



LEGISLATURE

MINUTES

PUBLIC EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Monday, January 29, 2024 | 8:30 a.m. | 110 Senate Building

Members Present:

Sen. Lincoln Fillmore, Senate Chair
Rep. Susan Pulsipher, House Chair
Rep. Norman K Thurston, House Vice Chair
Sen. Keith Grover
Sen. David P. Hinkins
Sen. Ann Millner
Sen. Derrin R. Owens
Sen. Kathleen A. Riebe
Sen. Jerry W Stevenson
Rep. Joel K. Briscoe
Rep. Steve Eliason
Rep. Katy Hall

Rep. Dan N. Johnson
Rep. Carol S. Moss
Rep. Jefferson Moss
Rep. Candice B. Pierucci

Members Absent:

Rep. Matt MacPherson
Rep. Robert M. Spendlove

Staff Present:

Ben Leishman, Finance Manager
Rachel Boe, Financial Analyst
Rachelle Gunderson, Financial Analyst
Nancy Skidmore, Committee Secretary

Note: A copy of related materials and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Call to Order/Adoption of Minutes - January 23, 2024 and January 25, 2024

Chair Pulsipher called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

The minutes will be voted on when the committee has a quorum.

2. Line-Item Review: Science Outreach

Ben Leishman presented Science Outreach Line Items.

[2a. Informal Science Education Enhancement \[iSEE\]](#)

[2b. iSEE Brief](#)

[2c. RFA - iSEE Sustaining Student Services](#)

[2d. RFA - iSEE Provider Expansion](#)

[Informal Science Education Enhancement](#)

Sen. Hinkins presented RFA: ISEE Provider Expansion and iSEE Sustaining Student Services with the assistance of Derrek Hanson, Executive Director, Red Butte Garden, Deborah Ivie, Utah State University Extension, Nick Hoffman, School Programs Manager, Red Butte Garden.

Rep. Thurston asked who chooses the RFP and recommends the flow from provisional to permanent programs. Deborah Ivie responded.

Rep. Thurston asked if this funding is one-time or an on-going request. Deborah Ivie responded.

Sen. Riebe commented that most of these programs are based along the Wasatch Front and wondered if they could be based in more rural areas to save money and bring jobs to those areas. Deborah Ivie responded.

Sen. Stevenson asked if there is an evaluation of the effectiveness of these programs and if a program is dropped, what happens to the money used for the dropped program. Derek Hanson responded.

Rep. Briscoe expressed his appreciation for the science outreach programs.

Rep. Carol Moss asked for an explanation of how it is decided which program will go to what school. Deborah Ivie responded.

MOTION: Rep. Briscoe moved to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2024 and January 25, 2024 meeting. The motion passed with a vote of 11 - 0 - 7.

Yeas - 11

Rep. J. Briscoe
Rep. K. Hall
Sen. D. Hinkins
Rep. D. Johnson
Rep. C. Moss
Sen. D. Owens
Rep. C. Pierucci
Rep. S. Pulsipher
Sen. K. Riebe
Sen. J. Stevenson
Rep. N. Thurston

Nays - 0

Absent - 7

Rep. S. Eliason
Sen. L. Fillmore
Sen. K. Grover
Rep. M. MacPherson
Sen. A. Millner
Rep. J. Moss
Rep. R. Spendlove

3. Line-Item Review: State Board of Education Line Items

Rachelle Gunderson and Ben Leishman presented State Board of Education Line Items.

Rep. Briscoe asked for a clarification of the Indirect Cost Pool - Restricted and Unrestricted Funds. Ben Leishman responded.

[3. Line Item Review: USBE Line Items](#)

[3a. Public Education Fees](#)

[3b. USBE Administrative Line Items](#)

Sen. Riebe asked if the Teachers Aid Compensation is \$17.31 "per hour" and if this low compensation is preventing the School for the Deaf and Blind to hire aids. Sen. Riebe also asked if a proposal can be made to increase the wage. Sen. Fillmore responded.

Rep. Briscoe asked if the downward drop in 2023 reflects previous years when we were not serving kids lunch because of COVID. Rachelle Gunderson responded.

Rep. Briscoe asked for an explanation of why the Child Nutrition Income Tax Fund is so low. Rachelle Gunderson responded.

Rep. Thurston asked what the 32 full-time employees, at a cost of \$3.5 million, do for the board. Ben Leishman responded.

