

Early Childhood Policy and Budget Division
Joint Education Committee and Early Childhood Policy and Budget Division Meeting
January 13, 2005
3:00 p.m. Room 123
Chair, Senator John C. Hottinger

Present:

Hottinger, Chair
Bob Kierlin
Gary Kubly
Sean Nienow
Sandy Pappas
Linda Scheid
Dan Sparks
Betsy Wergin

Absent:

Senator Kelley/Hottinger called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

A quorum was present.

AGENDA ITEM #1: Confirmation of Alice Seagren as Commissioner of Education.

Opening words by Sens Kelley and Hottinger: Senator Kelley emphasized the differences between the 2004 confirmation hearings and the 2005 confirmation hearing. Sen. Hottinger expressed his confidence in Commissioner-elect Seagren.

Opening words by Commissioner-elect Seagren: Commissioner-elect Seagren explained how her goal is have educational "access to each and every child." She went through her background, thus what makes her a prime candidate for this position. She also maintains that education is the key to becoming a successful adult. Commissioner-elect Seagren expressed concern in the achievement gap between whites and minority students, and hopes to improve those numbers.

Supporting Witnesses:

- Gary Prest, Bloomington School District. Mr. Prest emphasized Commissioner-elect Seagren's abilities to build bridges in the education community.
- Duane Mathias, Former Commissioner of Education
- Jerry Ness, Executive Director of Minnesota Rural Education Association
- Ric Dressen, Superintendent of Schools in Alexandria as well as on behalf of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators
- Jim Bartholomew, Minnesota Business Partnership
- Linda Distad, Associate Dean at the College of St. Catherine's as well as Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Ms. Distad expressed optimism in Commissioner-elect Seagren's openness and knowledge.
- Fred Stortie, Minnesota Elementary School Principal's Association

Opposing Witnesses:

None

Commissioner-elect Seagren fielded closing questions.

- Senator Michel moves that the Education Committee recommend the confirmation of Alice Seagren as Commissioner of Education to the full body.
 - Motion prevails, unanimous

Closing remarks by Commissioner-elect Seagren: Ms. Seagren thanked the committees for their votes of confidence. She also made it clear that she could not do this job by herself; she is looking forward to working with the committees to improve the state of education in Minnesota.

Senator Kelley/Hottinger adjourned the meeting at 4:27.

Respectfully submitted:



Senator John C. Hottinger
Division Chair


Jane Bowman
Division Secretary