

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
LEGISLATIVE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR APPROPRIATIONS ON EDUCATION

February 28, 1979  
8:20 a.m.  
Room 104  
State Capitol Building  
Subject: Budget for Office of  
Public Instruction

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Carroll South, with the following members present:

Sen. Larry Fasbender  
Sen. Harold Nelson  
Rep. Oscar Kvaalen  
Rep. Jack Moore  
Rep. Esther Bengtson

Also present in the meeting were Curt Nichols, Fiscal Analyst; Georgia Rice, Superintendent, Office Of Public Instruction; Alve Thomas, Deputy Superintendant Instructor, OPI; Phil Ward, Administration Service Directory, OPI; Larry Key, Vo-Ed Services, OPI; Bob Stockton, Finance Director, OPI; Bill Con, Senator Robert Palmer, and Marshall Cook, Executive Communications of Montana Special Oylmpics.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

At the beginning of the meeting Georgia Rice, showed a few overheads to all the committee members, showing just what the Office of Public Instructions is all about.

OPI will have \$101,000,000 in general funds disbursed in the next biennium. That's the highest in state government.

Who does the OPI serve: 1. People in education 2. Other government units, such as; agencies, public groups, etc.

How does the OPI serve these people: 1. Technical assistance  
2. Program reviews 3. Services 4. Teacher Education 5. Program Coordination activities 5. Consultation.

The OPI have maintained their appropriated level since 1972. May of last year the OPI filled all of their positions, OPI then reduced the staffing until August of the same year.

Chairman South asked if the 165 authorized positions or actual bodies. Ms. Rice answered they were authorized. OPI has at the present time, 163 bodies. That includes seven positions added by budget amendment, but they are not included in the 165 positions.

Ms. Rice stated that OPI operates on 53% federal money. What we are requesting from the committee for the biennium is 3.9 million dollars. We would like to see it go down, but at the present time we can't make it any lower. The OPI has never come in for a supplemental appropriations. We have always lived within the guidelines given to us.

#### BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

The primary purpose of this department is to improve instruction in the elementary and secondary schools of the state. Alve Thomas testified in favor of this department. Three units he feels are necessary are: the basic skills unit, the special education unit and the federal programs unit. He outlined these units for the committee and then went on to describe the original budget request OPI made concerning additional staff for this department. OPI requested 10 additional FTE's in the Basic Skills Unit and OPI would like to change that request to 5 FTE's. 1 FTE in accreditation and 2 FTE in certification in anticipation of legislation that would have mandated the accreditation of private schools.

OPI will also eliminate the 1.5 FTE we requested for Adult Basic Education as the program will not be funded as we requested. We now request additional FTE's for the following programs in the Basic Skills Unit.

1. Language Arts Consultant
2. Mathematics Consultant
3. Reading Consultant
4. Energy Consultant

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION

OPI requested four new FTE's in this area. The Fiscal Analyst recommended 2 FTE's. We have discussed this with the LFA's office who now agrees that our estimates are more accurate.

The last recommendation made by the Fiscal Analyst that we oppose is that we reduce secretarial help by eight people in the two units of Basic Skills and Vocational Education. We feel the secretarial staff must have a working knowledge of each program they serve and be able to respond to requests from individuals, teachers, administrators and the public. (A written testimony is attached - Exhibit A)

Chairman South stated that if the OPI compare their secretary staff with the professional staff, your well above other state agencies. For what reasons would you need to be above state agencies.

Mr. Thomas said within their office they are different from the state agencies. We need these secretaries because we need someone at the desk to have a good understanding of what is going on so they may be of real help to their consultant.

