

MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE
ON FINANCE

SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE
February 24, 1981

The Senate Committee on Finance was called to order by Chairman Floyd R. Lamb, at 8:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 24, 1981, in Room 231 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. Exhibit A is the Meeting Agenda. Exhibit B is the Attendance Roster.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Floyd R. Lamb, Chairman
Senator James I. Gibson, Vice Chairman
Senator Eugene V. Echols
Senator Norman D. Glaser
Senator Thomas R.C. Wilson
Senator Lawrence E. Jacobsen
Senator Clifford T. McCorkle

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

(None)

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ronald W. Sparks, Chief Fiscal Analyst
Dan Miles, Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Tracy L. Dukic, Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ted Sanders, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Ed Vogel, Las Vegas Review-Journal
Jack Renynolds, Senator Lamb's Intern
Rosemary Clark, State Board of Education
Richard Brown, Nevada Association of School Administrators
John Hawkins, Nevada School Boards Association
Kenneth Partridge, University of Nevada System
Don Baepler, University of Nevada System
Dawn M. Morris, University of Nevada System
Newcomb Maples, Storey County School District
Joe Fisher, Nevada State Education Association
Jim Costa, Department of Education
Randell K. Newman, Department of Education
Myrna Macdonald, Department of Education
Dellie M. Kelley, Department of Education

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lamb at 8:00 a.m., and he told the Committee that he had two bills to present for introduction. The first of these two bill drafts was a request requiring the Department of Taxation to contract for annual audits of each local government.

SENATOR JACOBSEN MOVED THAT THE BILL
DRAFT* BE INTRODUCED.

SENATOR GLASER SECONDED THE MOTION FOR
INTRODUCTION.

Senator Lamb then called for a motion regarding Senate bill draft S-1055. (S.B. 291)

* BDR 31-1329 (S.B. 292)

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SENATOR GLASER MOVED THAT SENATE
BILL DRAFT S-1055 BE INTRODUCED.

SENATOR GIBSON SECONDED THE MOTION
FOR INTRODUCTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

-oOo-

Chairman Lamb asked Mr. Ted Sanders, Superintendent of Public Instruction to present his budget.

Senator McCorkle asked if they might allow him to show a film presentation first.

Chairman Lamb consented, and the film "Marva" was shown.

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At the completion of the film, Chairman Lamb called for questions from the committee.

Senator Wilson asked Mr. Sanders what, in light of the film just shown and the problems being experienced presently in regard to the quality of education, might the committee do to help safeguard the educational system.

Mr. Sanders replied that he believes one new practice that will help weed out problems is proficiency testing. He stated that 20% of the 1982 graduating high school students will not matriculate on to college because they cannot pass their proficiency tests with adequate scores. He told the committee that these tests are particularly concerned with three areas -- mathematics, reading comprehension and English. The low scoring on these tests reflects the poor education these students are receiving. He also said that 25% of all the nation's high school students are functionally illiterate and the only way to effectively deal with this situation is to start eliminating the problem at the elementary and secondary school level, not the university and community college levels, and to get parental support which he feels is most important.

Senator Lamb asked Mr. Sanders if he had noticed a lack of parental support for education.

Mr. Sanders replied that not all of the parents are actively engaged in monitoring their child's educational progression.

Senator Lamb told Mr. Sanders that he feels that at least 80% of the parents of school-age children want to see their children succeed.

Mr. Sanders replied that he agreed, although there is not the support and involvement that he feels is necessary on the part of most parents. He said that a majority of parents leave the education of their children up to the school itself and never become involved.

Senator Wilson added that if Mr. Sanders were to sample the opinions of parents of school-aged children, he would find a high frustration level with the quality of education their children are receiving. He further asked Mr. Sanders if he thought that it would be helpful to readjust the emphasis on where the funding is placed in the school system.

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Mr. Sanders replied that it would point the educational system in the right direction. He told the committee that there is a good deal of evidence to show that writing skills are increasingly not being stressed at the secondary school level. He stated that as a result of the proficiency testing, the general writing ability of the students tested has improved 6%. He feels that this is a direct result of teachers feeling the pressure to be held accountable for their students performance on the proficiency tests. He told the committee that last year they predicted that the mathematics portion of the proficiency test would preclude 14% of the total graduating class from graduating, but that figure turned out to be higher...17%.

