

MINUTES OF
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

July 16, 2013

Governor Steve Bullock called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken. Board of Public Education members present: Patty Myers, Chair, Sharon Carroll, John Edwards, Paul Anderson, Erin Williams. Board of Regents members present: Angela McLean, Chair, Jeffrey Krauss, Paul Tuss, Todd Buchanan, Major Robinson. Ex officio members present: Governor Steve Bullock, Superintendent Denise Juneau and Commissioner Clay Christian.

Governor Bullock welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Board of Education during his term as Governor. He recognized President Royce Engstrom, from the University of Montana and Lieutenant Governor John Walsh.

Governor Bullock said that this group had significant work to do in upcoming years. His hope for Montana is: better jobs, a better educational system and more effective government. Among the Governor's priorities is our educational system as it is the foundation for what we do with job creation. Montana needs to increase high school graduation rates. Significant work has been done by the Board of Public Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. College and career readiness starts before kindergarten. We need to make sure students are ready for the next step in education, then in transition to the world. Governor Bullock said his goal is that by 2023 60% of adults would have a professional certification or degree. Education needs to be more responsive to businesses and their needs.

Governor Bullock recognized Montana's 2013 Teacher of the Year, Eileen Sheehy of Billings and extended his thanks to Sheehy family for their work in Montana.

Eileen Sheehy stated that it was a great pleasure to be Teacher of the Year. Her message was to please consider the people who are taking places of an aging workforce who don't have the same skill or expertise. We need to capture the skill and expertise of older teachers to help younger inexperienced teachers. She commented that the measure of our progress will be made by our children.

Board of Regents Report

Board of Regents Chair Angela McLean thanked Governor Bullock for helping to ensure that tuition could be frozen using a performance funding model. The Montana University System and the Board of Regents are diligently working toward affordability

for all students and decreasing the time to obtain a degree. There are structures in place to meet workforce development needs. Montanans need to work collaboratively to grow research enterprise. There are strong building blocks in place to meet the Governor's 60% degree/certification goal, including dual enrollment, workforce development, half-price tuition for dual enrollment opportunities, common course numbering and a powerful incentive for dual enrollment. They are working to expand K-20 data linkage with collaboration between OCHE, OPI, business communities and schools across Montana. Significant progress has been made with two year educations and transferability of credits.

Board of Public Education Report

Patty Myers, Chair of the Board of Public Education reported that they had just finished a major revision of the Chapter 55 accreditation standards and recently approved the content and performance standards for communication arts, literacy and mathematics. Science is next on the list. The Board brings people from across the state, facilitated by the OPI, to review both national standards and Montana standards, include Indian Ed for All and develop Montana's own standards. The Board provides standards and districts provide the curriculum. The Board of Public Education will be looking at renewal of PEPPS standards – standards by which schools of education across state develop their programs.

Superintendent of Schools' Report

Superintendent Denise Juneau acknowledged Chair Myers for outlining what's going on between the OPI and Board of Public Education and Chair Mclean for outlining joint work by the Board of Regents, OCHE and the OPI. Graduation Matters Montana (GMM) is the Superintendent's key effort to increase graduation rates and decrease drop out rates. There are 33 communities with schools with GMM programs. Each school's program is different, with their focus on meeting the needs of their individual communities. Compared to 2010, 582 fewer students dropped out this last year.

Those 33 GMM communities are outpacing the state in retention. A few of the GMM communities are looking at transitions to higher education. The Student Assistance Foundation's monies have been used to help students fill out FAFSA forms and have focus groups talking about financial aid. As a result those communities assisted 5% more students to apply for financial aid as compared to the state average which dropped 3%.

The OPI is working to promote dual enrollment and dual credit, trying to get more students earning college credit before they leave high school. Montana needs to

increase the number of educators who can teach dual enrollment classes. This requires the educators to have a master's degree in the subject they are teaching.

Superintendent Juneau would like to see the Board streamline and standardize entrance requirements for dual enrollment students and increase awareness of dual enrollment opportunities in Montana. The Superintendent is working with Governor Bullock's office on outreach programs to make sure everyone is aware of the opportunities.

The Superintendent reported they are working on data linkages to provide students with electronic transcripts which will link with colleges providing the ability to measure how well high schools are preparing students for college.

The other partnership they have is the Gear Up federal grant which funds the ACT for every junior in Montana. This past year 10,000 students took the ACT at no cost to the students and their families. Taking the ACT as a junior lets the student know where their weaknesses and strengths are and gives them an opportunity for remediation before entering college.

Early Childhood Learning Update

Governor Bullock introduced Shannon O'Brien, Policy Advisor for Education, to provide an update on early learning. Ms. O'Brien remarked that education is a long-term investment and challenging in Montana where over 25% of the population is under five years of age. Early learning is a collective responsibility. Head Start programs are doing good things and the State Librarian has programs that reach out to families. The Governor's office is looking at programs in other states and existing in Montana that show improvement for young students. Ms. O'Brien introduced DPHHS staff members, Jamie Polagi and Sarah Corbly, to explain their programs to reach out to Montana's youngest citizens.

