

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2018 Interim

September 10, 2018

Call to Order and Roll Call

The 4th meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Education was held on Monday, September 10, 2018, at 12:00 p.m. CDT, at the Barren County Career and Technical Center, Barren County, Kentucky. Senator Max Wise, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Max Wise, Co-Chair; Senators Danny Carroll, David P. Givens, Alice Forgy Kerr, Stephen Meredith, Gerald A. Neal, Reginald Thomas, and Mike Wilson; Representatives Danny Bentley, Jim DeCesare, Mark Hart, Regina Huff, Mary Lou Marzian, Reginald Meeks, Phil Moffett, Kimberly Poore Moser, Melinda Gibbons Prunty, Jody Richards, Steve Riley, James Tipton, Russell Webber, and Jill York.

LRC Staff: Jo Carole Ellis, Yvette Perry, Christal White, and Maurya Allen.

Approval of Minutes

Senator Kerr made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2018, meeting. Motion was seconded by Representative Moffett and passed by voice vote.

Welcome to Barren County

Representative Riley introduced Cornelius Faulkner, Superintendent, Caverna Independent Schools; Amanda Able, Assistant Superintendent, Caverna Independent Schools; Keith Hale, Superintendent, Glasgow Independent Schools; Amy Allen, Principal, Glasgow High School; and Regina Murphy, Principal, Glasgow Middle School. Senator Givens also recognized the work done by students, staff, and the community to create the facility at Barren County that was hosting the committee. Representative Riley also introduced Michael Hale, Barren County Judge Executive.

Cortni Crews, Assistant Superintendent, Barren County Schools, gave a brief welcome to the Barren County Career and Technical Center. She said the best part of her job is working with students and watching them grow so she introduced Maddie Anderson, a 10th grade student at Barren County High School. Ms. Anderson shared many of the recent accomplishments of her peers and herself, including recent football and band competition victories. She spoke about the many opportunities presented to her through the

Future Business Leaders of America and the importance of career and technical education to the students at Barren County.

Brad Johnson, Barren County High School Principal, spoke about the work Barren County Schools has done to incorporate business opportunities and educational opportunities into the programs at the new facility, including the Interapt Skills program. The district incorporates over 34 career pathways, Project Lead the Way (PLTW), and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) labs throughout the elementary, middle, and high school levels. These programs are excellent at reaching students at different levels to provide them the skills needed to be successful in business and technology. They also have wrap-around services and have developed a “Trojans Look Out for Trojans” program to help students help each other and identify those that need support inside and outside of the classroom. Other initiatives include Christmas gifting programs, a free store for students who need clothing or other supplies, and an on-site mental health counselor. All of this was done to reduce the stigma associated with being a low-income student. Mr. Johnson said that these initiatives have been critical in creating a welcoming and supportive learning atmosphere for all students at the school. He presented a video documenting the Barren County Reads and Feeds program, where buses travel around the Barren County community serving several thousand meals. The buses also serve as sites for delivering backpacks of food for students in need and providing books to students who may not have anything to read at home. This was all part of an effort to recognize the high amount of need and low-income within the Barren County community and be proactive in providing solutions. Barren County High School is the number one feeder school for Western Kentucky University. About 55 percent of seniors graduated with dual credits and one in five seniors earn college credit through Advanced Placement (AP) coursework. Barren County tries to identify students who would benefit from career and technical education and assists them in getting certifications in career pathways.

Ms. Able, Assistant Superintendent, Caverna Independent School District, spoke about the workforce development initiatives that the district has been pursuing to help students and teachers reach their potential. The school is very diverse and can be referred to as an “inner city district in the country.” It is a “Google District,” allowing for complete integration of technology into the classroom and preparation of globally competent graduates. The district strengthens its efforts to incorporate technology through the creation of STEAM maker spaces and using 3D virtual goggles for instruction. All of this allows students to work collaboratively and harnesses multiple learning styles. Caverna High School recently launched its PLTW initiative through the support of the Dart Foundation and are now offering a biomedical science pathway. The district has a pathway in industrial maintenance, offering certifications in electrical technician and maintenance mechanic. More than 50 students are involved in the program, and it was built directly through support and recommendations from local business stakeholders. Much like Barren County, Caverna Independent has instituted a culinary program, which just began offering catering services in the community. Caverna Independent is the only high school partnering with

the Western Kentucky University TOPS program to allow students to gain employment and, after a semester of work, receive financial support for coursework. Prior to participation in the program, students must take coursework in essential skills to prepare them to be excellent employees. This has proven to be invaluable to students, many of whom would be unable to afford dual credit courses. Ms. Able recognized the support of the Barren County and Hart County technology centers for allowing students to attend classes in their facilities.

