

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

March 13 & 14, 2003

**Montana Higher Education Complex
Meeting Room
2500 Broadway
Helena, MT 59620**

Chairperson Dr. Kirk Miller called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2003.

Board members present were: Kirk Miller, Chairperson; Randy Morris, Storrs Bishop, John Fuller, Patty Myers, Joyce Silverthorne, and Derek Duncan, Student Representative. Acting Commissioner of Higher Education, Carrol Krause was also present. Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction, Linda McCulloch, was not present at the time of roll call, but joined the meeting later in the afternoon. Staff present were: Steve Meloy, Executive Secretary of the Board of Public Education; Peter Donovan, CSPAC Administrative Officer; Tana Haxton, Administrative Assistant for CSPAC, and Suzan Hopkins, Administrative Assistant for BPE. The following people were registered on the meeting roster: Marti Garlett, Western Governor's University; Margaret Bowles, OPI; Spencer Sartorius, OPI; Bob Clemens, Montana State University-Bozeman; Linda Vrooman-Peterson, OPI; Deena Alley, University of Montana-Western; Al McMilin, OPI; Christine Emerson, OPI; Nancy Coopersmith, OPI; BJ Granbery, OPI; Kris Goss, Governor's Office; Bob Vogel, Montana School Boards Association; Judy Snow, OPI; Lance Melton, Montana School Boards Association; Karen Case, OPI; Jerry House, Whitefish School District; and Rick Chiotti, OPI.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Fuller led the board in the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Hopkins conducted the roll call, and Dr. Miller read the Statement of Public Participation. Dr. Miller also welcomed all visitors, including the members of the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council, who will be participating in the joint meeting of the Board of Public Education and CSPAC before the regularly scheduled board meeting.

Mr. Miller presented the agendas for the joint meeting and the board meeting. He explained that the Governor's Office report would be postponed until 3:30 on Thursday afternoon. Item 16 will have additional information, which will be passed out before the commencement of the item. Item 18 will contain public comment on the rule being discussed.

MOTION: Mr. Bishop moved to adopt the agenda. Ms. Myers seconded this motion and the motion unanimously carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Miller turned the meeting over to Mr. Bishop, Chairperson of the Finance Committee for any comments or questions regarding the finance portion of the consent agenda. Mr. Bishop stated that the board is 51% expended, with time elapse of 58%. Mr. Meloy reported that we have paid one-half of the years NASBE dues; scheduled to pay the second half at the beginning of the fiscal year 04. He also added that the subcommittee has restored about \$8,000 that the governor had recommended be taken out.

MOTION: Mr. Bishop moved to adopt the consent agenda. Mr. Fuller seconded this motion and the motion unanimously carried.

BPE/CSPAC Joint Meeting

- 1. Introductions-**The meeting was turned over to Mr. Meloy, Executive Secretary, BPE, and Mr. Donovan, Administrative Officer, CSPAC. Mr. Meloy welcomed the members of the CSPAC and everybody introduced themselves to the audience. Mr. Meloy then turned the balance of the meeting over to Cal Spangler, Chairperson for the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council.
- 2. CSPAC Annual Report-** Mr. Spangler reported that CSPAC has re-focused their priorities and he stated that there are eleven topics, which they feel, are important. Each of these topics has been assigned to a committee and the chair of each committee addressed the board concerning the priorities. The topics include: fee structures, mentor programs, provisional certification interns, process for hearings, Title II reporting and the possibility of testing, teacher accreditation, Native American certification or endorsements, NTACS standards, No Child Left Behind paraprofessionals, E-Learning task force, and reading.

He began with the *Executive Committee* and the Montana Commission on Teaching, which is also housed with CSPAC. He stated that his mission for July is to redraft the mission statement, bylaws, and to look at the structure of the meetings.

