

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

February 9, 2015

7:47 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Wes Keller, Chair
Representative Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair
Representative Jim Colver
Representative Paul Seaton
Representative Harriet Drummond
Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Liz Vazquez

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION: ALASKA NAVIGATOR: STATEWIDE WORKFORCE &
EDUCATION-RELATED STATISTICS (ANSWERS) PROJECT~ ALASKA
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

STEPHANIE BUTLER, Director
Operations/Outreach
Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APEC)
Department of Education and Early Development (EED)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided the APEC presentation on the ANSWERS (Alaska Navigator: Statewide Workforce and Education-Related Statistics) project, and responded to questions.

DIANE BARRANS, Executive Director
Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APEC)
Department of Education and Early Development (EED)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Participated in the APEC presentation on the ANSWERS (Alaska Navigator: Statewide Workforce and

Education-Related Statistics) project, and responded to questions.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[7:47:55 AM](#)

CHAIR WES KELLER called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 7:47 a.m. Present at the call to order were Representative Seaton, Drummond, Reinbold, Colver and Keller. Representative Kreiss-Tomkins arrived as the meeting was in order.

PRESENTATION: ALASKA NAVIGATOR: STATEWIDE WORKFORCE & EDUCATION-RELATED STATISTICS (ANSWERS) PROJECT, ALASKA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

[8:03:33 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER announced that the only order of business would be a presentation from the Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APEC) on the Alaska Navigator: Statewide Workforce and Education-Related Statistics (ANSWERS) project.

[8:06:37 AM](#)

STEPHANIE BUTLER, Director, Operations/Outreach, Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APEC), Department of Education and Early Development (EED), began with the mission statement for the Alaska Navigator: Statewide Workforce and Education-Related Statistics (ANSWERS) project, which reads: "Deliver outcomes information to Alaska stakeholders to assess, evaluate, and improve the state's education and career development spectrum." She said the outcomes should reflect what is and what isn't working in the state education system, and to better inform policy makers and stakeholders regarding the various programs. The discussions to develop this system began over a decade ago, and work began before grant money was made available to move forward. Among the associated acronyms applicable to the ANSWERS programs are the pre-school through grade 20 and the workforce (P-20W) and the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) components. A federal grant of \$4 million was received over a three year period, beginning in July, 2012, which will end in June of this year, 2015. Four state organizations partnered to apply for the grant: the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE), the

University of Alaska (UA), the Department of Education & Early Development (EED), and the Department of Labor & Workforce Development (DLWD). The goal of the collaboration has been to aggregate the existing data, which each of these organizations holds in independent silos, de-identify the information, and link it together into a secure environment, for appropriate access for measuring long term program outcomes.

[8:10:16 AM](#)

MS. BUTLER said ACPE has taken the lead in the project, acting as manager and the fiscal agent. The commission has a long standing interest in being able to assess the impact of educational programs, and a statutory responsibility and authority to coordinate these duties, but, until now, has lacked the data to do so effectively; ANSWERS will remedy this situation upon completion of the project. Relative to the ACPE mission the project will provide answers to some of the basic questions that are routinely received, such as what is working and how to best deploy limited state resources. There is need for this data, as it is easy to measure effort/funding that is put into a given program. The SLDS program will transform the input into measurable outcomes and provide details on participation levels, long term impacts, and investment return. She said a cross sector P-20W longitudinal data base will allow the data, currently held in the participating agencies independent silos, to be linked and accessed. She said caveats to consider are: it will take time to build the system and acquire data for meaningful analysis; and Alaska's approach to de-identifying the data, which does not allow tracking of an individual student. However, analysis based on averages will be available and provide information regarding the success of students who have attended a given program.

[8:13:38 AM](#)

MS. BUTLER continued to explain the emphasis that is placed on the privacy and security of the data. She reported that some states are allowing student identification numbers to be used by teachers for tracking purposes; an approach that will not be available in Alaska where analysis of average outcomes are the focus. The project has six phases, she said, and only the planning/preparation stage has been completed. The infrastructure phase is on track, the development phase is in full swing, and recent activities have centered on phase four, the data reporting aspect. She noted that this relates to constructing the system, not actual data reporting; no data has

been reported to date. The final phase, sustainability, has been a key piece throughout the project, and will be further discussed in wrap-up.

8:15:06 AM

MS. BUTLER described the objective for linking cross-sector data in a transparent and secure manner, via means that will identify the system costs, tracks information requests and responses, and provide other user based details. Additional operating principles are that data contributors own the input data, which cannot be accessed without the source agencies knowledge and guidance, and that the value of the data is increased via transforming it into useful information versus data elements. Finally, the ongoing system design is to be agile, flexible and scalable to allow for increasingly useful information and report effectively on return of investment analysis. Ms. Butler explained the system parameters, beginning with the requirement that input data be stripped of any personal identification information (PII), including student identification or account numbers, names, birth dates save month and year, and street addresses. Current systems rely on this type of personal data for transactional reporting of an individual student's credits, loans and eligibility for programs. It would not be possible, she pointed out, to use the existing data systems for the purposes associated with ANSWERS. A new system is necessary to handle data in PII format and to accommodate the multi-agency structure. Another parameter is that the system will use subsets of data from the cooperating agencies, not full sets; ANSWERS is not a data dump and only data relevant to the evaluation of educational program outcomes will be input. Also, only cross-sector queries will be allowed, not those that could be responded to by one of the partner agencies. The final parameter ensures best practices for data handling throughout the process of input, storage, and output.