Mr. Hale, Superintendent, Glasgow Independent Schools, spoke about efforts to increase the number of students taking advantage of vocational education opportunities. When he started at Glasgow Independent, there were only 40 seats being occupied by Glasgow students at the career and technical center. Now there are over 100 seats used by Glasgow students to expand their vocational and technical skills. He has worked to incorporate more AP classes rather than dual credit because of the increased rigor of AP courses. He has placed more emphasis on being successful and encouraging a strong work ethic.

Ms. Allen spoke about Glasgow Independent High School being ranked 7th by U.S. News & World Report and the various successes the small school district has had over the last year. As with Barren County and Caverna Independent, Glasgow Independent is a PLTW school. It offers open enrollment in their AP courses, which is a key to the district's success. This has been possible with a student population where 71 percent are on free/reduced price lunch and 14 percent experience homelessness. However, 80 percent have college aspirations, and the administration has worked hard to ensure that all 100 percent of the student population has hope and can succeed after school, whether that is in college or the workplace. One of the many programs offered that is unique to Glasgow is an internship program creating opportunities for students to work with businesses in the area. There are career and technical certification programs in engineering, advanced medicine, computer science, information technology, and culinary arts.

Barren County Innovations - #BeComeLifeReady

CheyAnne Fant, Director of Nutrition, Barren County Schools, discussed the offerings at Barren County to improve the percentage of graduates who attend higher education above the national average. The school system has adjusted the courses provided at the career and technical center to better align with local career needs based on new thinking that there are post-high school credentials for all, but it may not be in a traditional college environment. Bo Matthews, Superintendent, Barren County Schools, said that everyone can see the state-of-the-art football stadium, but not everyone can see the state-of-the-art learning performed in the classrooms surrounding the stadium. Barren County students and students from several area districts work collaboratively with instructors in many fields. At every opportunity, when a classroom is vacated through improved or increased collaboration, it is intentionally repurposed to better serve students and create new opportunities.

Barren County also recognized the deficit of students who have the essential skills to be successful after high school, and has therefore incorporated a mentoring program to “build Trojans” that incorporates core values into all the classes offered at the school. The goal is to ensure that every student is life ready upon graduation, regardless of whether the pathway is to postsecondary education or the workforce. Amy Irwin, College and Career Development Coordinator/Assistant Principal, Barren County High School, said that the driving force behind the creation of the center was the question “why can’t our students have this?” that was asked following a visit to the Hardin County area technology center. Barren County worked to find any way possible to create the state-of-the-art facility that would be capable of giving students the best possible education. There are four programs at the facility that incorporate apprenticeship opportunities: Culinary Arts, Computer Science and Information Technology, Biomedical and Health Sciences, and Engineering and Design. Through the Work Ready Skills Initiative (WRSI), the school will be establishing a diesel mechanics program on the campus next year because it is such a high demand field for the area.

Scott Harper, Director of Instruction and Technology, Barren County Schools, covered the projects that students assisted with in the construction of the new facility, specifically the use of networking students in running the over 36 miles of cable throughout the building. He emphasized how valuable this hands-on experience was for students and how other similar opportunities with Interapt have been connecting students with real-world jobs.

Barren County Interapt Skills

Justin Browning, Interapt Skills Project Manager, spoke about the “educate and deploy” model used in the Barren County Interapt Skills (BCIS) program. Essentially, the BCIS program educates students by narrowing the technology skills gap in Barren County and surrounding communities, while at the same time, deploying graduates into the technology workforce or higher education. In the classroom, they have 36 students ranging in age from 16 to 36 and coming from diverse backgrounds. They also come from different education backgrounds including those with associate’s degrees, bachelor’s degrees, high school equivalencies, high school diplomas, and juniors and seniors at Barren County High School. All of the individuals also come from various application sites from Paintsville, Kentucky to Cupertino, California. Each participant sacrifices something to join the program, whether rearranging a schedule to an adult quitting a current job to take a course to move toward a career. Participants primarily are learning iOS app development, but later will be working on web development and responsive website design. They are learning the professional skills necessary to be successful long term, including the ability to socially network on LinkedIn and other social media. Students graduate the program as junior software engineers, a career pathway with as many as 71,000 apprenticeships currently available on Indeed.com. Each of those jobs has the opportunity to achieve a salary of \$24-

35 per hour. Those that choose to transition to higher education may pursue careers in cyber security, computer science, and web development.

