

# **ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE**

## **SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting  
Tuesday, June 18, 2002  
10 a.m., Senate Hearing Room 1**

### **Members Present:**

Senator Tom Smith, Cochair  
Jean Ajamie  
Alice Bustillo  
Alberto Gutier  
Stan Morrow

Representative Linda Gray, Cochair  
Representative Marion Pickens  
Fred DePrez  
William Udall

### **Members Absent:**

Senator Joe Eddie Lopez

### **Staff:**

Kimberly Yee, Senate Education Committee Analyst  
Amy Bjelland, House of Representatives Education Committee Analyst

Senator Smith called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and attendance was noted.

Senator Smith began with a few opening remarks regarding the purpose of the program, stating that Law-Related Education (LRE) is an important part of a school's curriculum. He then asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

Ms. Ajamie distributed a handout (Attachment A) and provided a brief overview of the School Safety Grant Award process. She noted that because there was no increase in funding for FY 2003, applications were open to renewing sites only.

Senator Smith questioned if the Juvenile Online Tracking System (JOLTS) was funded for next year. Ms. Ajamie replied that it was.

Referring to the handouts, Ms. Ajamie next discussed the budget breakdown for each of the districts.

Representative Gray asked if the program was over budget. Ms. Ajamie replied that the program is over budget; however, she feels that the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) can meet the proposal. One reason she feels comfortable, even though the expenditures exceed revenues, is because the carryover funds from FY 2002 will be adequate to cover the difference.

Senator Smith pointed out that the School Safety Program had an overage of more than \$1 million from last year's budget, which the committee returned to the State to assist in covering the budget crisis with the understanding that the State will reimburse the Program for that amount.

Representative Pickens questioned if there is enough money to pick up additional schools this year. Ms. Ajamie replied that the monies will come back too slowly to be able to award additional sites. Senator Smith reminded everyone that the monies that are returned to the Program remain in the program and do not go into the general fund.

Representative Gray inquired about when the cities give an increase to their officers, how that would affect the program. Ms. Ajamie replied that although the program does not fund the entire part of the officers' salaries, ADE would pick up the increases.

Ms. Ajamie pointed out that several applications were submitted after the deadline, noting that these school districts submitting late are included in the budget as recommended. However, what is not included in the recommendations is the dollar amount for the Yuma Union High School District since no application had been submitted. When the Yuma District administrator was notified that ADE had not received their application, they explained that they did wish to continue with the program this year; however, because of some staffing problems, they inadvertently missed the deadline for the grant.

Detective Morrow asked for clarification as to whether the schools that submitted their application after the deadline were listed in the budget. Ms. Ajamie replied that they are included in the award amounts identified in the summary, except for the Yuma Union High School District.

Detective Morrow questioned if it is ADE's responsibility to remind the districts that the deadline is approaching for submitting the applications. Senator Smith responded that if ADE did not provide information to the districts as to when the applications were due, then it would be ADE's responsibility to contact the districts with a reminder. However, ADE provides a handbook with the program guidelines and he feels they do not have to remind the leaders of the schools about the deadlines.

Dr. DePrez suggested that perhaps the late applications could be funded later in the year if there was enough money available at that time.

Representative Pickens pointed out that the program is overbudget by more than the amount it would take to fund the Yuma Union High School District. Therefore, if they are going to fund one late application, they should fund them all.

Ms. Ajamie explained the procedure for collecting monies owed by schools that go over budget. Once the balance is determined at the end of September, the school's next grant payment will be reduced by that amount.

Representative Gray questioned why the Yuma Union High School District has not yet submitted their application. Ms. Ajamie replied that the district is unable to submit an application at this time because the applications are removed from the website shortly after the deadline date. She explained to the Yuma District administrator that she would bring their concerns and requests to the Committee members for an approval and if an approval is received, the Yuma District could submit their application at that time.

**Mr. Morrow made a motion that the Committee approve Yuma Union High School District's late application if it meets the program standards and if funds are available. The motion CARRIED by a voice vote.**

Dr. DePrez inquired as to how many other school districts may have called after the deadline. Ms. Ajamie responded that there were approximately ten new districts that inquired about the program. However, no new applications were reviewed for FY 2003.

Ms. Ajamie returned to discussing the individual school district's applications, referring to the Cartwright District that has requested adding a site this year which will not be funded because the program is unable to add any new sites. In addition, ADE is recommending the following three sites not be renewed because of longstanding misuse of officers: Cartwright, Palm Lane, and Tomahawk Elementary Schools. Since 1999, there have been ongoing concerns regarding the police officers spending too much time responding to incidents at other schools in the district and not meeting the LRE requirement.

Senator Smith remarked that this is a violation of the intent of the program, which is to include the LRE. He asked what last year's budget was for the Cartwright School District. Ms. Ajamie replied that it was \$366,909 for four probation officers (POs) and three school resource officers (SROs). She noted that the recommendation for FY 2003 is for four POs at four sites for \$211,600.

Representative Gray questioned if any of the elementary schools feed into the junior high schools. Ms. Ajamie answered that she does not know, but it is likely that some of the elementary schools do feed into the junior high schools.