The Licensure Committee, which is chaired by Melodee Smith-Burreson, was given the topics of professional licensure intern programs, teacher accreditation and E-Learning task force. Since she joined CSPAC in January, and is currently investigating each of these issues, Mr. Spangler expounded on each of the topics briefly, beginning with professional licensure intern programs. He reported that the number of licenses, which have been issued, needs to be tallied.

The Pre-Professional Preparational and Development Committee, which is chaired by Gloria Curdy, was given the topics of Title II reporting, Native American endorsement, NTACS standards and No Child Left Behind paraprofessionals. Ms. Curdy is currently working with OPI on the Title II reporting, and is at the beginning of the process. She is also working with Ms. Silverthorne, BPE, on the NTACS standards. Ms. Curdy reported that it is imperative to ensure that Indian Education standards are being met, and also to educate Teacher Ed candidates with respect to including Indian education in their curriculum. There was a lengthy discussion with the board and CSPAC regarding the No Child Left Behind paraprofessional issue.

The Professional Ethics/Hearing Committee, which is chaired by Scott McCulloch, is looking at cases where people challenge their professional status. Mr. McCulloch discussed developing a local process

The Research Committee, chaired by Shelly Fortune, discussed reformation of the fee structure, and the meetings of the Assessment Study Group, which met in January 2003. The next meeting will be on March 24, 2003. Items to be discussed included the NRT and what parts to give, how to report results to parents, how to make it a tool for the classroom, and how to deal with the issue of Adequate Yearly Progress. The goal will be to develop a whitepaper for presentation to the Board of Public Education with regards to the testing issues.

The Professional Development Committee, chaired by Dr. George White, discussed development of a workshop addressing governance issues relating to finding consensus. He also briefly talked about the mentor/mentee professional development opportunity, which MEA-MFT experimented with on the Billings campus, which was very well received. This committee will explore reading as a concern with its relation to NCLB in greater detail.

3. **Update on CSPAC Assessment Study Group**-Ms. Fortune previously gave an update on this topic under her committee, but Mr. Miller initiated a discussion on where we are with regards to the fate of the Norm Referenced Test, as well as the Criterion Referenced Test. A lengthy discussion followed with board members and council members expressing their concerns with the continuation or elimination of either test.
4. **Paraprofessional Assessment Question**-Mr. Fuller had a concern that if paraprofessionals' standards are dramatically uplifted, there will be pressure to utilize them in instructional positions.
5. **SB 202**-Mr. Meloy discussed the issue of utilizing research monies, on a limited basis, for the board and CSPAC. SB 202, which addresses this issue, was brought forth by Senator Royal Johnson and was carried through the Senate with no opposition. At the time of this meeting, it was in the House, no executive action taken yet, but it looks like this bill will become a reality. This bill will broaden CSPAC's and the board's flexibility to use these funds.
6. **Teacher fees**-Mr. Meloy addressed the issue that it appears that CSPAC's basic operating costs exceed current income and CSPAC will have to raise teachers' fees. He suggested a \$2.00/year raise would be sufficient to balance revenue with expenditures. He will break this proposal down further into an analysis to be presented at a later date. Mr. Miller suggested that Mr. Meloy present an analysis of what other states are doing with regards to teacher fees, especially those that surround Montana. Mr. Donovan addressed this suggestion by reporting that, in the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Ed and Certification, which publishes a manual, they highlight all of the licensure requirements of different states. The licensure fees in Montana are near the very bottom of this list, with some of the states charging as high as \$175. Mr. Donovan promised to get this information to the board and council members.
7. **BPE Priorities to CSPAC for Study**-Mr. Donovan reported that some of the areas that the council felt warranted further research and study are:
 1. E-Learning issue (will work with Ms. Silverthorne and her committee)
 2. Implementation of NCLB
 3. Follow up on how other schools are addressing NCLB (survey model)
 4. Evaluation of implementation of revisions to teacher licensure rules
8. **Western Governor's University**-Dr. Marti Garlett, from Western Governor's University (headquartered in Salt Lake City, UT), gave a brief history of the institution. The governors of nineteen states got together to found Western Governor's University with two hallmarks in mind; competency based and a sharing of resources across state boundaries. She also reported from the Secretary of Education's office that WGU has just launched a teacher's college. She was hired in January 2001 and her first commission was to find resources to help develop the teacher's college. Those resources consisted

primarily of grants from federal government and private corporations. She also reported that they have received endorsements from the state boards of education in Arizona, Nevada, and Texas. The average age of the student is 40 years old. The board and council members had numerous questions for Dr. Garlett on the topic of Western Governor's University.

