

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

November 12, 2015

Governor Bullock called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken. The following members were present: Board of Public Education (BPE) chair Sharon Carroll, BPE members Darlene Schottle, Mary Jo Bremner, John Edwards, Jesse Barnhart, and Greta Gustafson; Board of Regents (BOR) chair Paul Tuss, BOR members, Fran Albrecht, Asa Hohman, Bill Johnstone, Bob Nystuen, Martha Sheehy; Ex-officio members, Governor Bullock, Superintendent Juneau and Commissioner Christian.

Governor Bullock thanked the board chairs and members for coming to the meeting and for their service to Montana education. Governor Bullock stated amazing things were happening in the public education system. Students are scoring well nationally and Montana has the highest graduation rates since statistics have been kept. They are working to make higher education more accessible and affordable. Tools are being employed to ensure students are college ready so they don't lose time taking remedial coursework. Montana is working to identify workforce needs and match them with higher education programs.

Unemployment continues to be well below the national average. Wages are growing faster than in most states. Montana was named number one for entrepreneurs. Montana has the 6th best state business tax climate. There is a workforce shortage facing the state. New jobs are being added, but there are not enough skilled workers joining the workforce. Montana needs to redouble efforts in K12 and postsecondary education to prepare workers to meet demands. Schools are increasing dual enrollment classes which is setting students up for success.

Board of Regents Report

Chair Tuss thanked the Governor for his leadership and focus on education. The BOR is working on a number of strategies to improve college completion, including dual enrollment and guided pathways. He stated that a record number of high school students are taking dual credit courses which is allowing students to complete college courses while in high school at a significantly reduced cost. This saved Montana families more than \$3M in tuition last year. In exchange for teaching dual credit courses, 116 teachers in Montana received coupons on a credit for credit basis for use by themselves or family members to attend college.

The BOR has a task force working on providing a clear pathway for non-STEM students and evaluating requirements for college algebra. They are working on stronger communication between secondary education and colleges, efforts to improve educational opportunities for students, and provide employers with an educated workforce.

More students are staying in Montana to work with 78% finding employment within one year of graduation.

Board of Public Education Report

Chair Carroll thanked Pete Donovan for being the "face" of the BPE. She stated the BPE has been busy with negotiated rulemaking meetings for new health and physical education and arts standards. They are updating Montana content standards to ensure students have access to high quality education. Ms. Carroll stated she watched as the new math standards were developed, is implementing the new standards in her

classroom and thought they were good standards. Updating math standards helped change how we teach math. Students have a better understanding of problem solving. Access to high quality professional development is available through OPI and professional groups.

Ms. Carroll stated she is looking forward to the art and health and physical education standards. The new negotiated rulemaking process is working well and providing ample opportunity for community input.

They are working on determining how to prepare students for college and careers and on measuring college and career readiness. There is also a group working on what job skills and soft skills students need to step into careers. The ACT is a measure of college readiness but they need to know what the measure is for career readiness. Industry and business has to be ready to step up and tell us what it is.

Commissioner of Higher Education Report

Commissioner Christian thanked the Governor for his leadership in education and Superintendent Juneau for her work in getting high school graduates ready for college. Higher education is collaborating with the Governor's office and the Superintendent at unprecedented levels. Montana students are benefiting and the collaboration is paying off. Commissioner Christian expressed his appreciation of the initiative to fund \$50M in research money. The funds are providing some exciting research opportunities, such as research on traumatic brain injury, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, water quality monitoring, enhancing energy resources, biofuels, and wildfire management.

Main Street Montana (MSM) is a project they need to work on more closely with Department of Labor to determine what the workforce needs are and include K-12 education so they are aware of the career paths.

Commissioner Christian stated he was at the WICHE meeting last week with Pat Williams. They elected a new president. In the western United States, 36,000 undergrad students were served for a savings of \$300 million. Montana education achievement numbers are better than the average in the western United States. Minority education achievement is the only group that has declined in that time and we need to work on that.

A task force is working on how to place students in higher education. One tool is the efforts with EdReady. Currently over 20,000 completed the program. The EdReady program helped students move from developmental education needs to college curriculum. We need to make sure students are where they need to be and placed appropriately.

Regent Johnstone questioned whether Commissioner Christian had any information or comments he wanted to make on the federal government becoming more involved in higher education accreditation.

Commissioner Christian responded that the news was fairly new and there were several bills, from the government taking a more systematic approach to doing away with having state accreditation. Accreditation provides that degrees and credits earned are portable across the country. Transferability of credits is important, but whether the federal government will get more involved is yet to be seen.

Regent Nystuen questioned whether there was anything related to financial literacy coming on board for high school students. He thinks more life skills classes should be taught. He sees people applying for loans who don't understand personal finances, loans or credit scores. He would like to see more collaboration with K-12 education and higher education to increase courses on financial literacy.

Regent Sheehy questioned Superintendent Juneau on how far along they were on an assessment for career readiness.

Superintendent Juneau responded that OPI is looking at various tools and different assessments. They want it to be a meaningful assessment and need to know what skills should be measured. They are having the discussions now, but are early in the process. With respect to financial education she stated there is a lot of work to be done. Conversations have been going on about what's appropriate for high schools. They are creating Indian specific financial literacy for students and adults. The process is slow, but partnerships are occurring.

Governor Bullock stated they are looking at the same type of thing with JMG (Jobs for Montana Graduates).

Office of Public Instruction Report

Superintendent Juneau introduced Tara Ferriter-Smith who oversees the Preschool Development Grant to provide a report.

