

Work Session

Tab 16—Homeschool Testing

Executive Director Larry Davis provided some information regarding the testimony on the proposed WAC.

President May reviewed the proposed amendments for the WAC:

- Dropping the word “normed”.

Tom Parker expressed concerns about the need for the WAC. He asked for input from other members regarding their feelings about the need for the test.

Warren Smith stated that this was a housekeeping measure for the Board. There is a perception among some of the homeschool people that this is an attempt to regulate homeschool instruction.

Dana Twight asked for clarification on what the WAC is actually going to do.

Following considerable discussion, Executive Director Davis provided background on the development of the WAC. We need to move forward with the adoption.

Mrs. Lamb felt that we should move forward as this is the eighth meeting where this has been discussed. It was noted the 50 emails received were not individualized but spam copies.

Mr. Ames felt that OSPI maintaining the list on their website could be cut if the budget continues to decline. Who will maintain in a budget crisis?

Mrs. Lamb feels that the language about putting it on the website should not be included in the WAC.

Consensus of the Board was to move forward with a vote on the proposed WAC. Mr. Smith will propose Amendment A. In clarification, no vote will be taken tonight on any of the amendments or the WAC. Mr. Smith has been delegated to bring forth all of the amendments.

Tab 13—Private School Rules

Mrs. Lamb asked if the vote on the rule could be postponed. Several of the members expressed concerns about moving the rule forward.

Mrs. Frank expressed the feeling about the 1 to 25 ratio and the need to keep to that ratio. Finding certificated teachers is giving difficult to find for private schools more so than in the public sector.

Mrs. Lamb feels that this should come through the Professional Development and Certification Committee.

Mr. Parker noted that this gives many of the smaller schools more flexibility in hiring teachers especially for the small, specialized schools.

Mrs. May felt that maybe there should be some boundaries around certain issues.

Ms. Twight (her request) noted that the Montessori teachers are not well paid and, in most cases, cannot get certification. She is concerned about the student/teacher ratio.

Mrs. May noted that she is now a commissioner for the National Association of School, Colleges, and Universities (NASCU), and will ask that body how they feel about the student/teacher ratio.

Executive Director Larry Davis provided background information regarding the statute. If you look at the statute, every teacher in an approved private school had to be certificated. Carl Finboe proposed the ratio of 1:25 as a way of giving flexibility for the private school system. There are four ways to educate students in this state—public schools, approved private schools, homeschooling, and education centers. He took issue with the statement of Barbara Mertens regarding professional certification.

Mrs. Lamb expressed concerns about the structure of the language in the proposed WAC.

Ms. Twight asked if private schools are different from the public school system.

Mrs. May asked for closure until tomorrow.

Capital Budget

Executive Director Davis provided information that the budget process is very explicit. He provided copies of the Beliefs, which have been cleaned up. The word “facilities” needs to be added to the sixth belief and goal C.

Belief 6: All students and staff should be provided facilities that are safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments.

Goal 3: All students and staff will be provided facilities that are safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments to will meet their educational needs.

Consensus of the Board was to agree with the changes to the Beliefs and Goals.

Brenda Hood pointed out the following:

- ✓ There are no national averages for the area cost allowance.
- ✓ Asked for guidance on various items—area cost allowance, square foot allowance, fire marshal, increase rates, energy reimbursement rate, architect and engineering rate increase (rate schedule exists), space utilization for special ed and technology integration in the schools, SBE initiative on skill center needs (GA has not done the work; the work has to be done by December 1 or GA will not be paid), appropriate laws and rules do not exist on the funding issue for skills centers, GA has to provide a document regarding the condition of the centers and their programs by December 1 if the skill centers agree to the new timeline; REM grants, any other items.

Carolyn Tolas reported on the Facilities Committee meeting. The plan was to come forth and try to up the area cost allowance over the next six years to bring it up to the actual cost and in the third biennium, increase the square footage allowance to the national average. Committee recommendation is to go for thirds on the square foot allowance to bring it up to the national average. Next year there will be a waiting list for project completion.

Tom Parker stated that we wanted to get to the national average on square footage and bring the area cost allowance up to the current cost for building schools. This is going to be an uphill fight. We need data; we need a model of what it cost to actually build a school that meets today's criteria and needs. Higher education is taking an increasing cost.

- ✓ This is what it costs—this is the national average and this is what it costs. The air quality issue comes from building substandard buildings. Technology needs.
- ✓ We are trying to get to the baseline for what it takes. If you get the legislature to step up to the needs, it allows local levies and bonds to meet local goals. If the local dollars will generate more state matching dollars, the levies and bonds will pass.
- ✓ We need five good arguments to take to other education groups to get them on board to help work with the legislature.

Carolyn Tolas expressed concern that this will not happen unless all education partners are involved in getting the funding for the construction issues. The legislature took our monies and bonded for the higher education facilities. It is on the legislative horizon now and we have to get going to move the monies to the K-12 construction. Mr. Parker stated that we need to get figures for the messages the Board needs to take to the legislature. The Facilities Committee will be meeting in July to help with the budget development. A new bonding company is making a presentation to WASA Board that

Carolyn will be attending. Terry Bergeson is supportive. Consensus was to go for an increase every biennium for the next three to bring it up to where it should be (square foot allowance). There is a possibility legislature will not finish on time. For the area cost allowance, the Boecht Index is no longer being used nor is the OFM inflation index because it was not supportable. OFM has a new construction inflation fact based on federal guidelines. There might be a need to go annually on the area cost allowance. Mrs. Hood was given the green light to bring information on the fee increases to the August meeting.

Mrs. Hood explained the funding for the state fire marshal with regard to the school construction, especially in the small and rural areas. If the county does not have a fire marshal, districts can request the state fire marshal to come in and do the inspection of construction. Mrs. Tolas explained the REN (Emergency School Renovation) grants from the federal government. The applications totaled five times the appropriation. SFAB is asking that the state pick up the grants at 100 percent and then go to the federal government for matching funding. We need to make a presentation to the federal delegation to re-secure the funding. Mrs. May feels that the Board is overtaxed and cannot take on any more.

Executive Director Larry Davis asked that the staff be given reign to develop the general fund budget and bring it to the executive committee. Representative Haigh will help protect funding for schools and districts that want to go to performance based.

Mrs. May would like to have a discussion on the communication piece. The Board will use an extra time to discuss communication in tomorrow's meeting. There is also a need to set legislative priorities.

Larry Davis asked for direction on sending a letter to the federal delegation on the lack of vaccines. Board consensus was to go ahead with development of the letter.

Question was raised on the type of presentations coming to the Board. The presentations don't necessarily indicate the type of program.

Adjourned 8:35 p.m.