9. TEAC/WGU/Regional Accreditation/Reciprocity Issues-Mr. Donovan gave a brief history of TEAC. He reported that it is a fairly new, national accrediting body similar to NCATE in that it looks at performance based and outcome based approach to accrediting. The concern was whether or not TEAC accredited students would have difficulty getting licensed in Montana. Mr. Donovan stated that the State Board of Public Education would recognize any institution that is NCATE accredited. Mr. Meloy brought to the attention of the Board that Western Governor's University has been approved by the states of Arizona, Texas and Nevada.

10. Other business-Dr. White addressed an issue that Mr. Spangler had questioned him on earlier. The Center for Policy Studies in Educational Research is an advisory council consisting of a four state policy board that does educational research, meeting twice a year. They look for topics that are relevant for the Intermountain group of states to research. The next meeting will be May 21 & 22, 2003 in Billings, MT. CSPAC is invited and a meeting will be held in the Fireside Lounge on the campus of MSU-Billings.

Dr. Miller presented information on HB 736, which is entitled the School Renewal Commission. The board's position, in order to move things forward in education in Montana, is to develop a funding system, which is more understandable to the general public.

Joint meeting adjourned at 11:39 a.m.

1:00 p.m. BPE Meeting commenced; Superintendent McCulloch was in attendance.

******Items appear in the order in which they were covered during the meeting.******

ITEM 1 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Dr. Miller reviewed his update; highlights included, but were not limited to:

- ❖ *January 14*-Contacted by Senator Fred Thomas regarding restoration of the school entitlements to the level in the Governor's budget rather than the 2000 rolled back level.
- ❖ *January 20*-Attended a meeting with Mr. Meloy and many of our education partners to request help from Senator Max Baucus on NCLB implementation in Montana.
- ❖ *January 24*-Began the review of potential legislation regarding the School Renewal Commission.
- ❖ *February 1*-Attended performances of the Montana Performing Arts Council Artist Showcase.
- ❖ *February 11*-Derek Duncan, Student Representative, visited Havre Schools attending classes at Havre High School, and a Healthy Communities-Healthy Youth Advisory Board meeting.
- ❖ *February 17*-Testified in opposition to SB 369 in the Senate Education

- Committee.
- ❖ *February 23*-Attended the meeting of the Title I Committee of Practitioners in Great Falls on behalf of the Board.
 - ❖ *February 27*-Crafted a letter of response on behalf of the Board, to Richard Roehm, who requested input in the selection of the next Commissioner of Higher Education.
 - ❖ *NASBE Awards*-Policy Leader of the Year; suggested that Bob Brown be re-nominated for this award.
 - ❖ Upcoming items-March 31-SAM Board of Directors meeting in Helena.

MOTION: Ms. Myers moved to nominate Bob Brown, Secretary of State for Policy Leader of the Year Award. The motion was seconded by Ms. Silverthorne and the motion unanimously carried.

