

**AN ACT establishing a committee to study New Hampshire teacher shortages and recruitment incentives, and relative to defining secondary school grades for teacher loan forgiveness programs.**

**SB 236, Chapter 150:1, Laws of 2022**

**COMMITTEE TO STUDY NEW HAMPSHIRE TEACHER SHORTAGES AND RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES**

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

**MEETING DATE:** Wednesday, August 31, 2022, at 11:00am in LOB 302-304

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**Start Time:** 11:00am

**End Time:** 1:05pm

**Members Present:** Senator Ruth Ward, Senator Jay Kahn, Representative Rick Ladd, Representative Oliver Ford, Representative Mel Myler, Director Steve Appleby (NHDOE)

**Members Absent:** None

**Meeting Discussion:**

Senator Ward opened the organizational meeting at 11:00am as the First-Named Senate Member.

Representative Myler nominated Senator Kahn as Chair. Representative Myler believes Senator Morse appointed Senator Kahn based on Senator Kahn's dedicated efforts in education and his sponsorship of this Committee's enabling legislation (SB 236.) While Senator Kahn will not be returning to the legislature after the 2022 election, Representative Myler said he spoke with Senator Kahn and he is willing to serve as Chair. Representative Myler said he worries about the House taking this study committee on due to time restraints.

Senator Ward seconds Representative Myler's nomination. Senator Ward said Senator Kahn has spent a lot of time and knows a lot about this issue.

Representative Ladd said he understands Senator Kahn's commitment to education. He worries about the 2023 report deadline as Senator Kahn is not running for reelection and we would lose our Chair in November. This is a huge issue with strings going in numerous directions, all of which need addressing.

Representative Ford said he echoes Representative Ladd's concerns. He wonders how we could make this Chairperson transition a smooth one. He suggested the potential of electing a Vice-Chair.

Senator Ward said, in December, there will be new Senate appointment(s) either way and another vote can be taken then.

Representative Myler said we need to begin looking at the areas we need to study so we can at least clearly lay out what needs to be done.

Senator Ward said she would like to wait for Senator Kahn to arrive to take the vote on Chair.

In the meantime, Senator Ward reviewed the enabling legislation and read the duties outlined in the enabling legislation (SB 236.)

Senator Ward recessed the meeting to await Senator Kahn's arrival for the vote on electing a chairperson.

Senator Kahn arrived at 11:20am and Senator Ward motioned for the meeting to come out of recess. The Committee unanimously voted to elect Senator Kahn as Chair.

Senator Kahn reviewed the enabling legislation aloud. Senator Kahn asked Director Steve Appleby (NHDOE) if there is information already readily available on teacher shortages in NH.

Director Appleby said he would be cautious using the current critical shortage data as it is based on USDOE questions. For example, the survey asks 1) if positions were open in July and if they were still open in September, 2) do they deem those positions hard to fill, etc. That is how USDOE derives whether there are shortages. This is how NHDOE then uses the data. We do not know how many of these positions exist, in total. That data is not collected currently. Starting this fall, we will begin collecting how many positions each district has in each endorsement area and what varying licenses exist within districts. By late-October, we should get that data back and he told districts we need results back ASAP for this Committee's work. Looking backwards, that data will likely not be helpful. USDOE is actively updating their survey as well.

Representative Ladd asked Director Appleby if NHDOE receives this data by region. For example, Representative Ladd's area has had special education shortages for years. There have also been issues in sciences and math. He asked if the members of the Committee have seen issues in their districts.

Director Appleby said they will be receiving this data by school district. Special education services have been a problem throughout the state for years. If you remove the Nashua,

Concord, Rochester Triangle from the equation, the western and northern parts of our state are the most troubled areas.

Senator Kahn noted that we have seen this issue in CTE as well.

Representative Myler said it is his understanding that it has been difficult for the department to get a response to these surveys in a timely fashion in the past.

Director Appleby agreed. More recently, the department has had to call down to districts seeking responses which takes manpower.

Senator Kahn asked if it would be helpful for the Committee to send a note or bulletin out to school districts. He could work with Director Appleby to come up with the reinforcement language for this bulletin.

Director Appleby said that would be great.

Senator Kahn acknowledged Jerry Frew from the NH School Administrators Association (NHSAA) in the audience.

