

Colorado State Board of Education
Unofficial Minutes
July 22, 2008
Retreat

Mountain Thunder Lodge
Breckenridge, Colorado

The audio transcription of this meeting constitutes the official record of the meeting. The following are unofficial minutes of the Board Retreat. If you have questions, please contact the State Board Office at (303) 866-6817.

The Colorado State Board of Education (the “SBE” or “State Board”) held a retreat on Tuesday July 22, 2008 at the Mountain Thunder Lodge, 50 Mountain Thunder Drive in Breckenridge, Colorado in coordination with the CASE Convention. The retreat was generously paid for by a grant from the Rose Community Foundation. The primary intent of the retreat was to review the State Board’s Strategic Plan and compare it to Commissioner Jones’s Forward Thinking document, and update the plan based on the Forward Thinking goals as well as 2008 legislation.

Present at the meeting were Board Chair Pamela Jo Suckla, Elaine Gantz Berman, Randy DeHoff, Evie Hudak, Peggy Littleton, and Jane Goff. Vice Chair Bob Schaffer was absent. Also present from Colorado Department of Education (“CDE”) were Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones, Chief of Staff Tanya Price, Deputy Commissioner Robert Hammond, Deputy Commissioner Ken Turner, Assistant Commissioner Jeanette Cornier, Assistant Commissioner Jo O’Brien, Associate Commissioner Kelly Leid, Colorado Legacy Foundation, and Legislative Liaison Anne Barkis. Mary Frances Nevans, Director of State Board Relations and Marjorie Reinwald from the State Board Office were also present. Observers included Pat Chlouber, Regional Representative for the U.S. Department of Education.

The meeting commenced at 9:05 a.m.

SBE FY09 Budget Approval and General Discussion of CDE Budget

Deputy Commissioner Robert Hammond provided an overview of the CDE budget for the upcoming year and the next fiscal year. He mentioned that the Department had recently lost its staff of two manning the budget office. He was pleased to inform the State Board that Jeff Blandford was selected as Budget Director. Mr. Hammond stated that the JBC had split CDE’s budget into distinct line items, including separate delineations for public school finance and the ITS department, among others. This restructuring will significantly change the approach CDE will take to internal budget management.

Mr. Hammond and Ms. Nevans discussed the SBE’s budget, stating that in essence the SBE previously was included in the CDE’s budget, and, in past years, when needed, SBE would draw from CDE for additional expenses. This is no longer possible, since the JBC created a separate appropriation for the SBE.

Ms. Nevans stated that based on a review of the necessary expenses in the SBE Office over the last five years, the budget from which the JBC cut \$44,000 (or 26%) was the lowest amount

historically spent by the SBE. In other words, 26% was trimmed from a figure which was already considerably lower than had previously been needed for the SBE to carry out its statutory responsibilities. The SBE discussed various options for the upcoming fiscal year, including cutting back on monthly meetings, attendance at in state educational events, not purchasing needed computers, etc. A possibility was also discussed whether to continue to spend funds where necessary, including out-of-state travel and membership dues, and simply run out of funds in 2009 to demonstrate the need for this amount. This proposal was not adopted. Mr. DeHoff stated that despite efforts to try to trim in other areas besides cutting membership dues and out-of-state travel, these two areas were the only areas where sufficient funds were allotted to make up the \$44,000 shortfall. Accordingly, Mr. DeHoff recommended cutting back in these two areas. Mr. DeHoff's proposal was adopted. Specifically, the SBE decided to cut registration fees for conferences (\$7,000), to cut all out-of-state travel (in FY07, out-of-state travel was \$14,000), to not renew its upcoming membership year with NASBE in January 2009 (\$26,582), not renew its membership with the national state school trust land CLASS organization (\$350), restrict the ability of State Board members to attend these conferences (Ms. Suckla, secretary and treasurer of the national CLASS organization did not attend the national conference in Boise Idaho in July 2008 to save on funds. Other board members who are on NASBE policy study group committees [Ms. Littleton, Mr. Gantz Berman, Ms. Hudak] and on the NASBE Board of Directors and a likely candidate for President Election [Mr. DeHoff] will not be able to attend the upcoming conferences in FY08 and FY09 as a result of this cut. The result of the cut is non-participation in these organizations and others (ECS) which provided the SBE with an opportunity for professional development and, most importantly, allowing Colorado a voice in national educational policy making.

Ms. Nevans stated that the legislative audit of CDE, which this year will include the SBE based on Representative Johnson's request, will be concluded in the fall or early months of 2009. The SBE will have an opportunity to respond to specific questions from the auditors. Ms. Nevans also stated that CDE will request a return of the \$44,000 cut in FY08 from the JBC via a supplemental request in that amount. If returned to the SBE budget, the funds will be available in March 2009. The supplemental request does not rise to the level of an "emergency" request therefore the SBE determined to not submit such a request.