ITEM 2 EXECUTIVE SECRETARY’S REPORT

Mr. Meloy gave an overview of his report, which included a brief legislative update, which will be expounded on later in the agenda. Mr. Meloy explained that SB 411, initiated by Senator Glaser, attempts to define “quality education” for elementary and secondary schools. Mr. Meloy testified as an informational witness on this bill. The Communications Plan was discussed; Mr. Meloy related his excitement with this issue, but further comments were set aside as the item will be addressed later in the agenda. Highlights from Mr. Meloy’s activities since the last meeting include:

- Ongoing work with Roger Merrill on communications plan.
- Attended MACIE meeting
- Attended OPI agency budget and offered testimony in support.
- Testified on behalf of Board on HJ 8.
- Testified on SB 202.
- Attended Council of Deans meeting in Dillon.
- Offered testimony on support for HB 107 (student loan).
- Offered testimony in opposition to OPI reorganization bill.
- Testified on behalf of HB 73 as a proponent.
- Testified in support of HB 495 to add money for Indian Ed for All to OPI budget.

ITEM 3 CSPAC REPORT

Mr. Donovan gave a brief overview of highlights from the CSPAC Annual Report, since it was addressed extensively during the joint meeting early. He reiterated that the council appreciated the high level of board member participation in CSPAC’s meetings this year.

ITEM 4 STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent McCulloch presented her report to the board. She told members that a legislative update can be found on the website: www.opi.state.mt.us.

She also reported that Jay Erdie has been named the new Deputy Superintendent for Montana. He is currently the Superintendent of the Roundup Public Schools and will be coming on board in July 2003.

Schools were able to view the Superintendent’s State of Education address live via OPI Video Streaming.

At the request of Superintendent McCulloch, the Legislature considered HB 78, an act transferring authority for approving Saturday school from the State Superintendent to the local school trustees.

The 2nd Annual “Montana Only” Career Fair will be held at Montana State University-

Bozeman on Friday, May 2, 2003 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Superintendent McCulloch included a letter addressing an update on the Five-Year Comprehensive Education Plan.

Derek Duncan, Student Representative, is asking high schools to assist him in gathering student input on issues currently being dealt with by the board. With assistance from OPI staff, the easy to use survey is located online at the following link:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/regforms/studentsurvey/>

ITEM 5 COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT

After Dr. Carrol Krause, Acting Commissioner gave a brief history on his experience with higher education, he reported on the search for the replacement commissioner; advertisements will be going out this week; nationally they will be getting into some education publications; should fill the job by July, if possible. He passed around a profile, which will be sent to candidates explaining the knowledge, skills and abilities of the position.

ITEM 7 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Mr. Duncan presented an overview of his report, highlighting his Five-Month Plan Update, his visit to Havre High School, and his continuing encouragement to students to get involved with education. He is researching the possibility of doing a presentation at the NASC (National Association of Student Councils) in New York. He has been very active in the legislature. His Student Opinion Survey will be continued in order to retrieve more responses. He reported that the Governor's Summit on Tobacco Prevention has been postponed until Fall 2003.

He reported that the selection of the 2003-2004 student representative is Eric Engellant from Great Falls.

ITEM 8 SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS ANNUAL REPORT

Ms. Emerson, Director of School Nutrition Program, OPI, highlighted some issues presented in the school nutrition programs annual report. The presentation included information about the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Special Milk Program, USDA Donated Foods Program, Cooperative Purchase Program, and Team Nutrition Program for 2001-2002 school year. The presentation showed changes in program participation and funding over five school years. It also covered nutrition education activities for schools, parents and the community to improve nutritional value and acceptability of school meals, and promote the health and education of children.

ITEM 6 GOVERNOR'S OFFICE REPORT

Lieutenant Governor Karl Ohs presented his report, and included a copy of HB 736, which addresses establishing a K-12 public school renewal commission.

He also updated the board on the Governor's Award for Excellence in Cultural Education. The recipients will be announced by the end of the school year.

In February, Governor Martz appointed Mona Bilden to the Teachers Retirement System Board. She is a classroom teacher in Miles City and Mr. Ohs reported that she would be an asset to this board.

The Governor's Office has been active in attending meetings on Adequate Yearly Progress as a part of OPI's Focus Group.

The Governor's Office attended the Stand Up for Education Rally in Helena.

