

INFORMATIONAL REPORT
OF THE
INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION



Indiana Legislative Services Agency
200 W. Washington Street, Suite 301
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

October, 2011

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2011

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A copy of this report is available on the Internet. Reports, minutes, and notices are organized by committee. This report and other documents for this Committee can be accessed from the General Assembly Homepage at <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>.

(Note: Because a quorum was not present at the end of its final meeting, the Committee was unable to adopt this report as a final report.)

I. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

The Legislative Council directed the Committee to study the following:

- A. The causes of low graduation rates in Indiana high schools (SEA 85, HB 1369);
- B. Best practices that increase graduation rates in high schools in Indiana and other states (SEA 85, HB 1369);
- C. Training and technical assistance opportunities for high schools to effectively address low graduation rates (SEA 85, HB 1369);
- D. The impact that school counselors, teachers, school administrators, and parents have on graduation rates (SEA 85, HB 1369);
- E. Superintendent compensation throughout Indiana, including salary and salary related fringe benefits and accident, sickness, health, dental, and retirement benefits, as well as whether the establishment of a statewide salary schedule based upon school corporation ADM would be beneficial to governing bodies and the state (HB 1369); and
- F. The placement of students in special education programs and the waiver process for high school graduation for students in special education programs (HB 1380).

II. INTRODUCTION AND REASONS FOR STUDY

The topics assigned to the Committee were derived from subjects contained in legislation introduced during the 2011 Session of the General Assembly.

III. SUMMARY OF WORK PROGRAM

The Committee met 3 times during the interim:

July 28. The Committee met to hear testimony and discuss superintendent compensation in Indiana.

August 25. The Committee met to hear testimony and discuss superintendent compensation and high school graduation rates.

September 29. The Committee met to hear testimony and discuss the following:

- (1) Superintendent compensation.
- (2) Five and six year high school graduation rates.
- (3) The impact of early childhood education on high school graduation rates.
- (4) College completion rates.
- (5) Possible legislation to be introduced during the 2012 Session of the General Assembly.
- (6) The Committee's final report.

The Committee did not have time to study the issue of placement of students in special education programs and the waiver process for high school graduation for students in special education programs.

IV. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

Superintendent Compensation:

The Committee heard testimony from the following individuals:

Dr. Dennis Brooks, senior assistant to Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett: Dr. Bennett feels that the process of superintendent compensation needs to be transparent and focused on performance, and that school corporations need the flexibility to attract the best candidates for superintendent and to be competitive with districts in other states. He would not support salary caps for superintendents.

Dr. Tom Little, president, Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents and superintendent of the Perry Township, Marion County, school corporation:

The primary questions for consideration are:

- How much is a chief executive officer who is responsible for the education and safety of children worth?
- Who should set the amount of the CEO's worth, a school board that is in the position to know local needs, or the state?

He pointed out that school boards assemble compensation packages to attract and retain the best candidates, and opposes salary caps.

Dr. Jeff Butts, superintendent of the Wayne Township, Marion County, school corporation: He explained that the severance package received by a previous

Wayne Township superintendent, a package that many considered excessive, is not the norm for Wayne Township or other school corporations.

Dr. Ron Barnes, a former superintendent who is now a search consultant for school boards: While he favors performance-based contracts, he thinks a salary cap would be bad public policy, as artificially capping compensation would dramatically limit an already limited pool of candidates. Very few candidates from outside Indiana apply for Indiana superintendent positions, and he thinks the high turnover rate among Indiana superintendents would rise with caps.

Dr. Eugene White, superintendent of Indianapolis Public Schools: He urged the Committee to leave salaries as an item of local control.

Chris Himsel, superintendent of the Northwest Allen School Corporation: Every community is different, and a school board is elected to know its community. Thus, the board is in the best position to set the salary necessary to attract a superintendent to the school corporation.

Ron Felger, president of the Northwest Allen school board: School boards take their jobs seriously, and salary decisions are best left at the local level.

Frank Bush, Indiana School Boards Association: A local school board needs to have the flexibility to make decisions in the best interests of the local community. School boards will not appreciate a cap that would make it difficult to perform the job of choosing the best superintendent for their school corporations.

High School Graduation Rates:

The Committee heard testimony from the following individuals:

Sen. Jean Leising: She had filed a bill requesting the study because of concerns over the wide range of graduation rates around the state, and to learn what practices school corporations with high rates are using that other corporations may use. She pointed out that one out of five high schools in Indiana has a graduation rate of less than 70%.