James Moss, Board Chair, Utah School Board of Education and Scott Jones, Deputy Superintendent of Operations, Utah State Board of Education responded to the staff presentation.

Rep. Pierucci asked for an explanation of the 32 full-time employees that were previously brought up by Rep. Thurston. James Moss and Scott Jones responded.

Sen. Riebe asked if the USBE has seen an effort by the committee to be more efficient when introducing bills and programs to not create more administrative work for the USBE. Scott Jones responded.

Chair Pulsipher commented that the committee needs to think about the administrative impact on programs and grants that are approved. Scott Jones and James Moss responded.

Ben Leishman provided context to the discussion.

4. Line-Item Review: MSP- Voted and Board Local Levy Programs

[4. Line Item Review: MSP Voted and Board](#)

Ben Leishman presented MSP - Voted and Board Local Levy Programs.

Sen. Riebe asked what will happen when State Fund from Basic Levy "Freeze" (2019-23) are unfrozen. Ben Leishman responded.

Sen. Riebe asked if this money could go back into the Economic Stabilization Fund. Ben Leishman responded.

5. Line-Item Review: Public Education Economic Stabilization Account

Ben Leishman presented Prior Year Funded Items.

[5. PED Economic Stabilization](#)

[5a. USBE PED Economic Stabilization](#)

Rep Pierucci asked if the prior year plus growth contingency is based on the 5-year freeze in enrollment funding. Ben Leishman responded.

Sen. Riebe asked if the \$75 million going to rural schools for capital gains is a duplication of the equalization funds. Ben Leishman responded.

Sen. Riebe asked if there are school districts that have bond ratings that negatively impact their ability to get a loan and would this give them the ability to get a loan through us at a better rate. Ben Leishman responded.

James Moss and Scott Jones responded to the staff presentation.

6. Utah School Board's Association Budget Requests

[6. USBA, USSA, UASBO Budget Requests](#)

Lexi Cunningham, Executive Director, Utah School Board Association, Todd Hauber, Past President, Utah Association of School Business Officials, Cade Douglas, President, Utah School Superintendents Association, presented Utah School Board's budget requests.

7. Utah Education Association Budget Requests

Jay Blain, Director of Policy and Research, Utah Education Association. Renee Pinkney, President, Utah Education Association, presented UEA Budge Prequests.

[7. Utah Education Association Budget Requests](#)

Rep. Thurston asked if the UEA has recommendations for line-items that could be rolled into flexible allocations. Jay Blain responded.

Rep. Pierucci commented that the Advanced Degrees Bill came to a House Committee last week and the fiscal note is different than what is being presented on the slide. Jay Blain responded.

8. Requests for Appropriation

Rep. Jefferson Moss presented RFA for K-12 Computer Science for Utah Grant Program with the assistance of Vik Hockett, Associate Director, Talent Ready Utah and Will Clive, Chief People Officer, Pluralsight, Inc.

[8a. Computer Science.24.PEA](#)

[Computer Science For Utah](#)

Sen. Millner commented that Utah is 16th in the nation in terms of the number of high schools where students have access to computer science. She added that If Utah wants to be number one in the economy, we cannot be 16th in digital communication and technology skills.

Rep. Carol Moss asked why tech companies, such as Pluralsight, are asking for more employees when they are laying off hundreds. Vik Hockett and Will Clive responded.

Sen. Riebe asked why the 100 plus schools that do not provide computer science courses, don't use on-line courses through SOEP. Vik Hockett responded.

Rep. Val Peterson presented RFA for PRIME Expansions with the assistance of Taylor Adams, Utah System of Higher Education, and Vick Hockett, Director, Talent Ready Utah Association.

[8b. PRIME.PEA.24](#)

[8b. RFA - PRIME Expansions](#)

[PRIME EXPANSIONS](#)

MOTION: Rep. Pierucci moved to adjourn. The motion passed with a vote of 10 - 0 - 8.

Yeas - 10

Rep. J. Briscoe
Sen. K. Grover
Rep. K. Hall
Rep. D. Johnson
Sen. A. Millner
Rep. C. Moss
Rep. C. Pierucci
Rep. S. Pulsipher
Sen. K. Riebe
Rep. N. Thurston

Nays - 0

Absent - 8

Rep. S. Eliason
Sen. L. Fillmore
Sen. D. Hinkins
Rep. M. MacPherson
Rep. J. Moss
Sen. D. Owens
Rep. R. Spendlove
Sen. J. Stevenson

Chair Pulsipher adjourned the meeting at 10:54 a.m.