Lieutenant Governor Ohs gave a legislative update, relating that they have been supporting the Governor's Budget for K-12 and Higher Education after the legislature took all

budget levels to the fiscal year 2000 level. They also worked on HB 643, which would have removed \$3 million from OPI's agency budget and placed it in the flex fund. The Governor's Office will continue to monitor closely SB 411, initiated by Senator Glaser, which attempts to define quality education.

ITEM 9 NASBE STUDY GROUP ON E- LEARNING

Ms. Silverthorne presented an overview of the committee meeting minutes from the conference call, which was held on March 11, 2003. She also discussed the lunch meeting of the E-Learning Committee, which was held during this board meeting to confer about E-Learning issues. Data from schools that are currently participating in distance learning will be collected, an analysis of this data will be conducted and presented at the May board meeting, with a possibility of recommendations being made by the July board meeting regarding rule changes, etc.

ITEM 10 NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Coopersmith, Assistant Superintendent, OPI; Mr. McMilin, Accreditation Specialist, OPI; Ms. Granbery, OPI; and Ms. Snow, OPI presented an update on the NCLB activities. Information was presented concerning requirements of the law which include:

- a. State Consolidated Application Submissions to the U.S. Department of Education
- b. Single Accountability System to Assure All Schools, Districts and the State Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress
- c. Highly Qualified Teachers

A timeline and plan of activities to address the above requirements was presented. In addition, plans for a peer review of the Montana Consolidated Application submitted to the U.S. Department of Education was discussed. The peer group consists of state education agencies, higher education constituents, and statisticians.

ITEM 11 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Meloy gave an overview of activities that have been taking place during the legislative session. He expressed his appreciation of the protocol that has been established. He had started tracking bills on the state system, but is now tapping into the MTSBA system, which has proven to be beneficial.

HB 736, the renewal commission bill, was the first on Mr. Meloy's list. He reported that Dr. Miller has stated that he will be here on Monday to testify and give the governor some assistance on this bill. Mr. Meloy reported that he has been present at hearings of bills that have been identified by the legislative committee of the board as an opponent, proponent or just an informant; felt he made a solid presence for education. Mr. Duncan will testify to HB 736 and wants to amend it; wants to have students added.

SB 202, the bill that will allow expanded use of research monies, has received no opposition.

SB 373, the bill that would prevent state of Montana or private associations that offer extracurricular activities from using any state monies if they exclude schools that weren't accredited by the Board of Public Education. Mr. Meloy provided opposition testimony to this bill.

SB 411, the bill that attempts to identify "quality education" by a list of standards. Mr. Meloy urged the Board to stand up and oppose this bill, as currently written, as the Board is the body that sets these standards. Lieutenant Governor Ohs has offered to stand up in opposition, as well as Mr. Fuller. The hearing is scheduled for March 19, 2003 at 3:00 p.m. Mr. Melton, MTSBA, interjected that this bill is the most damaging to this board's authority.

Mr. Melton elaborated on SB 323, regarding the county retirement levy. This bill came to

the Senate floor just before transmittal and stiff opposition was represented by MTSBA. They also offered some key amendments that they felt were necessary. These amendments would have taken a substantial amount of time, so it was referred back to Senate Finance and Claims. The latest information, as of the date of this meeting, is that SB 323 will be heard on March 19, 2003.

HB 60, a bill that exempts the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind from executive order budget cuts during the middle of a biennium, treating them just like other schools that have base entitlements, went through unopposed.

Mr Meloy testified on behalf of the Board on HB 107, the student loan repayment assistance bill for certain teachers.

ITEM 12 BOARD MEMBER APPEARANCES

Following is an update of board member appearances since the last board meeting in January 2003.

