether to continue with the ACT at a later date. The committee discussed the need to have three years of assessments in order to measure growth and agreed that in order to start measuring growth in high school the assessment should be given either at the end of 8th grade or the beginning of 9th grade. Ms. Kammerud noted that if the committee specifies the end of 8th grade that students will be given two tests.

The committee directed staff not to proceed with WLC: 0062/1. The committee further directed staff to make the following modifications to WLC: 0054/1:

1. Delete the requirement that the examinations adopted or approved for 8th grade must include examinations offered by ACT, Inc.
2. Specify that the 9th grade examination offered by ACT, Inc. must be administered at the beginning of 9th grade.
3. Add a requirement that DPI submit a report to the appropriate legislative standing committees and the Joint Committee on Finance five years after the ACT Suite is

implemented that evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of continuing to offer examinations offered by ACT, Inc. and recommends any legislation DPI determines is necessary.

4. Delete the two full-time positions authorization and appropriation for DPI.

WLC: 0059/1, relating to the youth options program and making an appropriation

Ms. Letzing described the draft. The committee discussed different programs under which high school students may earn high school and college credit, or only one type of credit. Senator Grothman stated that he did not support either option for changing the funding of the Youth Options Program. The committee also discussed whether to require the pupil to describe the connection between a post-secondary course and his or her ACP in the application to the school board or whether to authorize a school board to deny a pupil's request to take a post-secondary course under Youth Options unless the course was connected to the pupil's ACP.

The committee directed staff to make the following modifications to the draft:

1. Delete all sections of the draft relating to creating a new categorical aid appropriation for youth options and relating to authorizing a school district to increase its revenue limit to pay for youth options.
2. Specify that the requirement that a pupil's notification to the school board of the pupils intention to enroll in a post-secondary course under Youth Options must include a description of how the course is connected to the pupil's ACP becomes effective one year after the ACP requirement as provided in WLC: 0054/1 becomes effective.

Discussion of Youth Apprenticeship

Ms. Karls-Ruplinger summarized a conference call that Chair Olsen hosted regarding the Youth Apprenticeship program. She stated that employers expressed concerns regarding certain aspects of the program, including the number of hours pupils must complete, pupil safety and employer liability, and the ability of pupils to earn math and science credit for work in the program. She noted that employers currently participating in Youth Apprenticeship stated that the program has become more flexible and has improved the curricula over the past few years, but did suggest some changes. Among changes discussed were removing the \$900 per student funding cap or increasing the cap, providing more emphasis on marketing and awareness, providing more funding to the program, and providing a financial incentive such as a tax credit to employers. She said it was determined that Youth Apprenticeship is a small program with well-defined parameters that best fits employers who want to involve a small number of students at the workplace. Staff from the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) stated that they plan to survey employers regarding barriers in the program.

Review and Discussion of Draft Letters

Draft Letter No. 1. The committee directed staff to remove the reference to students in 8th grade taking the EXPLORE test and to add a provision urging the Governor to include in his biennial budget bill a requirement that students in 9th grade take EXPLORE at the beginning of the 9th grade year.

Draft Letter No. 2. The committee directed staff to remove the request to the State Superintendent of DPI to support a requirement that students in 8th grade taking the EXPLORE test and to add a provision urging the State Superintendent to support a requirement that students in 9th grade take EXPLORE at the beginning of the 9th grade year.

Draft Letter No. 3. The committee directed staff to determine if the PLAN test already includes science. If the PLAN test includes science, the committee directed staff not to send this letter.

Draft Letter No. 4. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 5. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 6. The committee directed staff to add a provision that specifies an audit should examine what the costs are to post-secondary institutions.

Draft Letter No. 7. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 8. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 9. The committee directed staff to delete the phrase “and pursue any legislation the work group recommends” at the end of page 1 in the third paragraph.

Draft Letter No. 10. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 11. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 12. The committee directed staff to add a provision that specifies that the Special Committee study how special education teachers are instructed regarding transition for students with disabilities.

Draft Letter No. 13. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 14. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 15. The committee directed staff to remove the specific endorsement of mobile technology labs and to add a provision encouraging the Wisconsin Association of School Boards to be aware that many opportunities to increase technical education for high school students are available.

Draft Letter No. 16. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 17. The committee did not request any changes to this letter.

Draft Letter No. 18. The committee directed staff to address this letter to each of the Wisconsin Technical College District Presidents. The committee also directed to staff to add a provision encouraging each technical college district to utilize a regional online resource in order to facilitate communication and coordination among school districts, post-secondary institutions, and businesses regarding work-based learning, career opportunities, and post-secondary options for high school students in the region.

Draft Letter No. 19. The committee directed staff to address this letter to DWD.

Chair Olsen said that Draft Letter Nos. 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 will be amended to specifically reference students with disabilities, as requested in the December 13, 2012 letter from Disability Rights Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities.

Chair Olsen stated that the letters would be combined according to the recipient. There was a consensus of the committee to send the letters as amended and combined. Senator Grothman asked that he be recorded as “no” on Draft Letter No. 1 and Draft Letter No. 2.

Ms. Karls-Ruplinger explained that any bill drafts approved by mail ballot will be reviewed by the Joint Legislative Council and if the Council approves the drafts, the drafts will be introduced by the Council and proceed through the regular standing committee review process. She noted that committee members will be notified of the Joint Legislative Council meeting.

Chair Olsen thanked committee members and Legislative Council staff for their hard work.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

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