Dan Clark, representing the Department of Education (DoE), the Education Roundtable, and the Commission for Higher Education and Kim Clement, DoE: They answered questions about graduation waivers, which are given for students who have completed academic requirements but have been unable to pass the graduation qualification examination and distributed information concerning the percentage and types of high school diplomas awarded, and the percentage of

students receiving each diploma who need remediation in postsecondary education.

Terry Spradlin, Director of Education Policy for the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy: He presented and discussed information concerning graduation rates and dropout prevention strategies in Indiana. Speaking of behalf of Indiana University, he pointed out that IU has been active in working with high school students through an on-line school, dual credit programs, and mentoring. Once students enter IU, the school is focusing on engaging the students and making sure that they make a successful transition into higher education.

Gail Zeheralis, Indiana State Teachers Association: She stated that students dropping out often stems from societal and family pressures, but schools, teachers, and counselors can influence students. Inviting teacher input and participation is vital in improving the school environment and keeping students engaged and in school, as is increased professional development. She pointed out that state funding for programs that could be successful in keeping students in school has decreased over the years.

Dr. Eugene White, superintendent, Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS): IPS has been focusing on improving graduation rates for the last six years, and has seen significant improvements since 2009. Among the methods IPS has used to improve the rates are students taking leadership roles in their own educations, effective teaching, teacher professional development, enhanced technology, alternative schools, learning centers, credit recovery, mentors, enhanced parent involvement, and enhanced community involvement.

Robert Schultz, Indiana Wesleyan University: He presented information concerning Indiana graduation rates, dropouts, and strategies and stressed the importance of including students in developing strategies for keeping students in school.

Paul McGuinness, Purdue University North Central (PNC): PNC has two programs in which it works with high school students to keep them in school and continuing to postsecondary education. These programs, Talent Search and College Bound, begin working with students in middle school and continue through high school.

John Newby, Ivy Tech State College: Ivy Tech works with high school administrations and students through dual credit and early college programs. The dual credit programs have grown by about 20% a year for the last two years.

Judy Bardonner, Marian University: Marian sponsors programs to increase

graduation rates, including the YouthBuild Indy GED program and the Summer Learning Institute.

Julie Baumgart, Indiana School Counselors Association, presented information concerning the role of school counselors and school counselor/student ratios.

Chris Slaten, Assistant Professor in the Counseling and Development Program at Purdue University, West Lafayette: He discussed several research studies that showed that mental health interventions, such as those provided by school counselors, improved academic outcomes for the students.

Amanda Fitzgerald, American School Counselors Association (ASCA): She discussed the Indiana Gold Star Initiative, in which schools adopt the recognized ASCA model program for counselors.

Josette Rider, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana: The organization provides mentors for children at risk, including children who are at risk of dropping out. In her district, 100% of the students who had mentors and were eligible to graduate in 2011 graduated with Core 40 diplomas.

Karen Diamond, Purdue University: Early childhood education is important in ensuring that a child will graduate from high school. Whether a child is reading at grade level by the end of grade 3 can be used as a predictor of whether that child is likely to finish high school, while a child's reading skills during kindergarten can be used to predict whether the child will be reading at grade level by the end of grade 3.

Ted Maple, United Way of Central Indiana: The United Way assists in providing quality early education programs as well as making policy recommendations for improving early childhood education. The United Way assists in school readiness and early reading proficiency through a variety of programs directed towards children and parents.

Jeff Kucer, PNC Bank: PNC's program, Grow Up Great, provides assistance to community groups that work with children up to age 5 and their families. PNC sees early childhood education and school readiness as important in ensuring that the children grow up to be productive members of society.

Dianna Wallace, Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children: The Association recommends a comprehensive, high-level early childhood system with coordinated governance through a state early childhood advisory council, and an integrated professional development system that attracts, educates, and retains high-quality early childhood educators and administrators.

Sally Sloan, Indiana Federation of Teachers: The Federation has held a position for several years on the importance of early childhood education.

Callie Marksberry, Lafayette Education Association: She discussed Lafayette's program of early childhood education and the program's successes.

Nancy Pappas, Indiana State Teachers Association: She spoke about the importance of school readiness and early childhood education for children's later education.

Tammy Moon, Indianapolis: She spoke about the importance of social skills development on a student's future as an employee and citizen and the need to focus more attention on social skills in education.

