



Education and Local Government Interim Committee

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57th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

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TOM FACEY
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ART PETERSON

COMMITTEE STAFF

CONNIE ERICKSON
RESEARCH ANALYST
EDDYE McCLURE
STAFF ATTORNEY
PAM JOEHLER
FISCAL ANALYST

MINUTES

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed. Committee tapes are on file in the offices of the Legislative Services Division. **Exhibits for this meeting are available upon request. Legislative Council policy requires a charge of 15 cents a page for copies of documents.**

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION POLICY AND BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE

December 20, 2001
Room 116, State Capitol
Helena, Montana

PEPB TELECONFERENCE MEMBERS

Sen. Edward "Ed" Butcher
Sen. Royal Johnson
Sen. Don Ryan
Sen. Emily Stonington
Rep. Branae
Rep. Peterson
Mr. Jasmin
Mr. Semmens
Mr. Snezek

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Sen. Ryan
Mr. Snezek

STAFF PRESENT

Pam Joehler, Fiscal Analyst
Taryn Purdy, Fiscal Analyst
Eddy McClure, Attorney
Miko Owa, Secretary

VISITORS & AGENDA

Visitors' list (ATTACHMENT #1)
Agenda (ATTACHMENT #2)

COMMITTEE ACTION

- Adopted the tentative agenda for the December 20, 2001, meeting.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by Rep. Peterson, Acting Chair. Roll call was noted; Sen. Ryan and Mr. Snezek were excused. Jeff Hindoen, Governor's Office was present in Mr. Snezek's place.

The adoption of the tentative agenda was approved unanimously.

OPENING REMARKS

Rep. Peterson provided opening remarks regarding the importance of higher education in strengthening the economy, promoting civic contributions, and creating a sense of community. He said that the Subcommittee's goals should be how to make clear the roles of the Legislative Branch and the Board of Regents.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Pam Joehler, Legislative Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Fiscal Division, provided an overview of the project proposal as outlined in the memo Public Postsecondary Education Policy Goals and Accountability Measures Project Proposal (EXHIBIT #1).

Sen. Stonington asked about current statutes related to the governing functions and public policy goals of the Legislative Branch and the Board of Regents; and if none existed, whether it was Ms. Joehler intent that the Subcommittee propose legislation to establish statewide policy goals. Ms. Joehler said that currently, there is nothing in statute related to the issue and she would have to confer with the Legislative Branch Legal Counsel to determine if something could be put into statute on a permanent basis.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Rep. Peterson preferred Option #2 (address policy goals only). He felt that Option #2 was the most realistic in tackling statewide policy goals, but questioned whether the Subcommittee would have time to establish measurement criteria as to whether those goals were successful.

Rep. Branae felt that establishing policy goals was a big enough undertaking at this time. He cautioned the Subcommittee to not move too quickly until it has received input from all of the stakeholders. He also felt that the Subcommittee needed to identify those who should be involved and ensure that they all had an equal say,

Mr. Semmens said that as a Board of Regent member for the last 1 1/2 years, discussions have centered around developing a more collaborative relationship among the Executive and Legislative Branches, and the University System. He felt that the Subcommittee should move forward and that Option #2 was the best way to do it.

Sen. Johnson disagreed, stating that it would be difficult to communicate and move toward proposing statewide policy goals unless the Subcommittee heard comments on Option #3 (address policy goals and accountability mechanisms).

Ms. Joehler responded that the Legislative Fiscal Division was working with the University System on an interface with the University System's BANNER system that will make information gathering very simple and more efficient. Detailed information will be gathered before the next legislative session.

Sen. Butcher said that the real issue is accountability and that he was more concerned about where revenue was coming from and where it was being spent. He said that the Board of Regents needed to deal with the administration of the University System so that when the Legislature reviews the numbers, it can see where revenue was being spent branch by branch. He also wanted information on the number of students who were graduating from the various programs by institution.

Rep. Peterson and Commissioner Croft agreed that the Legislature sees what was being spent at every session. Commissioner Crofts added that institutional profiles, such as enrollment, the number of graduates, and placements, were readily available and that the Board of Regents provides that information to the Education Appropriation Subcommittee on a campus-by-campus basis. However, after that point, the Board has very little opportunity to provide the same information to the remainder of the Legislature.

Sen. Butcher reiterated that even though he saw the information provided by the Board of Regents during the legislative session, the figures were not readily apparent and he wanted to see what each campus was spending.

Sen. Stonington said that the Subcommittee was discussing the need to incorporate policy goals and measurement tools together, the goal being to help the state understand how its money in higher education is being invested to its best advantage. She felt that the Board of Regents have worked on a vision and mission statement so the goals are already articulated. She suggested that the Subcommittee review what the Board has done to date, what other states are doing, and that it needed to move forward with both the policy statement and the performance measurement.

Commissioner Crofts said that he would hate to see the Subcommittee make a hasty decision that would limit its work only to the two options mentioned in previous statements. He said that current literature and practices throughout the nation is teaming with accountability measures. This part of the process would be more a question of choosing accountability measures from other states that are relevant to the goals that the Subcommittee has established. If the Subcommittee could accelerate its work in the arenas of public policy and goal statements, it would be possible to begin a process of developing accountability measures. He said that the Board has been working in these areas within the system and has some suggestions from the management of the system that could be brought to the Subcommittee.

Sen. Butcher felt that the Subcommittee should not have to spend much time on the statewide policy goals because the Board already had them established along with basic accountability

measures. He suggested that the Board of Regents bring a basic outline of the goals and policies for Subcommittee analysis at its next meeting.

Mr. Semmen said that the Board of Regents' strategic plan would be a good starting point for the Subcommittee to review. In the development of the plan, the Board looked at various accountability measures to assess how it was achieving those goals.

Rep. Peterson expressed his hope that the Subcommittee would review higher education policy in its totality, incorporating community, tribal, and private colleges, rather than university policy.

The Subcommittee further discussed agenda items for its next meeting. They decided the following:

- to proceed with the consideration of a statewide policy goal by reviewing the Board of Regents' strategic plan to see if it may lead to some measurement goals;
- to receive the Board's "dashboard" reports to determine what type of information the Subcommittee wants to receive; and
- to analyze the Board of Regents' strategic plan to determine in what direction it wants to proceed.

Mr. Semmens informed the Subcommittee that the dashboard reports were incomplete but that the Board could share some ideas or a draft copy. He also encouraged Commissioner Crofts to provide a summary of where the dollars go to the various campus units, a summary of the different revenue sources and expenditures, and a summary of the reports that the Board will include in its handbook which will provide the Subcommittee with some ideas related to performance and accountability issues.

ADJOURNMENT

Their being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

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