

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Craddock  
Vice Chairman Foley  
Mr. Beyer  
Mr. Malone  
Mr. Rackley

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Coulter  
Mrs. Hayes (all excused)  
Mr. Horn  
Mr. Vergiels

GUESTS PRESENT: Denis Graham, Voc-Ed, State Dept. of Education  
Marie Egbert, Advisory Council for Voc-Tech Educ.  
Mike Rask, Advisory Council for Voc-Tech Educ.  
Maran Razim, Intern for Helen Foley

Chairman Craddock called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

This meeting is a continuation of receiving presentations on vocational education and to consider having two bill requests drafted. Chairman Craddock apologized for several members' absence due to other committee meetings here and in Las Vegas.

The first bill request\* has to do with the year around school and sick leave being accrued for the additional teacher time spent over a normal school year. Mr. Malone made a motion that the bill request be drafted, seconded by Vice Chairman Foley. Motion carried.

The second request\* has to do with the teachers and principals jointly agreeing to override a parent in the case of retention of a student in the same grade. Mr. Malone made the motion that the bill request be drafted, seconded by Mr. Beyer. Motion carried.

Chairman Craddock noted that Judith Eaton, Clark County Community College, apparently could not be here after all.

Written testimony was accepted from the Nevada Advisory Council for Vocational-Technical Education. The testimony is attached as EXHIBIT A for Marie Egbert and EXHIBIT B for David Fulstone II.

Mr. Malone noted that the committee would have much rather heard the testimony in person, but was pleased that it was at least available in written form for them.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Mobley, Secretary  
Education Committee

\* A.B. 526  
\*\* A.B. 563

TESTIMONY ON THE STATUS  
OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
IN NEVADA

Submitted to the Education Committee  
by Marie Egbert - 1981

My name is Marie Egbert and I am an intern for the Nevada Advisory Council for Vocational-Technical Education. The Council asked me to testify at this Education Committee Meeting because of my working background in special education and in vocational services for handicapped populations, specifically the hearing-impaired.

Education of handicapped students is now in the forefront. Although several high quality educational programs existed for serving the needs of handicapped persons prior to federal government mandates of open access and equal educational opportunity, these were not sufficient in scope, size or offerings to serve all handicapped persons. Many of you may be familiar with The Education for All Handicapped Children's Act (P.L. 94-142), Amendments to the Vocational Education Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-482) and Section 504 of Title V of the Rehabilitation Act. These laws serve the primary purpose of equal access to and provision of educational opportunities to all persons. Public awareness of educational needs has increased while, at the same time, funding and accessibility concerns prevail for educators and administrators.

As an educator of the hearing-impaired for 9-1/2 years, I have written, helped design, improve and evaluate educational offerings for students in residential settings. My concern now is where the relationship of vocational education is to educational programming for handicapped youth. Unlike residential settings and education therein, traditional vocational education programs in public schools have not been open to handicapped persons. According to Frank Bowe, Chairman of the Citizens Advocacy Committee in Washington, D.C. and a deaf adult, "the single most blatantly discriminatory aspect of public education for disabled children and youth today is that of vocational education." 1. Because of my contact with vocational education during the conducting of workshops, I fully agree with his statement.

Not only is vocational education discriminatory, but it also stereotypes occupational interests and offerings according to the handicapping conditions encountered. Examples of this are the enrollment of hearing-impaired individuals in printing courses ("because noisy environments won't bother them"), blind persons into piano tuning ("due to a well-developed sense of hearing which compensates for lack of sight") and mentally-retarded individuals into monotonous assembly-line positions ("because they don't get bored easily and it's the only thing they can learn to do.")

Vocational education must make itself available to and adaptable for handicapped people. It can no longer choose to serve select populations. If disabled youth are to be trained for jobs, vocational education is mandatory. Today, a majority of adults of working age who are also handicapped are not employed; of those who do have the advantage of employment, average earnings are half those of non-handicapped persons.

To educate handicapped youths, programs and educators will have to change. Outdated equipment is prevalent in residential settings for handicapped persons, such as the ones I taught in for several years. It is difficult enough to train non-handicapped youths on outdated equipment and expect them to be hired. It is nearly impossible to use that same equipment for skill development in handicapped youths and anticipate them being hired into the work force. They already have a battle getting the employer to see beyond the handicap and then we're asking them to sell their outdated skills as well.

But equipment is not the only concern. Educators themselves express their reluctance at having handicapped students in classes. These educators may be some of the finest we have available; yet they want to make sure they can serve the needs of those handicapped students before they incorporate them into existing classes. Inservice training is needed to make them aware of their own reluctance, prejudices, and stereotype views, the strengths and weaknesses of existing programs to serve the needs of handicapped persons, and possible adaptations and techniques necessary for mainstreaming handicapped youths. The primary need is to make vocational educators acquainted with handicapped persons and to provide them with experiences and

tested procedures in order to alleviate concerns, increase understanding and open up doors.