Ms. Polagi stated that they run child protection services and see the most vulnerable at-risk students. Children bring what happens at home to school. Adverse child experiences (ACE) have long term impacts. Kids who live in a state of fight or flight develop differently. Interventions are needed in early childhood so we can change outcomes. Of children with more than four adverse child experiences, 50% are in special education and 85% have been suspended from school by 2nd grade. Getting early childhood services to these children is critical. For a return on investment, the greatest gains are shown from an investment in early childhood. Montana needs collaboration on a community and state level to support kids in homes and build skills of caregivers.

They encouraged the Board of Public Education to look at early childhood education in connection with their revision of the PEPPS standards.

Tribal college update

Governor Bullock welcomed presidents from four Montana tribal colleges to give an update on their college.

Dr. Florence Garcia, President of Fort Peck Community College stated they are part of a national organization of 27 tribal colleges. Montana colleges represent 20% of the membership. The American Indian College Fund seeks funding for students in tribal colleges. The main thing that sets tribal colleges apart from other institutions is that they are designed to assist in education and preserve tribal culture. Fort Peck has a two year program with 410 students. They are looking at workforce development and have an agreement with the Fort Peck Tribe and the Make it Right Foundation to build green housing for people in their community. Seventy percent of their students are female and it takes 4-5 years to complete a two year degree. Their students need a lot of developmental and refreshment courses.

Dr. Carole Falcon-Chandler, President of Aaniiih Nakoda College reported that they have a children's language immersion school on their campus where students are speaking the language, learning the culture as well as learning other things. Their graduation rate is 33% which is okay for a small institution. They are struggling because students that come in from public schools are not prepared in reading, writing and math skills. The local schools are not teaching any college ready courses.

Dr. Billie Jo Kipp, President of Blackfeet Community College stated that they are doing cutting edge programming. They have a health careers professional opportunity grant to increase the number of Native Americans in health care programs. They want to work with the state on certification of behavioral health aides. They offer scholarships with the goal for students to come back to tribal communities to work. They are partnering with Browning schools on curriculum development to increase outcomes for students. She stated that tribal colleges were left out of common course numbering and encouraged OCHE to include them in the future. They would like to work more with dual enrollment and are looking to OPI and higher education to accomplish that goal.

Dr. Richard Little Bear, President of Chief Dull Knife College voiced his agreement with comments made by the previous tribal college presidents. They have a strong emphasis on remediation because the students are not prepared for college. They started a summer session, tuition free, to help prepare students for college. They admit both Indian and non-Indian students.

Main Street Montana Project

Governor Bullock introduced the CEO of the Washington Corporation, Larry Simkins to give an outline of the Main Street Montana Project. Mr. Simkins stated that GMM and Early Childhood Development were very important to them and they will continue to be involved in those projects.

The mission of Main Street Montana is to develop a bottom-up, self-sustaining blue print for Montana jobs. This project is a private sector led, non-partisan, transparent, accountable blue print for job creation and economic development. They are looking for impediments to job creation and economic development and then developing the solutions. So far, the common theme in every city has been education, the value of a two year education and the value of apprenticeship programs. The next step is county surveys to get feedback from each county about their needs and to find out what neighboring states are doing. They will have a formal report prepared in the spring of 2014 with concrete actions suggested.

Veterans and Military Families

Lieutenant Governor John Walsh stated that he feels a strong responsibility to military veterans and their families. Montana has 110,000 veterans living in the state. Montana needs to provide resources for educational opportunities at all levels. Montana will join other states in a compact for education for military children. The initial focus is on the difficulties of transferring from school to school and helping with the transition from high school to warrior to higher education.

Round Table Discussion

Governor Bullock invited Board members to discuss their concerns and priorities.

Regent Angela McLean said we need to apply an “all hands on deck” approach to early childhood education. We need to intervene early and often to mitigate problems. She proposed effective data monitoring to track interventions and effect and to link intervention and student performance data across other systems. We need to ensure that every child has access to early childhood opportunities. She encouraged continuing with Big Sky Pathways for each community as an opportunity to grow the economy and prepare students for jobs at hand. Regent McLean wants to see expanded dual enrollment and system wide unified professional development.

Regent Paul Tuss stressed the need to expand research enterprise at the Montana University System. Montana expends \$195 million on university based

research while the average for western states is \$467 million. Montana also needs to work harder on a college affordability plan.

Board of Public Education member, John Edwards stated that his priorities would be seat belts for school buses in Montana and to reinstitute general civic education in schools. He stated Superintendent Juneau was doing good job and getting teachers to know how to have a voice and be heard in the process.

