



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGH SCHOOL

Room 411 South
State Capitol

September 13, 2012
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the September 13, 2012 meeting of the Special Committee on Improving Educational Opportunities in High School. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc.>]

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Olsen called the committee to order. The roll was called and it was later determined that a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. Luther Olsen, Chair; Rep. Paul Farrow, Vice Chair; Sens. Tim Cullen and Glenn Grothman; Rep. Sony Pope-Roberts; and Public Members Joni Burgin, Bill Fitzpatrick, Joe Garza, Robert Hein, Patricia Hoben, William Hughes, Suzanne Kelley, Jim Leef, Jeff Monday, Patricia Neudecker, Sheila Ruhland, and S. Mark Tyler.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Public Members Mark Kaiser and Harry Muir.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Jessica Karls-Ruplinger and Rachel Letzing, Senior Staff Attorneys.

APPEARANCES: Lori Peacock, Career/Technical Education & Counseling Coordinator, Green Bay Area Public School District; and Steve Schneider, School Counselor, Sheboygan South High School; S. Mark Tyler, President, OEM Fabricators, Inc.; Randy Guttenberg, Superintendent of Schools, Waunakee Community School District; Tim Schell, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Waunakee Community School District; Joe Gothard, Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education, Madison Metropolitan School District; and Tim Casper, Public Affairs and Governmental Relations Officer, Madison College; Sharon Wendt, Director, Career and Technical Education, Department of Public Instruction (DPI); Sara Baird, Education Consultant, DPI; Robin Kroyer-Kubicek, Youth Apprenticeship Curriculum Coordinator, CESA 6; and Cathy Cray, Youth and Projects Unit Supervisor, Department of Workforce Development.

Presentation by Invited Speakers

Lori Peacock, Career/Technical Education & Counseling Coordinator, Green Bay Area Public School District; and Steve Schneider, School Counselor, Sheboygan South High School

Ms. Peacock described the individual graduation plans in the Green Bay School District. She noted that others, including Tim Sullivan's report to Governor Walker, refer to these plans as academic and career plans. She explained that the individual graduation planning process is aligned with the Wisconsin Comprehensive School Counseling Model and the American School Counseling National Model and that the process is integrated into the district's school counseling curriculum. She also noted that the school counseling curriculum was approved by the school board on August 20, 2012.

Ms. Peacock described the standards that are completed in middle school and high school under the plan. In middle school, students look at what they like to do and what they are good at. In high school, students further define what they like to do and what they are good at and look at how these interests align with career pathways. She explained that students review how career pathways relate to a post-secondary plan. She also explained that students complete an individual planning conference, in which a student reviews his or her electronic portfolio and discusses the academic and career planning process with a school counselor. Lastly, she described the community support for graduation planning and the strengths and challenges of the planning program.

Mr. Schneider described the individual learning plans at Sheboygan South High School. He explained that sixth graders do career exploration using career clusters; that seventh graders are introduced to an electronic portfolio that relates interests to careers; and that eighth graders continue to develop the portfolio for career assessment. He explained that in high school, students explore and discover career options and make a plan for post-high school.

Mr. Schneider explained the two-day career lessons in the freshman, sophomore, and junior years and the process leading up to the formalized plan. He explained that in the senior year, students are provided with resources and understand the next steps in their post-secondary plans. He also described how parents are connected to the career planning process, including access to the student's electronic portfolio. Lastly, he explained how local businesses are connected with the process and the opportunities for growth in the process.

In response to questions from committee members, Ms. Peacock and Mr. Schneider discussed the student-to-counselor ratio in their schools and the availability of the planning process to special needs students. Ms. Peacock expressed concern that requiring individual learning plans may lead to the plans becoming another checklist to complete and suggested that incentives could be provided to include more employers in the process. Mr. Schneider suggested that grants could be provided to support K-12 teachers in getting certified to teach technical college courses and mentioned the impact of child labor laws on the manufacturing industry. Ms. Peacock also mentioned that the portfolio helps students develop a course plan, and Mr. Schneider stated that career research plans are tied to course offerings. Lastly, Ms. Peacock and Mr. Schneider explained the educational preparation of school counselors and the barriers to participation by parents.

Committee Discussion on Academic and Career Plans and Tim Sullivan's Report to Governor Walker

The committee discussed academic and career plans and Tim Sullivan's report to Governor Walker.

Ms. Ruhland explained that career planning needs to be understood and that the key question is what "career planning" means. She also said that it is not clear what academic and career plans would include.

Ms. Neudecker noted that the "Guide for Implementing Programs of Study," published by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), discusses pathways.

Chair Olsen asked the committee if there is anything that the Legislature needs to do to make academic and career plans work.

Ms. Burgin responded that there is an equity issue. She said that smaller schools do not have academic and career plans and that counseling services have been reduced in those schools.