Senator McCorkle asked Mr. Sanders how much bearing classroom size has on the work habits and education proficiency of students.

Mr. Sanders replied that overcrowding in the classroom results in a lighter workload for the student; the teacher cannot deal with the amount of work produced by students in an overcrowded classroom. He stated that he feels it is a time to make changes in the very way the educational system is structured, which very well may be unpopular with the teaching community.

Senator Wilson surmized that the educational institutions are failing in their prime mission..to educate..and that it is time to make painful reassessments of the system.

Mr. Sanders interjected the suggestion that the changes, if they are made, will be most effectively enforced by the secondary school principals. He strongly urged the need to give more authority to principals and teachers to enable them to effectuate the changes.

Senator Lamb suggested to Mr. Sanders that, historically, it is a good practice for the Superintendent of Schools to make an annual visit to each and every school in the district to analyze their progress and proficiency.

Senator McCorkle asked Mr. Sanders if he could tell him what the average classroom size is around the State.

Mr. Sanders replied that the pupil/teacher ratio is approximately 25 to 1.

Senator McCorkle said that he has not found any scientific evidence to support the theory that classroom size dictates the quality of a student's ability to learn. He asked Mr. Sanders if the emphasis should be placed upon the size of classes to effect improvement in the educational system or place the emphasis on offering a quality education.

Mr. Sanders told Senator McCorkle that that is not what he was referring to when he said that classroom size effects the education of the students; he said the workload precludes the average teacher from giving the individualized care and instruction which might otherwise be available. He also noted that not all teachers are as dedicated as Marva Davis, and this is a significant factor which contributes a great deal to the quality of a child's education.

Senator Lamb asked if there is a lack of supervision in the classroom. He expressed the opinion that if he were an eighth grade teacher, he would be ashamed to matriculate students into the ninth grade who were unable to competently read and write.

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Mr. Sanders said that he agreed with Senator Lamb's observation.

Senator Glaser told the committee that he feels this is a result of the lack of dedication on the part of the average teacher in today's educational system. He also said that he is not sure how much pressure the Department of Education can exert to effect the changes they are seeking.

Mr. Sanders replied that their effectiveness to enforce changes is determined by their statutory authority, which is limited in this field, but that they can exert pressure on the school principals to improve their schools. He stated that there have been workshops offered to help guide the school principals in the improvement programs. He also added that he thinks it would be helpful to have different individuals survey schools in their daily routines. He mentioned that one of the most valuable tools would be an efficient way of evaluating teachers' performances.

Senator Lamb asked how the Legislature might give the authority to the proper organization to do just that.

Mr. Sanders replied that they would have to empower the State Board of Education with the approval authority over the local schools.

Senator Echols stated that he feels that the example of Marva Davis is the panacea for the teaching dilemma in this country. He stated that the emphasis for a solid education in basic skills..reading, writing and mathematics..should be placed on the entry level student.

Senator Lamb asked for suggestions from Mr. Sanders as to how this might be brought to fruition.

Senator Wilson interjected a suggestion that a possible way to achieve this would be to legislate conditions and terms into the appropriations for the school budgets as to how the money will be spent, and, thereby, achieve this goal. He also asked Mr. Sanders about the discipline problems being experienced in the classroom. He went on to ask if the answer to the illiteracy problem is to have a general review board that would analyze the volume of reading being done and the quality of composition being turned out by the students. He suggested that there possibly should be a set of guidelines for the schools to operate under.

Mr. Sanders replied that he agreed with this suggestion. He added that many of the innovative ideas contrived by different teachers within the system have been thwarted by the bureaucratic red tape when trying to implement new programs.

Senator McCorkle told Mr. Sanders and the committee that he, personally, does not want the money appropriated for the schools laden with conditions and terms to be met in order to receive funding. He stated that he believes that the problem lies within the local school districts themselves. He also wanted to make the point that he greatly resents the public attitude that suggests that the problem with the present state of the educational system is the result of a lack of funding.

