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MONTANA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

STATE CAPITOL • HELENA, MONTANA 59601 • TELEPHONE 406/449-3750

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE

Place of Meeting: Room 436

Date Meeting Held: 1/26/72
Hour Meeting Held: 1:30 P.M.

Committee Chairman: Richard Champoux

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT OF MEETING: General Education Topics

Roll Call:

Richard Champoux	<u>Present</u>
Robert Noble	<u>Present</u>
Lloyd Barnard	<u>Present</u>
William Burkhardt	<u>ABsent</u>
Marjorie Cain	<u>Present</u>
Max Conover	<u>Present</u>
Carl Davis	<u>Present</u>
Gene Harbaugh	<u>Present</u>
Dan Harrington	<u>Present</u>
Robert Woodmansey	<u>Present</u>
John Toole	<u>Present</u>

INTERESTED PEOPLE TESTIFYING

Gladys Vance
Lloyd Markell
Harriet Meloy
Harry Axtmann
Clarice Beck
Robert Herrig
Margaret Brown

REPRESENTING

PTA
MEA
member of the State Board
County Superintendent
AAUW
County Superintendent
County Superintendent

DISCUSSION:

The chairman called the meeting to order and welcomed all people present, and introduced the committee members.

Mrs. Gladys Vance from Great Falls, representing the PTA Association was first to testify. She said this was a special interest group. Its special interest being the health and welfare of our children. They are people taking action to fulfill their goals. She said it was felt that we must make room for a wide diversity of learning opportunities that will enable a child to learn when he needs to learn. To do this there will have to be a change in the pattern of school finance and structure. The first of these changes, of course, would be on the federal level, greater financial participation. It should continue its policy of aids to meet special educational needs. Second, would be for the state to assume substantially all local school costs making it easier to wipe out the large inequities within states resulting from long established practice of heavy reliance on locally levied property taxes for schools. Whatever the method of finance it is essential that the state make provisions to remain able to act directly to insure high standards of local performance. The PTA is opposed to use of public funds for non-public schools. She said we are not yet supporting one school system adequately. The PTA urges that the Income and Interest monies stay as they are presently.

Next to speak was Lloyd Markel, representing the MEA, Montana Education Association. A copy of his statement is attached to the minutes, per exhibit 1.

Questions:

Mr. Conover: Why reserve the age limit of 21?

A.- You might distribute these funds to anyone who is being educated, if you don't set a limit.

Mr. Davis: How many members do you represent?

A.- 8,000

Mr. Harbaugh: Would your organization be against holding city and school elections on the same day?

A.- We would oppose this because it would co-mingle with local politics.

Mr. Toole: Do you think the Governor and Attorney General should remain on the State Board of Education?

A.- Yes, I think these people are needed.

Champoux: How do you feel about teachers, students, administrators on the Board.

A.- We should move in the direction of having a professional practice of status.

Harriet Meloy, member of the State Board of Education spoke next. She said she was appointed to the Board in 1969. A copy of her testimony is attached, per exhibit 2.

Questions:

Mrs. Cain: What percentage of the board's time is spent on the University System as compared to elementary and secondary systems.

A.- Much more time is spent on the University System.

Q.- What do think of a chancellor system for the university systems.

A.- I don't know if the people of Montana would go back to this system.

Mr. Davis: Do you think the Board would be more effective if the State Superintendent of Public Instruction was appointed rather than elected?

A.- probably not much change.

Q.- Should the State Board be elected?

A.- This could create a problem if someone had a personal conflict they may try to be elected so they eliminate whoever and whatever there

problem is. I feel that one or the other, either the Board or the State Superintendent should be elected.

Q.- Do you think the Governor and Attorney General should be on the Board?

A.- I feel they are needed as resource people, but I think they would prefer not to be on it. The State Superintendent should only be on the board as a resource person.

Mr. Harbaugh: How would you feel about the Board appointing the State Superintendent?

A.- This would be a good idea.

Mr. Sievers: What do you think about a student as a voting member on the Board?

A.- Hadn't given this much thought. A university student may not want to sit through the elementary and secondary part of a meeting. They are welcome to come to the meetings.

Mr. Champoux: If there were two boards do you think there would be competition for funds.

A.- Yes, to some extent.

Q.- What do you think about eliminating county superintendents and putting them in districts or regions?

A.- Would be in favor of this.

Next to testify was Mr. Harry Axtmann, County Superintendent of Roosevelt County. He stated that it was essential to have two boards. He didn't think the Governor should appoint the state superintendent, because then he would answer only to the Governor. A copy of his written statement is attached per exhibit 3.

Questions:

Mrs. Cain: What is the cost of the census and how long does it take?

A.- It starts September 15 and ends October 15 - 15¢ for each name.

Mr. Conover: What do you think of having a superintendent in regions rather than by counties?

A.- If the county superintendent's office is operating effectively, then it is a well deserved office.

Mr. Harbaugh: Do you think the county superintendent should have control over federal programs within the county.

A.- There is no control over this money. Someone should have control.

Clarice Beck from Helena representing the American Association of University Women was next to testify. A copy of her material is attached.

Robert Herrig, Lincoln County Superintendent testified next. A copy of his statement is attached.

Questions:

Mrs. Cain: Isn't it the duty of the county attorney to advise you in legal matters?

A.- Yes.

Mr. Champoux: Do you agree with Mr. Axtmann about county superintendents taking over the bookkeeping?

A.- No, this should be left to the individual administrators.

John Murphy a student was next to speak. He would like to see a student

on the State Board with voting rights. This person should probably be elected by the student body president or be the student body president. He said there are approximately 27,000 students who vote and pay taxes. He said he was also in favor of one board.

Margaret Brown, Gallatin County Superintendent was next to speak. A copy of her testimony is attached. She stated she felt there should be a cut-off date on the age limit because some children are too immature to start kindergarten or even the first grade.

Questions:

Mr. Woodmansey: Isn't it up to the kindergarten if they are ready for the first grade.

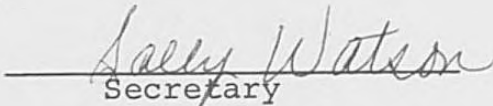
A.- They have to have something definite or the parents will override them.

Mr. Champoux: Would you like to keep county superintendents or regional ones?

A.- She said she thought there was a provision in the constitution to cover this, if the county wanted to do away with a superintendent.

The meeting was then adjourned.


Chairman


Secretary