**Representative Gray made a motion that the Committee approve the proposed budget for the School Safety Grant Awards for FY 2003 and include the late applications if they meet the program standards. The motion CARRIED by a voice vote.**

**Cindy Zwick, Executive Director, Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education (AZFLSE)**, formerly known as the Arizona Bar Foundation, distributed a handout (Attachment B) covering many of their accomplishments. She explained that the mission of the LRE Academy is to prepare new and experienced POs and SROs for LRE classroom instruction by providing training and instruction that is research-based and proven effective. When implemented correctly, LRE can increase knowledge of the law, encourage positive behavior, reduce the use of violence to solve problems, improve school attendance, improve the likelihood of law-abiding behavior and improve self-image.

Ms. Zwick noted that over the past year, AZFLSE implemented 12 LRE Academies, which included three basic and nine advanced academy courses. She also stated that 194 officers were trained with many of them attending more than one course. All of the officers who attended the Academy were asked to complete an evaluation survey that measured their satisfaction and asked their needs, which will be taken into consideration to prepare for next year's Academy. She pointed out that 160 officers used their stipend to purchase materials for use in the classroom.

Ms. Zwick explained that AZFLSE has a database that tracks participation, purchases, and library access. On December 10, 2001, they implemented the Academy's website, and to date, there have been approximately 74,000 hits.

Ms. Zwick mentioned that Joannie Delgado, Program Coordinator for the LRE Academy, developed a statewide needs assessment survey to assist in enhancing the available resources of the LRE Academy and resource library. They also have been working on the Train the Trainer Program scheduled for August 9, 2002.

Ms. Zwick noted that the proposed budget of \$244,935 includes 1.75 staff positions. She indicated that they anticipate serving an additional 120 officers this year. She emphasized that because of some salary savings and the negotiation of reduced expenses, the budget has been decreased by approximately \$49,000.

Senator Smith questioned where AZFLSE gets their funding. Ms. Zwick explained that their funding is received from ADE and is used exclusively for LRE training.

In response to Representative Pickens' question, Ms. Ajamie explained that the administrative training will be offered through ADE; the Academy is for officer training only.

Representative Gray asked how the officers are trained in working with community resources, such as the police departments and neighborhood association groups. Ms. Delgado replied that during the Academy training, officers are often given examples of how to use outside resources. Technically, the officer is an outside resource and is the primary LRE instructor.

Representative Gray inquired about how many of the 294 officers have not attended an LRE program. Ms. Delgado replied that the Foundation only has a database of the officers who have attended a course. Ms. Ajamie added that ADE will be attempting to track that information this year.

Representative Gray noted that all of the officers should have gone through training in order for the school district to meet the standards of the program. Ms. Ajamie indicated that one of the complications is that there is a turnover in the positions. Dr. DePrez explained that an officer could have gone through the program a few years ago. Senator Smith suggested that ADE should identify the officers who have not attended the Academy and contact them to ensure they receive the training in order to meet the standards.

**Mr. Gutier made a motion that the Committee renew the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education contract in the amount of \$244,935. The motion CARRIED by a voice vote.**

**Steve Schimpp, Senior Fiscal Analyst, Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC),** distributed a handout (Attachment C) and provided an overview of the funding for the School Safety Program for FY 2002 and 2003.

Mr. Schimpp referred to the \$1.2 million that the School Safety Program returned to the State on a one-time basis only. He explained that it was not put back into the FY 2003 budget. However, JLBC staff understood the intent is to bring that money back to the Committee at a later date. Senator Smith suggested that it could be reimbursed to the School Safety Program next year. Mr. Schimpp replied that it is a possibility.

Mr. Gutier questioned the difference between the JLBC and ADE numbers. Ms. Ajamie replied that the JLBC numbers include the School Safety Clearinghouse and School Safety Study. Mr. Schimpp countered that those costs were folded into the general services administration operating budget. The School Safety Clearinghouse was always budgeted separately.

Ms. Ajamie introduced Rani Collins, administrator for the School Safety Grant Program, who has been with ADE for two years. She has a masters degree in public health and has extensive experience with prevention programs.

**Donna Neal, Neighborhood Activists Inter-Linked Empowerment Movement (NAILEM)**, asked if her group could obtain information on the school officers qualifications and the criteria for the schools to receive the funding. Senator Smith referred her to AZFLSE that provides the training for the officers and noted that there also is a handbook developed by ADE.

Representative Gray added that the community groups would also like to know who the officer is in their community so the groups can work with them. Senator Smith suggested that the best thing for a group to do is to ask to meet the officer and get the information desired.

**Betsy Kendall, School Probation Officer, Casa Grande Middle School**, commented that this year she had the opportunity to take two students to Washington, DC. At this meeting there were 1,500 students from throughout the country who attended the conference. They participated in a march, meeting many of the other students and sharing experiences. They returned with enthusiasm and have started fund-raising for the next training session which will be held in California. She commended the AZFLSE for the good job they do in equipping the officers to do their job and expressed her appreciation.

Senator Smith suggested there may be one more meeting this year in the fall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Dager  
Committee Secretary

(Tapes and attachments on file in the Secretary of the Senate's Office/Resource Center, Room 115.)