Senator Wilson suggested that even with the jurisdictional limitations imposed upon them, as a legislative body, they have the obligation to provide some leadership. He asked Mr. Sanders to give his ideas on what leadership they would be able to effect between now and the time the Legislature adjourns.

Senator Lamb asked what a teacher might do if he or she was reprimanded by the principal for his or her lack of performance. He asked Rosemary Clark, State Board of Education, to respond to the question.

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Ms. Clark responded that she feels there will be improvement once the local school principal receives the authority and the techniques to competently evaluate teachers.

Senator Lamb asked if Mr. Sanders was in agreement with Ms. Clark.

Mr. Sanders replied that he was, in part.

Senator Glaser noted that in his experiences, the better the School Board is, the better the schools are. He suggested that possibly it would help to develop some kind of incentive program between the local School Boards and the local schools.

Senator Gibson asked if the proficiency tests show a score breakdown by county and whether or not there is a variation in scores.

Mr. Sanders replied that the proficiency test does reflect both of these factors.

Senator Gibson told the committee that maybe they should analyze the variations to see what changes could be made. He noted that he is aware of the sentiment in the teaching profession to have the proficiency testing eliminated.

Mr. Sanders said that it is most imperative that they keep the money appropriated for the proficiency testing of ninth and tenth grade students in the budgets.

Senator Gibson observed that education hinges on the student's motivation, and in this country, there is an attitude that an education is owed to the student. He also stated that he believes there is a great deal of pressure being placed upon teachers to matriculate students who are not prepared for the next grade's educational demands, and that this is most evident at the college level. He suggested that a possible solution would be to curtail enrollment at the college level for those students who do not score adequately on their proficiency tests.

Mr. Sanders replied that he thought the suggestion had merit, as long as the Legislature would leave the authority to correct the problem at the local level.

Senator Wilson asked Mr. Sanders if he was aware of any administrative pressure being placed on the teaching staff not to fail students.

Mr. Sanders replied that he has found this to be true of both the administrative staff in different schools and parents of these students who are questionable for advancement.

Senator Wilson told the committee that he had been recently contacted by a teacher from the Washoe County School District who had told him that if she were still grading at the same standard of competency she had employed when she first began teaching, she would be flunking more students. She attributed the fact that she was passing unprepared students on to the next grade to the pressure exerted at the administration level to pass students, prepared or not.

Senator McCorkle repeated that the priorities of the teaching profession as have been expressed to him are, first, salaries, and secondly, class size.

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Senator McCorkle asked why the various unions do not supply the vocational training programs for apprentices.

Mr. Sanders replied that the unions participate in this vocational apprenticeship program by paying for on-the-job training.

Senator McCorkle cited the example of what has been accomplished by a group of realtors in Reno, Nevada and the local high school industrial arts program. He stated that the students received on-the-job training in construction, i.e., they constructed a house, and the realtors association sold the house, taking their commission, with the balance of that money being used to pay for the course.

Mr. Sanders replied that these programs are becoming quite popular all over the State.

Senator Jacobsen noted that there is a possibility of a change in the structure of the Fire Training Program in that it is going to be administered by the State Fire Marshall, and he asked if this might promote any problems.

Mr. Sanders replied that it would not. He told the committee that the funding for this program will be turned over to the State Fire Marshall's office, although there could be a reduction in the funding due to federal cutbacks

Federal School Lunch Program

Mr. Sanders told the committee that the cost of this program is partially underwritten by the Federal Government, and that it consists of three different sources of funding. He went on to give the committee a breakdown of the sources of matching funds and the costs to the State. He asked that the State approve the matching fund requirement for the Regular Appropriation.

Mr. Sanders expressed the concern that this year there will be a reduction in the money appropriated; that there will be a need for more money. He told the committee that if the Legislature were to revise the Appropriation Law, it would enable them to pick up more federal monies, and this would help alleviate the funding problem. He told them that there is a request for three additional positions in this budget..two regular fulltime positions and one fulltime support staff position.

Senator Jacobsen asked Mr. Sanders what happens to those individuals involved in the School Lunch Program in the summertime.

Mr. Sanders replied that the School Lunch Program is an ongoing Federal program for feeding people which continues throughout the whole year.

