

ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE

SENATE EDUCATION AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE AUDITS OF:

PAGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
WHITERIVER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SNOWFLAKE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
KIRKLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
MARICOPA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
PEORIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
TOLLESON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT;
THE SUNSET REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE, AND THE REVIEW OF STATUTORY AUDITS OF THE ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Minutes of the Meeting
November 14, 2016
1:45 p.m., Senate Hearing Room 1

Members Present:

Senator Sylvia Allen, Co-Chair
Senator Lynne Pancrazi
Senator Steve Smith

Representative Paul Boyer, Co-Chair
Representative Reginald Bolding
Representative Jay Lawrence
Representative Lisa A. Otondo
Representative Bob Thorpe

Members Absent:

Senator David Bradley
Senator Kimberly Yee

Staff:

Catcher Baden, Senate Research Analyst
Aaron Wonders, House Research Analyst

Co-Chairman Allen called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m. and attendance was taken.

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE'S (COR) DUTIES

Catcher Baden, Senate Research Analyst, gave an overview of the Committee of Reference (COR) Duties.

Presentation by the Auditor General

Vicki Hanson, Director, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, distributed and explained a PowerPoint Presentation entitled "Arizona Auditor General Making a Positive Difference, School District Performance Audits" (Attachment A). Ms. Hanson gave background information on the Performance Audits and updates on the audit schedule and briefly summarized the follow up results. Ms. Hanson answered questions posed by the Committee.

PAGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presentation by the Auditor General

Mike Quinlan, Manager, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, continued with the PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) on the Performance Audit of the Page Unified School District and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Response by the School District

Robert Varner, Superintendent, Page Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Mr. Quinlan answered additional questions posed by the Committee.

Mr. Varner answered additional questions posed by the Committee.

WHITERIVER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presentation by the Auditor General

Ann Orrico, Manager, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, continued with the PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) on the Performance Audit of the Whiteriver Unified School District.

Response by the School District

Sandy Sedillo, Business Financial Administrator, Whiteriver Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Dr. Rea Goklish, Superintendent, Whiteriver Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Ms. Sedillo answered additional questions posed by the Committee.

SNOWFLAKE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presentation by the Auditor General

Mike Quinlan, Manager, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, continued with the PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) on the Performance Audit of the Snowflake Unified School District.

Response by the School District

Hollis Merrell, Superintendent, Snowflake Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

KIRKLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presentation by the Auditor General

Ann Orrico, Manager, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, continued with the PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) on the Performance Audit of the Kirkland Elementary School District and answered questions posed by Committee.

Response by the School District

Michelle Perey, District Administrator, Kirkland Elementary School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

MARICOPA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presentation by the Auditor General

Mike Quinlan, Manager, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, continued with the PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) on the Performance Audit of the Maricopa Unified School District and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Response by the School District

Steve Chestnut, Superintendent, Maricopa Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Thomas Beckett, Director of Human Resources, Maricopa Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Aron Rausch, Director, Business Service, Maricopa Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Mr. Chestnut answered additional questions posed by the Committee.

PEORIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presentation by the Auditor General

Vicki Hanson, Director, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, continued with the PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) on the Performance Audit of the Peoria Unified School District and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Response by the School District

Dr. Darwin Stiffler, Superintendent, Peoria Unified School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

TOLLESON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Presentation by the Auditor General

Ann Orrico, Manager, Division of School Audits, Office of the Auditor General, continued with the PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) on the Performance Audit of the Tolleson Elementary School District and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Response by the School District

Dr. Lupita Hightower, Superintendent, Tolleson Elementary School District, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit. Ms. Hightower distributed and explained a handout entitled "Tolleson Elementary School District No. 17; Superintendent's Office, 2016-17 Teacher and Staff Compensation" (Attachment B). Ms. Hightower answered additional questions posed by the Committee.

OVERVIEW OF THE SUNSET REVIEW PROCESS

Catcher Baden, Senate Research Analyst, gave an overview of the Sunset Review Process.

SUNSET REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Presentation by the School Safety Program Oversight Committee

Nerissa Emers, Interim Director, School Safety and Prevention, Arizona Department of Education, distributed and explained a handout entitled "School Safety Program (SSP)"(Attachment C).

Jenny Walker, School Safety Administrator, Arizona Department of Education, answered questions posed by the Committee.

Diane Douglas, Arizona State Superintendent of Public Instruction, testified on the School Safety Program.

Discussion and Recommendations by the COR

Representative Boyer moved that the Committee of Reference make the recommendation that the School Safety Program Oversight Committee be permitted to sunset effective July 1, 2017 and that legislation is enacted to transfer the review and approval of school safety grants to the State Board of Education. The motion CARRIED by voice vote.

REVIEW OF STATUTORY AUDITS OF THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ADE): EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNTS

Presentation by the Auditor General

Jeff Gove, Auditor General's Office, distributed and explained a handout entitled "Arizona Department of Education, Performance Audit, Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program Report No. 16-107 (June 2016)" (Attachment D).

Response by ADE

Ashley Berg, Associate Superintendent of Policy Development and Government Relations, Arizona Department of Education, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Michael Bradley, Chief of Staff, Arizona Department of Education, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding the Performance Audit.

Public Testimony

Sydney Hay, American Federation for Children, testified regarding the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program.

Kathleen Jones, representing herself, testified regarding the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Robin Sweet, Executive Director, Gateway Academy, testified regarding the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program.

Julie Batt, representing herself, testified regarding the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program.

Katherine Visser, representing herself, testified regarding the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program.

REVIEW OF STATUTORY AUDITS OF THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ADE): K-3 READING PROGRAM

Presentation by the Auditor General

Jeff Gove, Auditor General's Office, distributed and explained a handout entitled "Arizona Department of Education, Performance Audit, K-3 Reading Program Report No. 16-101 (March 2016)" (Attachment E).

Response by ADE

Carol Lippert, Associate Superintendent, Department of Education, answered questions posed by the Committee regarding Performance Audit.

Attached is a list noting the individuals who registered their position on the agenda items (Attachment F).

Attached are forms noting the individuals who submitted a Speaker Slip on the agenda items (Attachment G).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toy Brown
Committee Secretary

(Audio recordings and attachments are on file in the Secretary of the Senate's Office/Resource Center, Room 115. Audio archives are available at <http://www.azleg.gov>)