Mr. Frew said important data can be seen in newspapers. In July of this year, the Superintendent from the Monadnock Regional School District (Lisa Witte) asked custodians, bus drivers, AP teachers, etc., this kind of information and updated it in August. There is a statewide meeting coming up which would be a perfect opportunity to talk about the importance of getting this data submitted for this exact work. He will share the contact information of folks who could be resources to the Committee's work. It is a challenge to get information in a timely way. NHSAA will do their best to help.

Representative Ladd mentioned the NH School Boards Association (NHSBA) and a school board member in Londonderry. They are a million dollars short for funding. He asked Mr. Frew how we can address competition with private businesses when looking at pay for teachers.

Mr. Frew noted that some school districts have increased their pay.

Director Appleby referenced the Franklin Superintendent who increased their pay to \$15 an hour plus benefits. This increased applicants. Superintendent Jim Morse in Durham has increased the pay rate for bus drivers and monitors, and he has filled those positions.

Representative Ford said if we are going engage data collection, we should broaden our subject to "why" we cannot get folks in these roles. We need to update the equation. He is aware of a group working to help paraprofessionals get their certification as these folks already have families and need healthcare. In some cases, folks giving up their current job

would result in their family losing healthcare. We need to incorporate all aspects into our work.

Senator Ward referenced the AFT packet shared with the Committee the night before the meeting. She said has not had much time to review this packet. She believes it is good information to review.

Representative Myler said this AFT packet is very comprehensive and addresses many issues. This is a good resource document. Other documents are likely to come.

Senator Kahn asked about Superintendent Witte's study and if it would be available for review at Mr. Frew's NHSAA meeting.

Mr. Frew said he would have to reach out and ask. It was informal outreach by Superintendent Witte to help fill in blanks.

Senator Kahn asked if we could ensure that our Committee's work is mentioned at this meeting.

Senator Kahn asked Director Appleby if the department's survey comes from his office and where it is returned once completed.

Director Appleby said yes, if it comes from his office and gets returned to Caitlin Davis, who runs the analytics and resources division. He said the survey should go out soon as school is just starting.

Senator Kahn asked about survey data being returned and when the Committee could possibly have access. He asked if November 1<sup>st</sup> would be a possibility.

Director Appleby said that date is the goal.

Senator Kahn said Representative Ladd raised a good point about studying paraprofessionals. Analyzing non-teaching staff is also a good point, but we should all agree on the scope that the Committee wants to seek.

Representative Ladd asked Director Appleby if paraprofessionals are certified.

Director Appleby said yes, they are, however, it is not mandatory.

Representative Ladd said all adults who impact the quality of the education of a child should be included in this study. He also suggested we look at the post-secondary pipeline as enrollments in teaching programs are declining. Enrollments do not show many indicators that they are going to improve given the political climate of our nation. Teachers are taking a beating, this does not make others want to step in and join the

teaching force. We should engage in talking about the essential need of teachers in our culture.

Senator Kahn agreed with Representative Ladd's statement.

Director Appleby said the department's survey only covers licensed educator positions, not food service folks, coaches, etc. Non-credentialed areas are not included. Paraprofessionals, while not certified, are included though.

Representative Myler said there is anecdotal information that can be reviewed while we wait for the department's survey. Local newspaper articles, of which are recent, cover this issue at length. He would like for Eileen O'Grady from the Concord Monitor to come before the Committee to speak as these articles are very instructive as to what is happening on the ground as schools are opening.

Senator Kahn pointed out that Ms. O'Grady was in the audience.

Director Appleby said the decline in graduates from prep programs is nationwide and goes back decades. It is a steep decline. There is a height in 2019, where we had 186 programs. However, the decline in enrollments led to a decline in programs as a number of institutions have exited. These exits are due to not enough students. As those programs decline in popularity and enrollments, universities are divesting. That is definitely worth talking about. Four years ago, we had about 400 educators on alternative pathways. Today, we have over 1,200 educators. There has been an increase in alternative pathway educators who come off interim authorization with support of folks within school districts.

Representative Ford said universities have seen graduates not apply for licensure for quite some time. This is due to graduating folks, entering into business related markets due to compensation and other reasons, staying in business jobs instead of going into teaching. He saw this in Minnesota where graduates would be placed in businesses to strengthen their business management skills and those folks did not return to education. Superintendents were very upset.