Storrs Bishop:

1/10/03 ED Approp.Subcommittee
1/14/03 “
1/14/03 ED Forum Meeting
1/21/03 State of State Address

John Fuller:

Stand Up for Education Rally-speaker
State of State Address
State of Education Address
MEA Lobbying Days

Joyce Silverthorne:

1/23/03 State of Indian Affairs-Helena
1/29/03 Council of Deans-Dillon
1/29/03 CSPAC Meeting
2/12/03 NWREL
3/1/03 Stand Up for Education
3/9 & 3/10 Wash.D.C.Office of
Indian Education Program-Tribal Ed

Patty Myers:

1/16/03 Gr.Falls Reading Council-assessment
1/21/03 State of State Address
1/29/03 Council of Deans-Dillon
1/30/03 CSPAC Meeting
1/31/03 Meeting with Roger Merrill & Steve
1/31/03 OPI Licensure workshop
2/5/03 Vaughn teachers' assessment
2/6/03 MAEMSP banquet-Gr.Falls
2/13/03 MSU-N class on assessment
2/14/03 State of Education address
2/23-2/25/03 Carroll College accreditation visit
3/1/03 Stand Up for Education rally
3/6/03 MSDB committee

ITEM 13 BOARD COMMUNICATIONS PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Merrill provided a summary of the communications plan to date. He reported that the whole concept of developing a primer (brochure) is to focus our attention on a reality to develop key ideas and see where those ideas lead. He also shared some of the comments from meetings he has had with the private sector since the last gathering of the board. There have been several novel ideas, which have come to pass because of the original developmental work that he thinks the board should consider. One of the key concepts used in his work is, “Everyone Profits from Quality Education”, which will become the primary message that would be generated. This message will target even people who do not have children in the system, which is significant to the success of this plan. The second key concept he presented was, “You are the Public in Montana Public Education”. This message is an empowerment message, which is designed to empower the individual to get involved in quality public education and to understand the role better. Mr. Merrill also discussed some possible private sector participation and fund raising activities. He also suggested an incentive such as the “Jefferson Medal”, or whatever name the board chooses, be given to individuals and organizations that have significantly donated to this

program.

ITEM 14 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE 2-YEAR TERM

Mr. Duncan discussed further the idea of having the student representative's membership on the board be extended to a two-year term. He presented pros for his argument on this issue, which included a better awareness from a student's perspective. He then opened this topic up for discussion. Ms. Silverthorne asked Mr. Duncan if he had researched what other states are doing with regards to this. He responded that he had done some research and the findings were very diverse. Mr. Miller suggested that we check the bylaws. This item will be moved to the action section of the agenda at the May meeting.

ITEM 15 ACCREDITATION STATUS RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. McMilin, and Dr. Peterson reported on the updates relating to the accreditation recommendations. Prior to the meeting, they passed out some additional information regarding changes to the previous material handed out. A summary of the basic accreditation criteria most frequently used included: Regular or Regular with Deviations, Advice, and Deficiency with Assistance.

Mr. McMilin, also presented analysis (in the form of a PowerPoint presentation) regarding Accreditation History, which included the following statistics:

- Non-certified Teachers-55
- New Intern Program-44 Districts
- Misassigned Teachers-134
- Class Size-AA-Primary Grades
- 7-8 Program-No World Language
- K-12-Library/Counseling Staffing

MOTION: Mr. Bishop moved to adopt the accreditation status recommendations with amendments proposed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fuller and the motion unanimously carried.

The board recessed at 12:00 in order to be present at the Governor's Office for the presentation of a check from the St. Labre's School to Governor Martz.

ITEM 18 ADOPTION OF RULE AMENDMENTS

Ms. Bowles, Educator Licensure Program Manager, OPI; and Mr. Chiotti, Health Enhancement, OPI; presented comments and responses that were heard regarding Chapter 55 and Chapter 57 amendments. They are requesting to read the comments and then take action on the adoption of the amendments.

MOTION: Ms. Myers moved to approve the comments and responses to Chapter 55 and Chapter 57 and to authorize publication of the adoption notice for Chapter 55 and Chapter 57. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fuller and unanimously carries.