Regent Jeffrey Krauss stated his priority was to extend outreach for veterans to reenter education. Veterans need to know how to transfer military classes into college credit not just as electives but to apply to their degree. Veterans need to achieve the 60% degree/certification goal as well. Regent Krauss proposed a one stop shopping at the internet level, (ie. how you can apply for your benefits, who do you need to see at a campus, and how we can help you succeed). He did not feel it should be necessary for veterans to wait a year to become a resident. He suggested we offer classes on line to active duty military to get them here after they are discharged. Veterans have different needs and campuses need to learn how to deal with veterans.

Board of Public Education member Paul Anderson, suggested that educators and parents need to talk to kids about their future as they go through school. They need to ask students, what is your next step? Students want relevance in what they're doing.

Executive Secretary of the Board of Public Education, Pete Donovan commented that he was pleased the Governor has placed education at top of his agenda and feels public education in Montana one of our greatest assets.

Commissioner Clay Christian voiced his agreement with Mr. Donovan's comments. The top of his list is working toward the goal of higher achievement for adult learners – how to get there and how to get there in larger numbers. Lowering the cost of credit hours is nearly impossible, but lowering the cost to get a degree is workable. Having students prepared for college will help achieve that goal. A robust research agenda needs to be on the forefront for Montana. Other states that have put it as a priority have seen education grow and economic development come from it. Education needs to be receptive to workforce needs. He would like to see us work closely with partners in state and federal government to bring financial aid resources together. Students need to be thinking about this early on in high school and find a way to supplement financial aid at the federal level with what we can offer in Montana.

Regent Todd Buchanan stated we need to advance community colleges because affordability is a priority. Tuition is only a part of the cost of education. Montana has

one of the highest gaps between college debt loads and incomes in the region. We need to incentivize students to go from 13-18 credits and incentivize districts to participate in dual enrollment. He suggested giving teachers help to complete their master's degree programs so we can have dual enrollment in rural areas. Regent Buchanan commented on the work of the recent legislature and boards and encouraged education partners to stay at the table and work together.

Board of Public Education member Erin Williams stated that her experience was with disadvantaged children. Early childhood education is a priority for those children. She would like to look to publicly funded preschools to help children close the achievement gap and become good learners.

Regent Major Robinson stated that meetings like this show where common ground and gaps are. It is a great asset in Montana to have 20% nationally of tribal colleges working to make sure Native Americans have opportunities. He asked the board to keep in mind our tribal communities and struggles they have, to hold the bar up and give support. He encouraged the Board and Governor Bullock to focus on four or five key points for the next two years with a view toward the next legislative session. He feels early education is the most critical. He would like all students have opportunities and believe they apply to them and for them to see the options at an earlier age. He encouraged goal setting within the schools, asking often "what do you want to do, how can we help you."

Board of Public Education member Sharon Carroll stated she was passionate about Montana's Content and Performance Standards in all curricular areas. They strengthen student opportunities in education. She encouraged using data generated by the Smarter Balanced Assessment and the ACT administered to juniors.

Board of Public Education Chair, Patty Myers encouraged opening the lines of communication between members of the boards, OCHE, OPI and the Governor's office. She reminded the Board that what they witnessed during the legislative session this time was what collaboration does. SB 175 is an example. Cooperation between education groups focused on one purpose worked. She also commented on how important early childhood education is and the importance of the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind. MSDB has a problem recruiting and retaining educators. She would like to see the higher education programs address the needs of the MSDB.

Governor Bullock opened the meeting for comments from the public.

Marco Ferro from MEA-MFT stated that their members provide a common thread in all the issues discussed today. He was happy to see that Head Start and early childhood education are on the docket. He encouraged the Board to get MEA-MFT members involved and use their experience and expertise. Digital learning and dual enrollment have been successful in Montana. The Digital Academy through MEA-MFT received a grant to provide on-line educational opportunities. They fully support educators getting their master's degrees to increase dual enrollment opportunities in Montana. They want to be involved in the conversation and want to provide perspective and assistance from their members.

Royce Engstrom, President of the University of Montana thanked the Board for the discussion. Excitement about education is evident in the communities and affects our quality of life. Thinking in the K-20 sense begins in kindergarten when teachers excite students about the world around them. Types of research concepts introduced at an early level are critical. Research is not just for honor/graduate students, but for all levels. Use research as a tool to entice students at an early age to pursue education all the way through.

Governor Bullock closed expressing his appreciation that each person touched on areas they are passionate about. Discussion alone doesn't lead to change. The Board needs to take their passions and collaborate and work together to set mutual goals. Change is effected by coming together and working together as a unified front. We need to celebrate successes of education system throughout the state, not being afraid to be disrupters at times.

The meeting adjourned.

/s/ Denise Juneau
Denise Juneau, Secretary