Rep. Bengtson stated that 2 years ago we requested that local schools incorporate energy conservation into their curriculum. What has your office been doing in this area. Mr. Burk said what OPI tried

to do is push it in with Social Studies and Math. These two areas seem best in the curriculum. They operate alot of the time relating to this area of Energy conservation. Mr. Thomas added to this that the Energy conservation is getting 2.5 million to train auditors to go into schools. That training will start taking place this spring and summer.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Phil Ward, Administrative Service Director, preceeded to give his testimony in his area. He stated that OPI serves in three particular area. These are as follows:

1. Office Management
2. Instructional Support Service
3. Program Development and Evaluation

In this department we have the standard staff service. We have provided a testing program designed to help teachers and administrators identify problem areas of the students in their class. 506 high schools participate in our testing program. This testing program costs around \$69,000. 50% of this money is federal money. (A handout was given- Exhibit B) Ms. Rice stated that this testing program is a test of a class or student with its strengths and weaknesses. In this case, the school will know what students need help in.

#### LIBRARY RESEARCH

OPI has answered 815 requests for researchs of teachers and administrators. OPI is asking \$22,384 per year to continue this service. In addition you may be aware of our request to retain a revolving fund for this service. OPI is not requesting additional FTE.

#### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Larry Key, Director/Administrator, handed out a written testimony. (Exhibit C) He explained that this department is responsible for the state administration budgeting, program consulting and evaluation of the five postsecondary vocational-technical centers and all other Board of Public Education funded programs at the universities, colleges, community colleges and state institutions in Montana.

For FY 80 and 81, the department is requesting an increase in staff of five professionals and three secretaries. Two of the professional staff and one secretary is an attempt to reinstate those staff members lost during the last biennium due to the problems and changes in federal to state matching requirments.

The other request for three professionals and two secretaries is for state administration of the five postsecondary vocational-technical center. We do not need a large state postsecondary staff, but we do need more than the two staff members presently working directly with our postsecondary centers.

Chairman South felt that maybe these extra secretaries weren't needed and from the way he understood it, these secretaries would be more on a professional basis than just an ordinary job.

(A 5 minute break was taken)

The meeting was called back to order by Chairman South. He then introduced Sen. Robert Palmer, to talk on Adult Basic Education. Sen. Palmer stated that this appropriations committee will be to many the difference between basic education and none at all. Adult Education deals with the basic reading, writing, and arithmetic. I feel that this program is very important and very much needed.

#### FINANCIAL SERVICES

Bob Stockton, Administration of Financial Services, gave his testimony about Finance Services. He first gave some of the budget modification OPI has requested.

1. Computer Equipment - this equipment needs to be replaced and updated. But, we are incapable to do this at this time. The Fiscal Analyst's recommendation falls \$10,000 short of what we need for the computer.
2. We need excessive funds in accounting.
3. \$42,000 for additional telephone costs
4. Rent - the amount we paid this year was \$96,000, but this biennium we need \$126,000.
5. Legal Service - Additional \$43,000
6. Traffic Education - Additional \$11,700
7. HB 891 - merit bonus for employees of state - additional \$8,000
8. Film Library - Additional 59.2¢ per student.

#### SPECIAL OLYMPICS

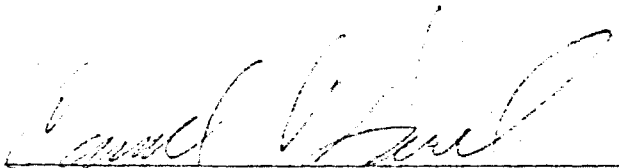
Rep. Bengtson asked OPI what they were doing with Special Olympics. Mr. Marshall Cook, Executive Community of Montana Special Olympics, gave a talk about this for Rep. Bengtson.


He stated that the request in the Executive Budget there was a request of \$150,000. This is not included item in the Fiscal Analyst Budget. We need a full time paid director for Special Olympics. This position would be able to generate enough funds through contributions, grants, and so forth, that we would not have to come to the Legislature in 1981 for this position. He feels that this program is unique in two ways.

1. 100% volunteer effort
2. All money has been derived through OPI.

What we are asking is for your committee to help us to continue to invest this money to this program. This program is very beneficial to all the youngsters in Montana. We had 3,000 total participants this year.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45.

  
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CARROLL SOUTH, CHAIRMAN

  
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Jeanne Glennon, Secretary