Associate Commissioner Kelly Leid: Update on the Colorado Legacy Foundation

Kelly Leid, Associate Commissioner of the Colorado Legacy Foundation (the "Foundation") provided an update to the State Board on the Foundation. He state that it has moved from a concept that was forged last summer by Commissioner Jones to a fully operational organization and is prominently included in Forward Thinking. Mr. Leid has been full-time now since June 1st and the office is up and running. Thanks goes primarily to the Piton Foundation which contributed \$126,000 for start-up and general operations; the Rose Community Foundation which gave a \$250,000 grant to the Foundation (payable over two years), a portion of which is for start-up and general operations; and Donnell-Kay Foundation which donated \$43,000 towards the Foundation's Best Practices Guide. In total the Foundation collected \$419,000 in financial support. It also has received miscellaneous support from a variety of sources, including the law firm of Berenbaum, Weinshienk & Eason, which is providing valuable tax advice on a pro bono basis. Mr. Clifton Gunderson is also assisting at a reduced rate to help the Foundation comply with state requirements.

The Foundation has established a board of directors. The first board meeting will be held on August 19, 2008. The Board Chair is Dr. Stephen H. Shogan, M.D. The Foundation continues

to look for board participation from the western slope area as well as the Colorado Springs / Pueblo area.

The foundation has three current initiatives:

1. The legacy scholars: discussing how to attract the best and brightest to a career in teaching in hard-to-staff subjects;
2. The Commissioner's Cup, the annual luncheon/fundraiser
3. A Foundation Best Practices Guide

The SBE commended Mr. Leid for the progress he has made over the last year, and welcomed him to his full time position with the Foundation.

Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matters: Lunch

The Board convened into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

Presentation by Pat Chlouber to Commissioner Jones

Ms. Chlouber presented Commissioner Jones with an autographed photo of Secretary Spellings and expressed her appreciation of the commissioner's efforts on her own behalf and most importantly on behalf of Secretary Spellings. Ms. Chlouber stated that Secretary Spellings thinks very highly of the commissioner and wanted him to know that people are taking notice of his efforts.

Ms. Chlouber informed the State Board that Secretary Spelling started a national Teaching Fellowship. Recently, twenty-five teachers were chosen as fellows, including Cheri Isgreen from Colorado. Ms. Isgreen teaches at Cottonside Elementary School in Montrose, Colorado. Ms. Chlouber would like to bring Ms. Isgreen in to one of the Board meetings and ask her to present briefly to the State Board about the program and her achievements as a teacher.

SBE Discussion with Commissioner Jones on Forward Thinking and the SBE Strategic Plan

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ken Turner and Assistant Commissioner Dr. Jeanette Cornier facilitated the discussion with the State Board on their Strategic Plan revisions. They provided 5 handouts: State Board Mission and Vision Statement; Strategic Planning Session Agenda; Strategic Plan Versus Operation Plan; Progress Chart; and Crosswalk

The primary focus of the retreat was on the Strategic Plan revisions. The Board reviewed the Goals from "Forward Thinking" and the Objectives from the SBE Strategic Plan to see how they align with the Board's current priorities. A significant portion of the discussion focused on what goals had been accomplished, what goals needed to be redefined based on recent legislation (including the CAP4K and BEST Legislation) and what goals could be reshaped to conform more closely with Forward Thinking. At the conclusion of this session, the State Board requested that Dr. Turner and Dr. Cornier compile a revised document and submit it to the SBE for review and discussion.

Legislative Update

Legislative Liaison Anne Barkis led the Board in the Legislative discussion. Ms. Barkis reviewed the current ballot initiatives and began preliminary discussions of the SBE's 2008-2009 legislative priorities. Some highlights included:

- Bill sponsors for any proposed legislation should be identified in October or November.
- Rep. Debbie Benefield will be running a bill for teacher identifier numbers, another bill will handle various teacher licensing “clean-up” issues, and CDE will likely also pursue a bill to alter the content of the SAR.
- Ms. Barkis will attempt to schedule a meeting with the SBE and the JBC and House and Senate Education Committees
- Ms. Barkis will coordinate meetings and events with legislators around SBE Board Meetings
- Ms. Barkis will send updates to the SBE of the monthly task sheet as changes are made

Ms. Barkis also talked about the feedback from the SBE on how to improve the legislative updates provided to the SBE. Some of Ms. Barkis’s suggestions include that she would:

- Maintain frequent meetings during the session.
- Submit a list of proposed dates
- Provide regular e-mail updates summarizing legislative activity between meetings.
- Her weekly updates will have more of a narrative report, something that could be passed along to constituents.
- She will work to provide committee calendars that extend as far out as possible.
- She may utilize reports from other organizations like CASE, CASB, CEA, etc., to minimize duplication and improve efficiency.
- She will endeavor to keep the legislative meetings short and to the point

Commissioner Jones spoke to the Board about the possibility of a new employee at CDE who would work with the Department on policy.

Brief Standards Update

Assistant Commissioner Jo O’Brien provided the State Board with a review of the work being done on standards at CDE, and emphasized that a further review would be conducted at the August 13, 2008 board meeting. She discussed the collaboration taking place with the P-20 Council and other groups.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

MFN/mr