ITEM 19 AMENDMENT OF EDUCATOR LICENSURE RULES

Ms. Bowles, Educator Licensure Program Manager, OPI, discussed the changes to 10.57.410, 10.57.411, and 10.57.413. This represents a clean-up piece after the rule had gone through the hearing process. It was a section on lapsed licensure and it told the educators which

part of Chapter 57 to refer to. The part the references were made to did not make any sense. The Office of Public Instruction is requesting that the board authorize publication of the rule notice. Ms. Marlow has put together a timeline for this to be accepted.

The second proposal is in regard to offering online renewal for state educators. This will require an amendment to ARM 10.57.218. This amendment will streamline and increase efficiency of educator licensure renewal and further the state of Montana's goal of providing citizens the opportunity to transfer information electronically. Availability and use of this system will result in instant renewal for licensees and a cost savings for the licensure unit. The Office of Public Instruction recommended that the Board authorize publication of the rule notice and that the Board further authorize the adoption of these amendments if no negative comments are received.

MOTION: Ms. Myers moved to authorize the publication of the educator licensure rule notice and the board further authorize adoption of the amendments if no negative comments are received during the comment period. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bishop and unanimously carried.

Mr. House, Superintendent of Whitefish Schools, presented comments regarding a librarian, Ms. Jane Wheeler, at the school. Mr. House requested a waiver of the current regulations regarding reciprocity for specialists from out of state on behalf of Ms. Wheeler. After weighing his options, Mr. House decided to have Ms. Wheeler's credits evaluated, so no action was taken. Mr. Meloy will examine the board's authority to grant a waiver on an existing law, and then the board will have to decide whether or not they want to draft a waiver, and what the long-term implications will consist of.

ITEM 16 ALTERNATIVE STANDARDS REQUEST REPORT

Dr. Peterson and Mr. McMilin, OPI, reported on the concept of accreditation in non-traditional schools. More and more requests from non-traditional schools for accreditation are being received by OPI. Traditional schools are schools such as the brick and mortar schools, and public, private and state institutions. All of the standards that are presented in the accreditation manual are expected to be met by these traditional schools. Also, included in this group of standards would be the distance learning standard (10.55.907) and the alternative standard. Charter schools, Hutterite schools, independent districts, and attendance centers would be considered non-traditional schools. In addition to the previously mentioned non-traditional schools, Mr. McMilin discussed the alternative schools. Types of alternative schools within the traditional school settings are comprised of schools within schools, and separate school buildings or campuses. Alternative schools in the private school setting include correctional (Galen), therapeutic (Spring Creek Lodge), and other types. Some of the subjects raised by this accreditation question are legal issues, such as statute concerns, ANB and funding concerns, attendance center issues, and the relationship with the district.

Mr. McMilin, OPI, presented for consideration by the Board, Alternative Standard Requests representing 20 schools and 14 districts, for two-year approval. They also presented the request for Kremlin-Gildford Schools two-year approval, which came before the board in August and is now suitable for action. Their request was postponed pending a further review of possible ANB problems. The Office of Public Instruction was recommending disapproval of one, Shepherd Elementary, 10.55.712, class size.

MOTION: Mr. Bishop moved approval of the OPI alternative standards request except for Shepherd Elementary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Silverthorne and unanimously carried.

ITEM 17 MIDDLE SCHOOL ON-SITE REVIEW REPORT

Mr. McMilin, Accreditation Specialist, OPI; and Dr. Peterson, Administrator, OPI, presented to the board for consideration the 2002-2003 Middle School report from State Superintendent McCulloch. The recommendation is for another year of provisional status for Somers; Cascade made the decision to return to the 7th and 8th grade structure and program delivery.

MOTION: Mr. Bishop moved acceptance of the Office of Public Instructions' recommendation of provisional accreditation status for Somers Middle School. The motion was seconded by Ms. Myers and unanimously carried.