Work Ready Skills Initiative

Brooken Smith, Chief of Staff, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, began his presentation on the WRSI with a short video covering the opportunity the WRSI Grant has recently made possible in Taylor County. Prior to the implementation of these projects, there was little to no training for workforce development in many parts of the state, specifically in the areas of engineering and healthcare services. There is an aging infrastructure to support workforce training in Kentucky, as well as a pronounced skills gap, especially for middle-skills, which are those above high school diploma level and below college education. The goal of the initiative is to bring together employers, educators, and communities across the Commonwealth to create cutting-edge programs through employer led partnerships and modernization of facilities and equipment. The General Assembly's support has been critical, specifically through the passage of 2016 Regular Session House Bill 303, which allocated \$100 million in construction pool bonds for the WRSI.

Public-private partnerships have been valuable in helping to align curriculum, provide financial support, and provide physical support through the use of facilities and equipment necessary to train workers to meet demonstrated demand for jobs. Prior to being considered eligible, applicants were required to secure at least one private sector employer partner, one high school or secondary technical school partner, and one postsecondary institution partner, and they were encouraged to have collaborative partnerships with local elected officials, workforce development boards, and economic development agencies as well. Applicants also had to have a minimum of 10 percent local investment match of funds. Funds from a WRSI grant can be used for construction and equipping of new facilities, renovation or upgrade of existing facilities, or the purchase of new or upgraded equipment, software, and furnishings. Operational costs are disallowed and must be carried by the project partners.

To demonstrate the great need for this funding, Mr. Smith said there were 85 applications submitted requesting a total of nearly \$1 billion of combined grant and match monies. At this time, 40 projects have been awarded with a total community investment of over \$220 million, including approximately \$98 of WRSI funds and committed match funds of over \$121 million. The application process and awarding of funds was made in two rounds, the first in late 2016 and the second in early 2017. A 10-member committee publicly scored each proposal, and committee meetings were livestreamed for complete transparency. After acceptance of a proposal, contracts were negotiated between the applicant and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, including all terms, conditions, and requirements. Match funds must be spent before any applicant can access WRSI funds, which are released on a monthly basis as costs are incurred.

Each region of Kentucky has received funding for a WRSI project, so all citizens will be benefiting from the program. At this time, 12 projects have used their match funds, making them eligible to draw down WRSI funds, and an additional 10 projects are already drawing on WRSI funding. Of the 25 projects with a construction component, 23 are in the construction phase, and eight projects are nearing final completion. The Economic and Workforce Development Cabinet will issue a semi-annual WRSI report, but the initiative is already projected to double enrollment in workforce education opportunities. The WRSI provides monitoring and oversight by visiting project sites monthly to assess project status, answer questions, and verify that requirements are being met. The cabinet also developed an online portal for award recipients to submit receipts and invoices that verifies all purchases are allowable and money is spent appropriately.

David Morris, Administrative Coordinator, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, spoke about the Barren County project, which was the third largest project award at \$16.1 million, and the largest construction project at the time. The next projects reaching completion are the Shelby County Area Technology Center, receiving \$13 million, and the Logan County facility, which was an equipment only project receiving \$1.6 million in combined funds.

In response to a question from Senator Givens, Mr. Matthews said that education policy over the next five to seven years should strive to support the public-private partnerships that Barren County has been able to harness in creating this new facility. He recommended using focus groups and other outreach opportunities to identify the needs of each region and create localized strategic plans to meet those needs. Supporting improved infrastructure will also be critical.

Responding to a question from Senator Thomas, Mr. Matthews said that his focus was going to be primarily on what Barren County Schools can do, but he only sees charter schools as a motivating competitor. If Barren County Schools and other public schools are doing the best they can to educate, that is all that is required, regardless of what other options are available to students. As for revenue, the flat-lining of financial support from the state will be detrimental and will result in the raising of local taxes to meet the future needs of the school. Barren County Schools will continue to innovate and money is necessary to support that innovation, whether it comes from public or private sources.

Representative Riley again thanked the committee for coming to Barren County and meeting the individuals here who do an excellent job of educating students. Chairman Wise said that the October meeting had been cancelled, and the next meeting will be November 19, 2018, in Frankfort. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m. CDT.