

BUDGET REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2023 Interim

September 20, 2023

Call to Order and Roll Call

The 4th meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Education was held on September 20, 2023, at 10:30 AM in Room 154 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Kim Banta, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representative Kim Banta Co-Chair; Senator Matthew Deneen Co-Chair; Senators Christian McDaniel, and Stephen West; Representatives James Tipton, Shane Baker, Tina Bojanowski, Adam Bowling, Derrick Graham, Steve Riley, and Killian Timoney

Guests: Chay Ritter, Director, Division of Support Services, Office of Finance and Operations, Kentucky Department of Education; Bonita Brown, Interim President, Northern Kentucky University; Jay Brewer, Superintendent, Dayton Independent Schools; Angie Thomas-Perez, Student; Lisa Staley, Parent; Dr. Henry Webb, Superintendent, Kenton County School District; Keith Schneider, President, Square1; Dr. Kathy Burkhardt, Senior Director, Learning Grove (NaviGo); Jennie LaMothe, Director of School Based Services, Learning Grove (NaviGo); Lorraine O'Moore, Northern Kentucky College and Career Connector, Learning Grove (NaviGo); Ellen Bates, Vice President, Brighton Center; Melissa Hall Sommer, Senior Vice President, Brighton Center; Correy Eimer, Associate Director for Workforce Development, Northern Kentucky Area Development District

LRC Staff: Liz Columbia, David Talley, and Amie Elam

The minutes from the August 2, 2023 meeting were approved.

SEEK and Student Attendance

Chay Ritter, Division Director at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), spoke to the committee about student attendance and Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) funding.

In response to a question from Representative Timoney, Mr. Ritter said the total enrollment number is approximately 620,000. He added KDE primarily uses district-level numbers, but he suspects that drops in enrollment are likely more prevalent in high schools. He said that KDE would work to provide the committee with school-level snapshots of student enrollment.

In response to a question from Representative Bowling, Mr. Ritter said that many of the FEMA districts would qualify for one or both of the Adjusted Average Daily Attendance loss provisions.

In response to a question from Senator Deneen, Mr. Ritter stated that the budget bill directs where to send excess SEEK funds.

In response to a question from Representative Bojanowski, Mr. Ritter said that if SEEK

calculations were based on Average Daily Membership rather than Average Daily Attendance, it would increase the total of SEEK. He added that there would be a shift in funding, and there would be winners and losers at the district level.

Young Scholars Academy

Bonita Brown, interim president at Northern Kentucky University; Jay Brewer, superintendent of Dayton Independent Schools; Angie Thomas-Perez, student; Lisa Staley, parent; and Dr. Henry Webb, superintendent of Kenton County Schools, spoke to the committee about the Young Scholars Academy (YSA). YSA is a selective partnership between Northern Kentucky University, the Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services, and partner school districts. By the end of the program, most students earn roughly 60 hours of college credit.

In response to a question from Senator McDaniel, Dr. Webb answered that in seven of the nine participating districts, SEEK funds follow the student. P-12 schools are paying \$650,000 for transportation, staff, textbooks, etc. He added that the request is to recognize these students as full-time Northern Kentucky students and fund them in the same manner as Craft and Gatton Academy students.

In response to a question from Representative Bojanowski, Ms. Staley said that the school does offer support for students with disabilities.

In response to a question from Representative Graham, Dr. Webb said that the goal is to establish YSA similarly to the Craft and Gatton Academies.

In response to a question from Senator McDaniel, Ms. Brown said that after the students and school districts pay their respective portions, Northern Kentucky University is absorbing the remaining cost for YSA.

In response to a question from Senator Deneen, Ms. Brown stated that if YSA does not receive support from the General Assembly, the number of students allowed into the program will likely have to be capped, as NKU will not be able to absorb the cost of an expanding program.

Square1 Program

Keith Schneider, president of Square1, spoke to the committee about creating equitable access to workforce development programs for at-risk youth.

In response to a question from Representative Tipton, Mr. Schneider said that Square1 is a not-for-profit organization educating students in business, entrepreneurship, and leadership skills. He said that the board of directors at Square1 is comprised of local business partners. Mr. Schneider said that because school systems are so strained, the ability to bring partners from outside businesses to coach students and provide them with additional resources is invaluable. Ms. Burkhardt stated that time is an issue for schools. She added that these businesses and programs can help fill in the gaps and provide support for students.

In response to a question from Representative Bojanowski, Ms. Bates said that the Brighton Center serves approximately sixty to seventy out-of-school youth. She added that the proposal would allow many more transition students to receive services and support after high school graduation.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 11:34 A.M.