Representative Ladd said there is an article from 8/16/22 in the Wall Street Journal that needs to be distributed as it would be helpful. He has concerns about folks licensed in other states, not NH, where NH has reciprocity with those states. He asked how we can control quality of education provided if folks from other states do not meet our standards.

Director Appleby said true reciprocity between states does not truly exist. Every state still wants to see transcripts, test results, experience, etc. If someone came from VA, NH would make sure they meet our standards. While reciprocity is a quicker process, folks still have to meet our standards. For example, MA has very different math requirements that do not meet our standards; NH already acts as a gatekeeper. Some states give out licenses to

folks without degrees, 18-year-olds, emergency licenses, etc. This has happened in MA and AZ. NH already does this work to maintain our standards.

Representative Myler asked of the 28,000 educators, how many folks have used NH to get their credentials to take to another state.

Director Appleby said approximately, very approximately, 3,000 educators. That figure is roughly based on address and lack of a NH employment record. They exclude VT, ME and MA from this figure.

Senator Kahn mentioned we should look at other states who have identified shortages, loan forgiveness plans, pay for teachers, housing stipends, other experimental programs etc.

Senator Kahn said we should ask schools who train teachers to join us at some point to address strategies to attract qualified candidates. He is unsure if there are sources for us to use.

Director Appleby said he is happy to reach out to Deans throughout our state through his contacts. As for the alternative pathway piece, he can bring in folks from NHDOE if that is helpful. If the Committee supplies him with a list of questions, he can then form a list of who to bring from the department to answer said questions.

Representative Ladd noted that he is meeting with Cathy Provencher (USNH) and Jim Dean (President of UNH) in the near future. He would like to help in getting folks before the Committee to help us understand the pipeline.

Senator Kahn reiterated Representative Myler's comments. Plymouth State and UNH are already doing creative things. We could ask them specifically about programs they're working on.

Director Appleby said he agrees with Representative Ladd on having folks who directly oversee NH colleges and universities join us.

Senator Kahn said the enabling legislation does not define "teacher." There is an early childhood pipeline to remember in addition to K-12. He asked if we are interested in working on pre-K pipeline and those shortages as that is different than the K-12 pipeline.

Representative Ford agreed with Senator Kahn that we should review everything, even apprenticeships. The NH Department of Labor has recently opened their work to the field of education. He has names of folks who are working on this education apprenticeship work. Their office is in Concord. They are doing innovative work and the federal government is funding apprenticeships. Not the department of education, rather the department of labor. This is significant and major. We should become informed.

Representative Ladd agreed with Representative Ford that we need to look at all of this. CTE centers are pathways as well. We should look at what we have going on all the way through. This is a huge issue, but we have to be careful as we have limited time.

Director Appleby addressed Senator Kahn's statement about the enabling legislation's lack of definition of "teacher." The department refers to the "classroom teachers" definition as defined by the department. He asked about how the Committee wants to define "teacher."

Representative Ladd noted that, throughout state statute, a teacher can mean a number of different things. A principal can even be a teacher.

Representative Ford said NHTI may offer unique insight as well as it offers a full certification community college style.

Director Appleby said NHTI focuses heavy on early childhood.

Senator Kahn said we should combine those presenters on the meeting day of college folks.

Representative Ladd asked Director Appleby about retired teachers whose certification has lapsed. He asked how hard it is for folks to get back into the teaching game.

Senator Kahn noted that as the fourth objective in the enabling legislation.

Senator Kahn said we should have someone from the NH Retirement System present on this for folks who may have already retired and don't want this to negatively impact their retirement funds.

Director Appleby said he would suggest exactly that as there are time limits for folks coming out of retirement. As for the licensure side, the department has a means for folks to get their license back.

Representative Ladd asked about other states who may allow folks to continue to collect retirement and rejoin the teacher workforce.

Director Appleby said he would not know that information on other states, however, he believes the Education Commission of the States (ECS) may have more information.

Representative Ladd said he will ask a House Researcher for a good contact at ECS.

Representative Ford said the NH National Guard is looking to get more connections and ties with folks who want to tie their guard-service with something like teaching.