College Completion Rates:

The Committee heard testimony from the following individuals:

Jason Bearce, Indiana Commission for Higher Education: He presented information concerning graduation rates for public two and four year post-secondary educational institutions in Indiana. For two-year institutions, 6% of students will earn a degree within four years, while at four-year institutions, 33% of students will earn a degree with eight years.

Jennifer Schriver, Indiana State University: The University has developed several initiatives to increase graduation rates. The University has a large at-risk population, and has focused its efforts on these students.

Dale Whittaker, Purdue University, West Lafayette: The West Lafayette campus serves more traditional students than Purdue's regional campuses do. Regional campuses serve more adult and other non-traditional students, few of whom attend full-time. The University has invested in a number of initiatives to increase retention and, ultimately, graduation rates.

John Applegate, Indiana University: He discussed the University's regional campuses and the graduation rates at the campuses. About one-third of the total number of IU students attend a regional campus; many are non-traditional students who attend part-time and will stay in the local area upon graduation. IU has developed a blueprint plan for increasing student achievement and degree attainment at the regional campuses.

Gretchen Gutman, Ball State University: She presented information concerning

Ball State's initiatives for increasing retention and graduation rates. The school has undertaken value initiatives, allowing students to move more efficiently through the university.

Richard Ludwick, Independent Colleges of Indiana: Independent colleges educate approximately 20% of Indiana college students and awarded 35% of bachelors degrees in Indiana in 2009.

Ruth Rogers and Melody Lynch-Kimery, Marian University: They presented information concerning the University's programs to ensure the success of 21st Century Scholars attending the University, including support by mentors, tutors, and advisors, as well as social activities to ensure engagement with the community.

David McFadden, Manchester College: Manchester has programs, including the Success Center, that support student achievement, as well as a graduation "guarantee", which provides that a full-time student who cannot finish a degree in four years may attend a fifth year at no cost.

Rebecca Muellen, American Association of University Professors: She pointed out that not all students can finish degrees within certain time limits, as they may be forced by circumstances to leave school.

Ted Miller, Indiana State Conference of the American Association of University Professors: He discussed the role of the faculty in student success and graduation and pointed out that not all campuses or institutions will be able to have a high graduation rate, given the characteristics of the campus and its students.

Jeff Terp, Ivy Tech: Ivy Tech has a variety of programs to assist students in completing degree and certification requirements, and to prepare students for transfers to other institutions.

V. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee made the following recommendations:

(A) PD 3070, concerning superintendent employment contracts, was adopted by a vote of 8-2.

(B) Create an advisory committee on early education that consists of early education leaders from around the state to provide technical and professional assistance to the Education Roundtable. Passed 10-0.

WITNESS LIST

John Applegate, Indiana University
Judy Bardonner, Marian University
Julie Baumgart, Indiana School Counselors Association
Jason Bearce, Indiana Commission for Higher Education
Dennis Brooks, Senior Advisor to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indiana
Department of Education
Dan Clark, Indiana Department of Education, Indiana Education Roundtable, Indiana
Commission For Higher Education
Kim Clement, Indiana Department of Education
Karen Diamond, Purdue University
John Ellis, Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents
Amanda Fitzgerald, American School Counselors Association
Gretchen Gutman, Ball State University
Jeff Kucer, PNC Bank
Jean Leising, Oldenburg
Melody Lynch-Kimery, Marian University
Richard Ludwick, Independent Colleges of Indiana
Ted Maple, United Way of Central Indiana
Callie Marksbarry, Lafayette Education Association
David McFadden, Manchester College
Paul McGuinness, Purdue University North Central
Ted Miller, Indiana State Conference of the American Association of University Professors
Tammy Moon, Indianapolis
Rebecca Muellen, American Association of University Professors
John Newby, Ivy Tech
Nancy Pappas, Indiana State Teachers Association
Josette Rider, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana
Ruth Rogers, Marian University
Jennifer Schriver, Indiana State University
Robert Schultz, Indiana Wesleyan University
Christopher Slaten, Indiana School Counselors Association
Sally Sloan, Indiana Federation of Teachers
Terry Spradlin, Center For Evaluation & Education Policy, Indiana University
Jeff Terp, Ivy Tech
Dianna Wallace, Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children, IAEYC
Eugene White, Indianapolis Public Schools
Dale Whittaker, Purdue University
Gail Zeheralis, Indiana State Teachers Association