Senator Glaser noted that he did not see an agency request for funding for the Printing Office, and, yet, the Governor has recommended \$4,000 for this account.

Mr. Barrett replied that this is due to the transfer of the new position to the Printing Office.

Senator McCorkle asked why the Nutrition Program is taught throughout the secondary school level, and why nutrition, once taught, would have to be taught to students again.

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Senator Lamb told Mr. Sanders that if the teaching profession wants additional monies, they had best start providing a better education for their students.

Educational State Programs

Mr. Sanders began by asking for the approval of the individual budget account for general administration expenses. He further explained to the committee that the need for this account is based upon the fact that expenses were being charged back to the Title V program for miscellaneous items that other programs were unable to cover. He said that this change would clear up the confusion and generally promote better bookkeeping. He told the committee that there are two positions being deleted..a Health Education and Child Abuse Consultant and one position in Health Science and Environmental Education. He also said that there is going to be a transfer of seven positions to Budget Account 2720, Educational Support Services, and an additional transfer of two positions to Budget Account 2691, the School Lunch Program.

Educational Support Services

Mr. Sanders stated that this agency is responsible for the General Administration of the Department of Education's federal programs. They make certain that the federal programs carry their fair share of the funding for these programs. He told the committee that there are two additional positions; one is an auditor to audit the Federal programs which is badly needed because they are at least a year behind in their audit responsibilities, and a Senior Account Clerk to assist in the printing of reports.

In regard to In-State Travel, this is being increased because of the audit exceptions.

Senator Wilson asked what the Legal and Court expense category was for.

Mr. Sanders replied that they are experiencing a need for a fulltime attorney out of the Attorney General's Office. He told the committee that they presently have a halftime attorney general assigned to the Education Support Services Department.

Mr. Barrett told the committee that the Governor did not feel that the present workload required a fulltime position.

Mr. Sanders told the committee that when he is not being utilized by the Education Support Services Department, he would be allowed to do other work for other agencies.

Vocational Education

Mr. Sanders began by telling the committee that the funding for this category is on a 50/50 match basis, except the \$50,000 appropriated by the Federal government for the elimination of sex discrimination on the job and a proposal for a transfer of funds from the CETA Program Account to pick up two existing positions.

Apprenticeship Programs

Mr. Sanders told the committee that the budget difference between their budget request and the Governor's budget recommendation is the reduction in the funding made available for State funded vocational programs.

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Mr. Sanders replied that not all teachers are qualified to teach nutrition in the elementary schools, and once a child reaches a certain age, it is too late to teach him good nutrition.

Mr. Sanders emphasized that they are anticipating a reduction in federal reimbursement of the School Lunch Program.

Senator Lamb asked what "Indirect Costs" were.

Mr. Sanders replied that it is the assessment of costs for setting up the support services budget account.

Driver Education

Mr. Sanders stated that there would be no change in this budget.

Elementary School Education Act - Title I

Mr. Sanders told the committee that they were expecting over \$5 million dollars to be funded to the Title I Program last summer, but they will be encountering reduced funding here, too. He said that President Reagan is proposing to put the money appropriated for this program into a block grant program for the State and local school districts to administer at their behest.

Mr. Sanders went on to explain that they are requesting that two positions be deleted in order to fund a program to administer the Title I program. This was necessitated because of anticipated federal cutbacks to the Title I program. He told the committee that Out-Of-State Travel has increased because the travel requirement has increased in order to clear up the problems resulting from the audit exceptions in the Washoe County School District.

Senator McCorkle read an article by Carol R. Richards and Pat Ordovensky, (See Exhibit C).

Mr. Sanders responds to the reading of the article by saying that it is true that this program is operated as a pull-out program, but the pull-out is theoretically to be done when something other than the basics are being taught. He said that many schools have run into problems when the Federal Government finds out that they have not been pulling children out of class to give them their special training.

Senator Gibson told the committee that the program would be more effectively administered if it were placed in the block grant category and left the placement of funding to the discretion of the State.

Title IV B and C

Mr. Sanders explained the program for the committee. He told the committee that a deletion of two positions is being proposed, and that they are in accord with this. He also added that there is a proposed transfer of three positions to another budget.