Along with this comes the need for greater knowledge in the development of the IEP - Individualized Educational Plan - which is required by law for all handicapped students. Vocational education assessment, in my view, needs to be an interwoven part of the IEP process. Any vocational education offerings used are to be described in that IEP, according to federal mandate. However, by making vocational assessment a part of the mandated provision in the IEP, we guarantee access to vocational development for every handicapped person, and bring them farther along the road of employability.

Ladies and gentlemen, handicapped people are both your and my concern. When we educate and train a handicapped person we allow them to become an integral part of the working world. We are not only providing them with self-esteem, but we are also removing them from welfare and maintenance rolls - where they don't want to be in the first place. Vocational education can probably be one of the most significant contributions in the life of a handicapped person if we will only provide for it financially and with human resources.

1. Bowe, Frank: Rehabilitating America Toward Independence For Disabled And Elderly People. New York, Harper & Row, 1980.

TESTIMONY TO THE  
ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
ON THE STATUS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
IN NEVADA  
By  
David Fulstone II

As an employer-businessman, past vocational student in agriculture and member of the State Advisory Council for Vocational Education, I am seriously concerned about the status of vocational education in our state. Since becoming a member of the Advisory Council I have read many many definitions of vocational education; most have been very articulate, well thought out and completely confusing to the average non-educator. My definition is rather simple; vocational education is hire education - that's spelled h - i - r - e. Ladies and gentlemen I'm talking about education for work, preparation for getting a job that does not require getting a Bachelors degree from a College or University.

Obviously, I cannot address the status statewide of vocational education, but I would share with you what I have observed as a lifelong resident of Lyon County and a graduate of that county's schools. Mr. Greg Blackham, a member of the Lyon County School District central administration, testified to the Ways and Means Committee two weeks ago that Lyon County has over the last 10 years curtailed vocational offerings, and if educational funding continues to decline, the trend will continue. My personal observation, as a member of Lyon County's Vocational Advisory Committee, would verify his statement; and truthfully in Lyon County, if funding for vocational education is not increased, I believe what Mr. Blackham said about further curtailing vocational offerings, will be true.

As a member of the State Advisory Council, I have visited vocational programs in several rural counties; Clark County, Washoe County and at the Community College. I have found in each of those settings extremely good vocational programs that are turning out individuals who go immediately into employment and that is what

hire education is all about. I made this statement to assure you that because of committed teachers and students, vocational education is in many places contributing. The problems I wish to voice do not destroy, but greatly hinder vocational education in our state.

While I am not an expert in vocational education, there are some obvious considerations which we can all recognize. In many cases across our state, training equipment is simply not up to industry standards. The best example I can give is in my field, which is agriculture. The sophistication of agriculture equipment has increased continually. When a Vo.-Ag. graduate comes to me for work, he simply has never had exposure to our large four-wheel drive tractors. Even though he may have received excellent theory instruction and adequate basic skills on an outdated and only remotely similar piece of equipment, the effectiveness of the training is greatly reduced. Vocational education statewide needs major renovation.

Nevada needs more diversified training programs to address the needs of our students and employers. Two Presidents of the United States have recognized the need to increase productivity and to reindustrialize America. We in Nevada have recognized that we must diversify our economic base and to build new industry and expand existing ones. As a businessman I recognize that we can accomplish none of these things if we do not make a major investment in the youth of America - and a major portion of that investment must be in training. As a businessman I recognize that to increase my productivity I must expend funds to upgrade my existing operation, as well as invest new capital for general expansion. The same rules apply to vocational education. We can, neither as a state or a nation, afford to ignore the need to assist our young people in quickly finding their place in the private sector thus reducing the number of years young people spend going from job to job trying to find themselves and their place. Each time they find employment, quit and seek a new field, our general productivity goes down.

People involved in the private sector, either as businessmen or employees, recognize the fact that America has lost its edge in the world market. The Nevada Legislature's Judiciary Committee, through Assembly Concurrent Resolutions 13 and 14, recognized the need for expanded and improved vocational offerings and youth employment. The Committee related vocational training and youth employment to assistance in reducing youth and adult crime. Today the Education Committee is holding a special hearing on the status of vocational education. The fact that you have called this hearing testifies to the need for improving vocational education. Unfortunately, we have been satisfied to hold hearings, pass resolutions and recognize how vocational education can serve - it ends there.

As our representatives, I would ask you to convert the concern and interest expressed by the Judiciary and Education Committees and the individuals testifying here into action in the Finance Committees of this legislature. The future of Nevada's business growth is, at least in part, closely tied to our ability to train our youth for gaining meaningful employment.