Representative Myler said we need to consider why teachers are leaving the workforce. Ms. O'Grady's articles in the Concord Monitor address this. We should have teachers come present before us. They are under a hell of a lot of stress, particularly from the residual impact of COVID-19. If we don't look at that, we will be missing a huge piece.

Senator Kahn asked Brian Hawkins (NEA-NH), who was in the audience, about possible data they have on why teachers are leaving. He asked how we can engage in information collection or testimony.

Brian Hawkins thanked the Committee for their work. He suggested that highlighting the pipeline and current environment is critical. NEA is happy to work with the Committee. There is work being done to collect this input from teachers as to why they are leaving. He can speak with his colleagues around the country to get a sense of what they're doing. ME has created a strategic plan around recruitment and retention, where they hit the four themes which he thinks the Committee touched upon during this meeting. The Committee has yet discussed expanding diversity of the workforce. The environment for teachers has been trying to say the least.

Senator Kahn noted the importance of diversity in candidates. He read an article about large cities using community groups as a way to attract staff for classrooms. Then, they can groom a diverse teaching staff that reflects the complexity of the racial makeup of their community.

Mr. Hawkins noted the census revealed that NH is un-diversifying amongst young people.

Senator Kahn noted the differing make-up of Nashua or Manchester versus Keene or Littleton.

Representative Ladd said his district continues to lose folks. He asked if NEA has data on what teachers are getting paid throughout the state. He asked for salary schedules as there are huge differences based on region.

Mr. Hawkins said yes, NEA does have a great deal of salary information. Reaching Higher NH has also done work on this with the Education Funding Commission. There are a number of resources available that the legislature already has. NEA is happy to help. You do not have to travel far, as a teacher, to get a significant pay raise. Some school districts have the ability to do that and some don't.

Director Appleby said he sees drastic pay differences within SAUs.

Mr. Frew said the NH Public Employee Labor Relations Board has all collective bargaining agreements posted online. There is an incredible delta to compare salaries. A step-10 in Groveton versus a step-10 in Concord is massive, it is tens of thousands of dollars.



Representative Myler said compensation is a key issue. On the other hand, it goes deeper than compensation as the environment is not appropriate. If an environment is not appropriate, they will leave. Respect, their advice being valued, etc. This is why we need to talk with teachers who have left.

Mr. Hawkins said the NH Retirement System presenting will be a great resource as they have ages and how much of our workforce is eligible to retire when talking about pipelines. We need to look at both ends of the pipeline. “Silver tsunamis” also impact this sector. The legislature has made many changes to statute on folks returning from retirement.

Senator Kahn appreciated Mr. Hawkins input and polled the Committee on the pace at which we should meet.

Representative Ford said that depends on the folks providing information to the Committee.

Representative Ladd asked if NHDOE could provide information on our current shortages.

Director Appleby said we should have some data for October’s meeting as the survey goes out in two weeks. Last year’s data was short. While the department had a better response rate, he would still feel much better using this year’s data.

Representative Ford said Wynn Young, from the NH Department of Labor, would be a great person to hear from regarding background information on programs previously discussed.

Senator Kahn said while we wait on survey data and teachers, we can hear from others.

Representative Ladd asked for salary information by retirement date.

Director Appleby agreed with Senator Kahn about this salary data being included in the DOE25.

Committee members broadly discussed future agendas and presenters for their upcoming three meetings on Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> were also discussed.

Representative Ford noted the availability of housing in NH is a factor that severely impacts employing folks.

Representative Ladd noted the need to look at the coming and going of teachers, administrative positions, etc. between school districts and what exactly impacts that.

Senator Kahn agreed about reviewing the longevity of administrative staff.

Mr. Frew said NHSAA does not have principal data, only administrative data. He said Representative Ladd is correct, an opening in one place pulls from other areas. Superintendents do flow from one district to another as well.

Representative Ladd said interim superintendents can stay in these positions for a while.

Mr. Frew agreed with Representative Ladd's statement.

Representative Ladd asked if there is someone in charge of the NH Association of School Principals that the Committee can follow-up with as they would most likely have that information.

Senator Kahn adjourned at 1:05pm.

**Next Meeting Date:** September 21, 2022

**Report Deadline:** November 1, 2023

AMRH