Senator Glaser asked Mr. Sanders to give the committee an example of the innovative programs he had mentioned in his introduction.

Mr. Sanders told the committee that in Clark County they have utilized Title IV funds for the development of the art education programs in their schools. He told the committee that they will be supplied with a list of the different innovative programs presently underway.

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Title IV

Mr. Sanders explained the purpose of the program for the committee. He told them that this program will be one of the exceptions; it will not be appropriated as a State block grant program. He also said that this budget account will be substantially reduced. One of the functions of this funding program has been to underwrite various aspects of education expenses, such as the proficiency tests.

Mr. Sanders told the committee that the Governor is recommending the deletion of four positions. He told them that they are in accord with this decision. He said that the funds from these deletions of positions can be utilized to pay for the audit exceptions.

He further stated that they are proposing to transfer a position to Budget Account 2720, Educational Support Services, which will result in a 75% reduction in office expense to operate the program. He also told the committee that the recodification program which was authorized by the Legislature last session is now completed.

Senator Wilson asked by Contract Services had increased.

Mr. Sanders replied that this is due to the money necessary for the maintenance of the proficiency testing.

Senator Gibson asked Mr. Sanders if he had any idea how the proficiency testing program might be maintained at its present rate of funding if federal support of the testing is reduced.

Mr. Sanders replied that it may necessitate returning to the Interim Finance Committee for additional monies.

Senator Jacobsen asked with the proposed reduction in staff, why the In-State Travel expense is so great.

Mr. Sanders replied that there have been deletions in non-travel positions only, but travel expenses have increased along with the inflation rate.

Title VI

Mr. Sanders told the committee that there has been no recommended reduction in staff by the Governor or by the School Board. He told them that there will be slight cutbacks made in this program, but that these cutbacks will be less severe because it is one of the programs going to the block grant system.

Aid to Schools

Mr. Sanders told the committee that this aid to schools is increasing because of the request to augment the program by the increase in the number of handicapped students entering the school system. He told the committee that this is a direct result of the influx of population into Nevada at the rate of 5% per year. He asked the committee for the authorization to augment this budget account, and told them that the Governor is recommending a transfer of \$44,033 to the Aid to the Deaf and Blind Budget Account.

Discretionary Grant Program

Mr. Sanders explained the program as being a catch-all program for all of the smaller federal programs. The include: Dissemination and Difusion project, Title IV Survey, the Indo-Chinese Program, the Teacher Center Program and Right-to-Read Basic Skills Program.

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Senator Echols noted that most of the Title I and VI programs have ultimately the same purpose; isn't this a duplication of services.

Mr. Sanders replied that they have the same purpose because they are part of the same education act, but each program deals specifically with different types of special need individuals, such as mentally retarded and handicapped students.

Senator Echols asked if a better way to administrate these programs would be to administer them all under one unit.

Mr. Sanders replied that he felt this would be a good idea; that these programs would then be administered as part of an entire array of block grant programs.

Teacher Training for Handicapped Children

Mr. Sanders said that this is a competitive grant, providing additional training which is available to Special Education teachers and teachers in regular classrooms with specially handicapped youngsters.

Senator Gibson asked Mr. Sanders how effective he considers this training program.

Mr. Sanders replied that there is a large demand, both on the part of Special Education teachers and others, for this program to continue due to the increasing population of students requiring special teaching techniques in Nevada's school system.

Fleischmann Scholarships

Mr. Sanders informed the committee that this cholarship fund will cease to be in existence for funding programs after this fiscal year. He told the committee that they had approximately \$30,000 left which has been allocated for some undetermined use by the educational system, and he asked the committee for guidance in placing this money into an appropriately needy category. He told them that he has not found any particular area where this money might be best utilized.

Senator Lamb thanked Mr. Sanders for his presentation and told him that the committee would continue to hear his presentation on Wednesday, February 25th.

Senator Gibson then asked permission to introduce Senate Bill Draft S-394* which provides for an increase of \$2,300 for the annual dues of the Council of State Governments.

SENATOR JACOBSEN MOVED THAT SENATE BILL
DRAFT S-934 BE INTRODUCED.