Chair Olsen stated that school districts are not prevented from having academic and career plans but may have other reasons for not using the plans. He asked whether the committee should hear from school districts that do not use the plans.

Ms. Neudecker said that this is an awareness issue and that schools should have access to better labor market data. She said that students should be exposed to every career option in the state.

Approval of the Minutes of the Special Committee's August 20, 2012 Meeting

Ms. Hoben moved, seconded by Mr. Fitzpatrick, to approve the minutes of the Special Committee's August 20, 2012 meeting. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Presentations by Invited Speakers

S. Mark Tyler, President, OEM Fabricators, Inc.

Mr. Tyler provided the manufacturer's perspective on opportunities available to high school students. He described three examples of manufacturing programs that expose high school students to the manufacturing industry. First, he described the program at Webster High School, in which a technical education teacher started with a vision of technical education as teaching work skills, free for students, self-funded, win-win for everyone involved, and school-based. He described the process leading up to the creation of Tiger Manufacturing, which included meetings to get the support of school administration and fund raising for a computer numerically controlled (CNC) router. He described the positions available at Tiger Manufacturing and the key components to success of the program.

Second, Mr. Tyler showed a video describing Cardinal Manufacturing, a program created by Eleva-Strum High School that provides a hands-on manufacturing learning environment. Third, Mr. Tyler described the manufacturing program at Baldwin Woodville High School that OEM Fabricators is involved with. He noted the challenges to manufacturing programs, including the manufacturing image

and financial roadblocks. He explained how a manufacturing program works, including the steps taken in eighth through 12th grades, and he explained some of the challenges. Lastly, he explained the benefits of the program for OEM Fabricators, Baldwin Woodville High School, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, and students.

In response to questions from committee members, Mr. Tyler explained that students declare that they are on the manufacturing pathway by 10th grade and that it is not the program's objective to drive everyone into manufacturing. He explained that for most manufacturing positions, a high school diploma is not enough and that additional education is required. He also explained that manufacturing has worked to eliminate the gender gap in the industry and that students with disabilities can participate in the manufacturing programs he described.

Randy Guttenberg, Superintendent of Schools, Waunakee Community School District; Tim Schell, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Waunakee Community School District; Joe Gothard, Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education, Madison Metropolitan School District; and Tim Casper, Public Affairs and Governmental Relations Officer, Madison College explained the Youth Options Program and their experiences with the program.

Mr. Schell described the potential value to high school students of college-level learning opportunities. He explained that the Youth Options program allows students to participate in post-secondary courses that do not overlap with the courses available in the high school and that students earn college credit in the program. He explained the application and enrollment process, including the restrictions on seat availability.

Mr. Gothard explained that the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) goes through a formal approval process, where it compares the courses offered through the Youth Options program to ensure those courses are only offered at the post-secondary institution and not at the high school. He noted that the majority of MMSD students in the Youth Options program attend the University of Wisconsin (UW) – Madison.

Mr. Casper explained that students in the Youth Options program have an opportunity to attend a technical college course after the technical college students have been given the opportunity to enroll in the course.

Mr. Schell described data provided by DPI regarding the number of students participating in the Youth Options program and Dane County data provided by UW-Madison.

Mr. Gothard explained the challenge of transportation for students at high schools that are further from post-secondary institutions. He also explained that many of the students in the Youth Options program are those students who have exhausted course options at the high school.

Mr. Guttenberg explained that as Waunakee High School has increased its course offerings, participation in the Youth Options program by some students has decreased.

Mr. Schell stated that the Youth Options program is intended to provide access for all students in the state to courses in post-secondary institutions, but he explained that there are inequities in access, often based on the locations of institutions. He also explained that other dual credit options are available to high school students.

Mr. Casper noted that many credits can be transferred to other post-secondary institutions through credit transfer articulation agreements.

In response to questions from committee members, Mr. Schell explained that the majority of those who participate in the Youth Options program are attending a technical college and that the hands-on learning experiences may not be replicated well virtually. He also explained that the school district pays the tuition and materials for the course and that if a student drops or fails the course, the district can recover the cost from the student or parent. Mr. Gothard explained that the Youth Options program offers a transcribed course to students and also described the potential for a teacher to be certified to teach a post-secondary course. Mr. Casper emphasized the college experience that the Youth Options program provides, and Mr. Gothard noted that the program allows students to pursue coursework that is not available in the school district.

Committee members commented on the Youth Options program. Ms. Neudecker noted that tuition costs under the program are a problem for school districts. Ms. Ruhland expressed concern about the seat availability requirement in the program. Ms. Burgin explained the options available to students in her area of the state.

Sharon Wendt, Director, Career and Technical Education, Department of Public Instruction (DPI); Sara Baird, Education Consultant, DPI explained the work-based learning programs available to high school students, and ***Robin Kroyer-Kubicek, Youth Apprenticeship Curriculum Coordinator, CESA 6; and Cathy Crary, Youth and Projects Unit Supervisor, Department of Workforce Development*** explained the Youth Apprenticeship program.