ITEM 20 MSDB COMMITTEE MEETING/REPORT

Mr. Morris, Chairperson for the MSDB Committee, gave an update on activities at the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind due to the absence of Mr. Gettel, Superintendent, MSDB. He reported that the MSDB Committee convened on March 6, 2003, with a conference call at 3:30 p.m. Those who participated were Ms. Myers, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Gettel and staff members from MSDB. He then proceeded to give a brief overview of the following items.

1. **Student Enrollment/Evaluation**-On campus total: 72(+2), Residential-40(+4), Deaf-49(+2); Visually Impaired-23; Transition Students-2; Student Evaluations-HI Dept.-19; VI Dept.-7; Off campus total: 273, Deaf-76; VI-187; Parent Advisor Program-10
2. **Personnel**-3 new hires, 2 resignations, 1 leave of absence, 1 transfer, and five vacancies.
3. **Human Resources**-Update on Activities-Interest Based Problem Solving Committee met on January 27, 2003 to discuss improving methods for interstaff communication when immediate assistance is needed. The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services will monitor contract negotiations between MSDB and the UFCW through a new office in Helena.
4. **Policies/Procedures**-Currently developing policy necessary for completion of the Five-Year Comprehensive Education Plan, Section 4, under ARM 10.55.701 (3) (d-n) (5). Safety Committee met on February 26 and will be researching development of a modified version of the FEMA supported Incident Command System. Completion should be by December of 2003.
5. **2003 Legislative Session**-Update on Activities-HB 60-approved by the House Education Committee on January 16, went to second reading on January 20, hearing on January 24, and in Executive Action on January 30, was approved on a vote of 13-9. Will be heard by the Senate Finance and Claims Committee on March 14. SB 41-approved by the House on 3rd reading on a vote of 89-0 and has been sent to the Governor for her signature. SB 42-same as SB 41. SB 43-approved by the House on 3rd reading on a vote of 87-2 and has been sent to the Governor for her signature.
6. **Program Accreditation**-MSDB is requesting the board's approval of the Cooperative Agreement between the Golden Triangle Curriculum Cooperative and MSDB for the 2002-2003 School Year.

MOTION: Mr. Morris moved to approve the Cooperative Agreement

between the Golden Triangle Curriculum Cooperative and MSDB. The motion was seconded by Ms. Myers and unanimously carried.

7. **Professional Development Activities**-Mr. Morris described the various workshops and activities that have taken place and will take place in the future.
8. **MSDB Foundation Activities**-With regards to grants, MSDB is requesting application to the Murdock Charitable Trust for Transition Program, investigating sources of grants for a public awareness/public relations campaign, and acquiring volleyball equipment and floor refinishing for the Mustang Center.
9. **Conferences, Meetings and Contacts**-Mr. Morris presented a variety of past, and future conferences, meetings and contacts that MSDB has participated in from January through to May, 2003.
10. **Budget and Finance**-Update on Budget-
11. **Plant and Facilities**-Update of current projects-Carpet and interior remodeling of Long Range Building
12. **School Calendar of Events**-various upcoming events include:
 - March 14-17- Travel Weekend
 - March 27- End of Third Quarter
 - April 3- Arbor Day and Spring Music Program
 - April 5-12-Close-up for HI students in Washington, DC
 - May 7-14- Senior Trip
 - May 16-17- Games for the Visually Impaired
 - May 31- Graduation, Secretary of State Bob Brown, commencement speaker
13. **Student News and School Events**-various items of newsworthy importance included the following:
 - Expressions of Silence-February 11-District 8C Tournament-Great Falls
 - Two visually impaired students-Ski Festival at the Winter Park, Colorado-March 1-9
 - Seven seniors, 3 class sponsors, and one parent-Orlando-Senior Trip-May 8-14
 - Visually impaired students currently working on a quilt and numbers for the Spring Music Program
 - Elementary students will participate in Heisey League Volley Ball
 - Track begins March 10 with the Great Falls Central Catholic Coop

PRELIMINARY AGENDA ITEMS – May 15 - 16, 2003

- **Action item-two year term for student representative**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.