SENATOR ECHOLS SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Senator Gibson then presented Senate Bill Draft S-298^{**} a bill appropriating \$1,300,000 for the special acquisition of the property commonly referred to as the Eldorado Valley.

* S.B. 305

** S-928 (S.B. 304)

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Senator Lamb called for a motion on the question.

SENATOR GLASER MOVED THAT SENATE BILL
DRAFT S-298 BE PASSED.

SENATOR ECHOLS SECONDED THE MOTION.

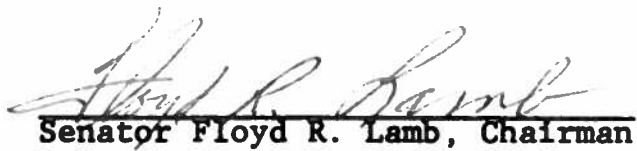
THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at
10:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:


Tracy L. Dukic, Secretary

APPROVED BY:


Senator Floyd R. Lamb, Chairman

DATED: Mar 5, 1981

SENATE AGENDA

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Committee on FINANCE, Room 231.

Day (See Below), Date (See Below), Time 8:00 a.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1981

- A. B. 34 - Exempts persons who fill elective public offices from disqualification for allowances under public employees' retirement system.
- S. B. 56 - Allows certain persons to obtain benefits from Public Employees' Retirement System while employed during legislative session.
- S. B. 113 - Removes conflicting and duplicative statutory provisions respecting purchase of service credit under Public Employees' Retirement System.
- S. B. 198 - Creates process for competitive bidding to provide services proposed by Department of Human Resources.
- S. B. 206 - Makes appropriation to develop computerized tracking and accounting system for clients of Nevada Mental Health Institute.
- S. B. 207 - Makes appropriation for development of computerized system of filing and retrieval for Division of Water Resources of State Department of Conservation & Natural Resources.
- A. B. 78 - Authorizes certain uses for park bonds and relaxes the requirement for local matching.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1981

State Department of Education (except Distributive School Fund) (Pg. 261-305)
(Ted Sanders)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1981

Distributive School Fund (Pg. 270 - Ted Sanders)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1981

1. Commission of Postsecondary Education (Pg. 306 - Merlin Anderson)
2. Nevada Department of Museums and History (Pg. 312 - Jack Porter)
3. Nevada Historical Society (Pg. 314)
4. Nevada State Museum (Pg. 316 - Scott Miller)
5. Lost City Museum (Pg. 319)
6. Nevada State Museum - Las Vegas (Pg. 322)
7. Virginia and Truckee Railroad Museum (Pg. 806)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1981

1. Nevada State Library (Pg. 324 - Joe Anderson)
2. Library Center for Cooperative Library Services (Pg. 328 - Joe Anderson)
3. Archives (Pg. 330 - Joe Anderson)
4. Library Service Improvement Program (Pg. 332 - Joe Anderson)

ATTENDANCE ROSTER FORM

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: February 24, 1981

PLEASE PRINT NAME	PLEASE PRINT ORGANIZATION & ADDRESS	PLEASE PRINT TELEPHONE
<i>Ed Vogel</i>	<i>R-T</i>	
<i>J Reynolds</i>	<i>Tutor</i>	
<i>Rosemary Clarke</i>	<i>St. Br. of Educators</i>	
<i>Richard Brown</i>	<i>Nev. Assoc. School Adm</i>	
<i>John Hewkins</i>	<i>Nev. School Boards Association</i>	
<i>Kenneth Petridge</i>	<i>University of Nevada System</i>	
<i>Don Baepfer</i>	<i>" " "</i>	
<i>Donna Marie Harris</i>		
<i>Stephen M. Myers</i>	<i>Store County School Dist</i>	
<i>Joe Fisher</i>	<i>Nevada State Educ.</i>	
<i>Jim Costa</i>	<i>Department of Education</i>	<i>885-5700</i>
<i>Franklin M. Newman</i>	<i>Dept. of Education</i>	<i>885-5700</i>
<i>Kryena Macdonald</i>	<i>Dept of Education</i>	<i>885-5700</i>
<i>Helie M Kelley</i>	<i>Dept of Education</i>	<i>885-5700</i>

Extras disrupt classes

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second article in a series on American education.