Ms. Wendt explained that work-based learning programs are not work releases; they are planned educational experiences. She explained that they are comprised of school, including academic and technical skills; 21st Century skills, and work-based learning. She also noted that the programs receive support from career development and programs of study.

Ms. Baird explained that work-based learning programs can be state-level, which awards a state credential or industry-endorsed competencies, or local-level, which awards a local credential and compliments local programs. She provided data regarding the number of skills standards co-op certificates issued from 1999 to 2012 and described local implementation of work-based learning programs.

Ms. Wendt described the impediments to growth of the programs, including a limited amount of time for outreach, business uncertainty about how to access the programs, economic slowdown, school budgets, and teacher attrition.

Ms. Kroyer-Kubicek explained the ideal work-based learning programs, including curriculum grounded in industry standards and work within an occupational area.

Ms. Crary explained that the Youth Apprenticeship program developed because employers were concerned that youth did not have the necessary work skills. She explained that employers identify competencies in the program, which assists in developing the curriculum.

Ms. Kroyer-Kubicek explained that skills align with national and industry skills standards and that skills are reviewed by employer groups. She also stated that employability, safety, and security skills are standardized across Youth Apprenticeship programs and that there is a standardized

curriculum structure. She noted that the programs are employer-driven because employer mentors train and support the students. She also noted that Youth Apprenticeship offers over 40 career options. She provided data regarding skill standards achievements and placements in the program.

Ms. Crary explained the grant funding available for the Youth Apprenticeship program. She noted that the grant funding now comes from the state biennial budget and the funding directly impacts the number of students that can be served in the program.

Ms. Kroyer-Kubicek described the impediments to the program, including employer participation, employer incentives, employer concerns regarding child labor laws and liability, funding restrictions, job availability and recession, marketing and awareness, and limited resources.

In response to questions from committee members, Ms. Crary explained that 1,800 students participate in the Youth Apprenticeship program and that the peak was 3,100. Ms. Kroyer-Kubicek explained that the outdated and large lesson plans have been replaced with a skills checklist. Ms. Crary added that three documents are involved in the program: (1) education training agreement; (2) checklist; and (3) on-site review. Ms. Crary also explained the per student cap, the 60% employment standard, and other impediments in the program. She explained that the program requires 900 hours at the workplace over two years and that the program is open to all students, including students with disabilities.

Committee Discussion on Impediments in State Law to Opportunities Available to High School Pupils

Chair Olsen asked committee members about impediments in state law that should be investigated further by the committee.

Ms. Ruhland suggested that greater awareness of career and technical education is important.

Mr. Tyler stated that more opportunities should be provided for youth employment.

Chair Olsen asked whether the Carnegie units are a barrier to other opportunities.

Mr. Monday said that teacher education is important because teachers are often not aware of the skills that students need for success in the workplace.

Ms. Hoben suggested that guidance counselors should be facilitators and that DPI's proposal regarding Explore Plan ACT should be funded.

Mr. Hughes noted that time is a huge factor in schools. He suggested that a set of competencies or attributes could be identified. He also noted that it is not realistic to expect involvement from all employers.

Mr. Fitzpatrick suggested that schools need greater flexibility to be innovative. He said that the 20 education standards have more to do with inputs than outputs and that a good metric is needed to show competency. He also suggested flexibility for teacher licensing and the school calendar. Lastly, he suggested modifying the funding formula for high school students to encourage the sharing of students and programs.

Ms. Neudecker noted that there are fragmented programs and that the state is holding onto the college or other framework. She expressed interest in the competency issue and noted that the common core standards could be useful but was concerned that it would still fit into the old credit model.

Vice Chair Farrow suggested that the career and technical education programs in high school, and the role of the counselor, could be reinvented. He mentioned changing the model of what is taught in high school and engaging technical colleges with high school students.

Senator Grothman emphasized the importance of work experience for youth, and he suggested that guidance counselors learn about workforce issues.

Mr. Hein suggested that the committee further discuss teacher licensing and certification.

Mr. Leef noted that the paperwork involved in hiring youth is an obstacle, and he suggested that the hiring process for a youth, in terms of paperwork and administrative obstacles, should be the same as hiring an adult.

Chair Olsen asked what would need to change in the school experience if academic and career plans are required.

Ms. Ruhland said that accountability is critical if academic and career plans are required and that a school should not be at fault if a student selects a career different than his or her plan.

Mr. Tyler suggested using stackable credentials in the secondary education system.

Ms. Burgin said that requiring academic and career plans now is probably too burdensome and suggested that incentives for teamwork to break down silos and barriers might be useful.

Ms. Neudecker said that an additional requirement will mean that something else will be eliminated; for example, requiring more math and science credits may result in less of other courses, such as career and technical education courses.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

JKR:ty