Ms. Ferriter-Smith stated the purpose of the grant is to build, develop and expand high quality preschool programs. This is a joint venture between the Governor's office, DPHHS and the OPI. Governor Bullock has provided support through the Best Beginnings Advisory council. The OPI and DPHHS teams are providing on-site professional development in the communities they are working with. They have received funding for the first two years and are hoping for funding for the final two years so they will be able to bring on Cohort 3. They are currently working with 17 communities. They have 24 classrooms in Cohort 1 and 18 in Cohort 2. A total of 645 children are receiving support through this grant. This fall 59 teachers were provided financial assistance to go back to school for early childhood education. They are working to meet the needs of the students where they are at. The requirements are that they have to have a whole day program in a high needs community. DPHHS is working to develop family engagement plans.

Governor Bullock thanked Ms. Ferriter-Smith for the work of all the groups involved. Lives are being impacted through this initiative.

Education Super Highway Report

Dan Lloyd from the Governor's office reported on the Education Super Highway. This is a partnership between Montana and nonprofit organizations to upgrade internet access so all students can take advantage of digital learning. The Governor's Office has worked with the FCC and other partners to modernize E-rate to fund broadband activity in K-12 schools and libraries. They are working on the third phase which is getting additional fiber/hardware in schools. They have identified over 30 schools that could use assistance.

American Indian Achievement report

Mandy Smoker Broaddus from OPI reported on American Indian Achievement. Montana continues to be a leader nationally in American Indian Education and recently hosted the Indian Education Departments from four other states. They came to Helena to learn about the great things we have going on. Montana is the only state education agency that provides two positions to support American Indian achievement. Montana is very innovative related to academic achievement. OPI has a pilot project in Wyola Elementary partnering with them for two years due to the district's high number of English language learners. OPI is providing professional

development, technical assistance and ongoing support in Wyola. Great lessons have been learned to share in other schools.

They have had tremendous gains in graduation rates in Indian country, but American Indian students are still dropping out at higher rates than non-Indians. OPI has a data specialist who created a one of a kind early warning system. This is a live system that can give you any student's risk ratio of dropping out on any given day. They are using this as a pilot project in three schools. Great Falls has been using the system for a year. They are looking at interventions to keep kids in school and OPI is supplementing the project with additional funds to try new techniques. This project has just started in St. Ignatius and Arlee. They are focusing on student well-being and empowerment.

SB 272 provided funding to create native language immersion programs. Browning elementary is delivering half of their program in Blackfeet and half in English starting in kindergarten.

Regent Sheehy asked for more information on the dropout program.

Ms. Smoker Broaddus replied that Eric Meredith of the OPI developed the program which is unique to Montana and is a live database for 6th to 12th grade. Schools input their own data which uploads to the GEMS system. Only designated individuals at the schools can see student level data. It is up to the district if they want to let parents see it.

Superintendent Juneau commented that the data used has already been collected according to federal and state requirements. Right now this is only a pilot project to learn from. This is a very powerful tool for them to be able to identify if a student is falling apart and they need to try interventions.

Chair Tuss questioned whether any of this was transferrable to higher education.

Ms. Smoker Broaddus replied that higher education is expanding these types of services. Schools are paying more attention to transition points in 8th-9th grade. The OPI is encouraging schools to provide better programs for transition services.

Chair Carroll asked for examples of MBI cohorts.

Ms. Broaddus replied that traditionally with MBI they seek to reward for positive behavior. Within traditional cultures people are inducted or brought into clans for specific purposes – leadership, etc. They have brought the clan system into high school. They are not rewarded with a ski trip, but are inducted into a clan that reflects successful behavior.

Fran Albrecht commented that she would like to see transferability of the dropout assessment program into higher education.

Dual enrollment update

Jon Cech reported that dual enrollment was changing the lives of students. One student reported that he will earn an honors diploma and 22 college credits when he graduates from high school. He has completed most of his course prerequisites and is hoping to be able to work and save enough money so he won't have to take out student loans. The classes are harder but the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

Amy Williams, OCHE dual enrollment coordinator, reported that dual enrollment continues to grow. Last year there was a 7% gain in dual enrollment students. National studies show that students in dual

enrollment in high school have a higher college retention rate, first year GPA and number of credits earned. In school districts where dual enrollment is not an option, they are looking for other ways to help students.

Ms. Williams also reported that there is a tribal college apprenticeship program, which is part of the Main Street Montana project. Teams are going out to each reservation to meet with the tribal college and community to see what the issues are. They will be awarding \$49,000 to five tribal colleges to develop this program. Their goals are supporting college completion transition to good paying jobs or transferring to academic programs.

Jon Cech acknowledged the work of Montana Department of Labor Commissioner Pam Bucy. Currently, Montana is facing workforce challenges with more people retiring than students can replace. They are changing training systems to serve adult learners. They will expand the opportunity for veterans and adult learners, with college opportunities and career readiness being enhanced. They are working to make sure adults and veterans get credit for skills gained outside of the college environment. This will minimize the amount of time required to earn a degree or certificate.

Governor Bullock commented that the STEM scholarships have a strong purpose to help students enter STEM fields. The funding was provided through statutory appropriation for Montana high school students enrolled in the Montana University System or tribal college in a STEM or health care major.

Public comment:

Jim Fryer from Hobson commented that he was impressed with the dialogue on work force development. He served on the Main Street Project and was a guest at Lieutenant Governor McLean's STEM summit. He stated that Kansas added 34,000 new jobs through welfare reform in the last 4.5 years or 7500 jobs per year. In Montana, we are expecting to be short in filling 2,300 jobs per year. If we replicate what Kansas is doing we can fill the holes with welfare reform.

Governor Bullock expressed his appreciation for everyone being there and the work they are doing for Montana.

/s/ Denise Juneau

Denise Juneau, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Board of Education Secretary