By **CAROL R. RICHARDS**
and **PAT ORDOVENSKY**
Gannett News Service

In a big-city public school, eight slow readers leave their third-grade classroom twice a week and walk to a room where a special teacher is paid by the federal government to give them extra help.

She spends five minutes tumbling with papers, 15 minutes reviewing work sheets and 10 minutes leading the kids through a game of word bingo.

"A synonym for 'stay,'" she asks, and answers her own question: "Remain." How is it spelled? She answers herself: "R-E-M-A-I-N." When someone has found five words in a row on his card, bingo ends and teacher gives candy to everyone.

Back in the first grade, their classmates are hard at work writing book reports. Their teacher is walking among them, giving each child personal, affectionate attention, helping with spelling and grammar and composition.

The special class — called Title I after the federal law that funds it — is one of the "extras" that now pepper the curriculum



Gannett News Photo

Carolyn Ingram uses poker chips to teach her third-graders multiplication tables at P.S. 116 in New York City

in public elementary schools, often depriving participants of basic classwork.

Gannett News Service reporters, visiting schools from coast to coast, saw dozens of examples:

• It's "Career Week" at A.M. Winn Elementary school in Sacramento, Calif. Half-an-hour a day is spent listening to adults discuss their vocations. Last

(See SCHOOL, page 12, col. 4)

School

(Continued from Page 1)

week was Black History Week. The week before was Oriental Culture Week.

• In Calvin McCullough Elementary School in New Castle, Del., "gifted and talented" children are bused in from several schools for a special class, where a recent day was devoted to discussing architecture and practicing public speaking.

• In another Delaware special class, educable mentally retarded students (EMRs) wander aimlessly. Some are coloring, some play electronic football, some read quietly. One little boy fiddles without supervision at a computer printout machine.

Special classes for the bright, the slow, the musical and the "educationally disadvantaged" are known in education circles as "add-ons." But many teachers call them "pull-outs" because they pull children out of one learning environment and put them in another.

Most Title I classes work as pull-outs because Congress pays for them and Congress doesn't want Title I money spent on any anyone but Title I children. Those are the ones whose tests show they are "educationally disadvantaged."

Pull-out classes trouble Carolyn

Ingram, who teaches at New York City's P.S. No. 116. "Sometimes the kids come back, and they're confused," she says. She often has to re-teach the lessons they missed.

And even the extras that really are "add-ons" often cause classroom disruptions. School breakfasts, supplied by the federal government, are offered before classes start, but the children are often still wolfing their French toast when teaching begins. Busing, whether for racial balance or just to get kids to school, often delays the start of classwork.

Here's how these extras affected a recent day in Kathryn Lovell's fifth grade at Billingsville Elementary School, Charlotte, N.C.:

At 9:07, the public address system reports "all buses are in." It's seven minutes past starting time. When the roll is called, Kim doesn't answer. "She's still at breakfast," says one pupil. At 9:15, seven children leave for chorus and the remaining 22 start working on their spelling. At 9:40 the choristers return and all read for 20 minutes, when the principal arrives to substitute for Lovell, who must testify in court.

Math starts at 10:30, and is interrupted at 11:10 by the arrival of Johanna Nimmons, a bilingual

teacher to help an Oriental and a German child master English. She stays for 45 minutes.

At 11:30 Lovell returns and soon team teaching begins. The three fifth grades rotate among four rooms for English, science, social studies and lunch. A group of children, excused for band practice, misses social studies. Then there's an in-class physical education game of "quiet ball," and the six-hour school day is over.

Petree Hammond of the National Institute for Education was part of a team that spent several years studying the effects of Title I. The group reported to Congress that in-class Title I programs were more effective than pull-outs, but that pull-outs were more common because schools fear the government will audit their Title I spending.

What did the researchers conclude about Title I, the biggest single federal school aid program?

"I think it's helpful on the whole," said Hammond. "I think there are places where it doesn't do any good at all. In some places it may be harmful."

The best he could say about the nearly \$3.4 billion spent annually on Title I is that "it does more good than harm."

(NEXT: "Snaps" instead of basics)