8:19:05 AM

MS. BUTLER turned to the governance of the program and said it is a three tiered structure supported by an executive board that is responsible for all system authority and activities. The executive board seats the ACPE Executive Director, the EED and DOLWD commissioners, and the UA president. Each of these four entities will appoint a project/data manager as information stewards to guide the day to day activities and development. These managers will access/establish implementation teams and committees for purposes of research, technical, legal, and

program support. The final governance piece are the stakeholder committees and advisors whose interests are key. She said there is excitement in this group for the possibility of not only knowing what goes into a program, but the measurable outcomes on the investment. She referred to the 10 policy questions, contained in the committee packet, and said that these questions, approved by the policy board, were designed to identify high-level informational needs, not currently available without linking the data. The policy questions are also key to filtering information input. If data is not relevant for generating an answer to a policy question, it will not be entered into the system. The policy questions can be amended, however, the executive governance board must approve any change.

[8:22:10 AM](#)

MS. BUTLER detailed the privacy and security protocols and how the system is designed to separate identifying information from the incoming data. Security considerations include: data de-identification, encryption, compartmentalization, system access logging and auditing, and human resource restricted role-based access. She reviewed a security diagram flow chart to explain how data is received and moved through the system emphasizing that controls exist on both the input and output levels. Ms. Butler said questions have arisen regarding how other states approach similar programs, and indicated that there are three primary models being employed by the 47 states that are implementing longitudinal data systems. One approach retains identifiable information, allowing access to individual student progress data. Another is the de-identified approach, which the ANSWERS model is implementing. The third is a federated data system in which data queries are able to access various agencies source system records in order to respond to specific data requests. She reported that a grant provided funding for a project team to visit state's using a similar system and the ANSWERS contingency traveled to Mississippi and Arkansas. She provided internet links to the Mississippi and Arkansas websites. The Mississippi website allows access to historical trends, demographic reports, and averages for student participation, progress and success K-20W, thus allowing comparisons to other populations. Arkansas's SLDS model was chosen as an example by the Alaskan team, for its leadership in data de-identification and privacy protocols and standards.

[8:28:59 AM](#)

MS. BUTLER reviewed the costs and sustainability of the program, stating that the goal is for the ANSWERS project management office, currently administering the grant, to make a transition into the program management office (PMO), for long term system administration and maintenance. The three year incubation period will be funded by the Alaska Student Loan Corporation (ASLC), as part of the ACPE operating budget. The previously reviewed privacy and security practices, as well as the governance protocols will be retained under the PMO. The annual program costs are projected to be \$1.2 million, which has been estimated without the knowledge of what the information demands will actually be. Finally, she pointed out that the funding model will require revisiting, following the initial three-year start-up period. The goal of the incubation period is to be able to demonstrate sufficient value of the ANSWERS products and attract grants and additional long-term funding. Should the program lack the ability to demonstrate usefulness, especially to program directors and legislative policy makers, she said it would not make sense to continue funding the program.

[8:30:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD referred to the overview, page 9, to ask about the PII process and if it was agreed to in the grant to retain birth dates and zip codes.

MS. BUTLER said the grant application indicated that Alaska would follow a de-identified model, without knowing exactly how that would be accomplished. Relative to zip codes, the addresses will not be stored. However, geocoding will be used to identify various areas that the student may be associated with for reporting purposes, such as school and legislative or economic districts.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD referred to a document titled, "GRANTS FOR STATEWIDE, LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS, CFDA NUMBER: 84.372, RELEASE DATE: September 15, 2011, REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS: NCES 12-01, INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES," Page 3, and the paragraph with the heading, "III. PURPOSE OF THE GRANT PROGRAM," to paraphrase the language, which read [original punctuation provided]:

The purpose of grants under this program is to enable State educational agencies to design, develop, and implement statewide, longitudinal data systems to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, disaggregate, and use individual student data.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD pointed out the stipulation for the use of individual data and asked for a response.

MS. BUTLER explained that individual data is in the data base and aggregated when it is reported. She said:

To be very clear, individual student data is stored in the data base. It is de-identified, but it is at the unit level.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD inquired whether zip codes, plus four digits, will be used.

MS. BUTLER replied, "No."

[8:34:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD directed attention to the overview handout, page 15, titled "Different State Approaches," to ask about the reasoning behind the choice of a central database for ANSWERS.

MS. BUTLER responded that it proved to be the most efficient system, as opposed to a federated structure. A federated structure requires accessing other state databases, which would require making compatible changes each time an agency altered their system, thus adding to the cost for system maintenance.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD questioned the acronym names of the individual programs, and established that the P-20W SLDS originated at the federal level to describe all of the projects being taken up by the various states, and ANSWERS is the Alaskan model being developed.

[8:37:24 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER referred to the overview, page 10, titled "Governance," and asked about public access to the Executive Governance Board.

DIANE BARRANS, Executive Director, Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APEC), Department of Education and Early Development (EED), responded, stating that the ANSWERS program is a bit of "an odd duck." She said it is a facilitated program, which originated with an Administrative Order (AO) [261], issued in 2011, by Governor Sean Parnell, directing the

named state agencies to work together and share information, to the extent permitted by law, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of state investment in programs. The governance structure was developed pursuant to that order, which, in accordance with the grant, would be under the direction of the executives from the four agencies. The executives agreed to operate on a consensus model. The development of the ANSWERS system, and associated protocols, have been built via interagency consensus. Regarding public input, she said, recruitment is currently underway to hire a director, and whose job description includes the solicitation, receipt, and consideration of public comment.

CHAIR KELLER pointed out that Alaska's constitution has a right to privacy clause and asked how concerns by the public will be handled.

MS. BARRANS answered that a plain language description will be made available to assist anyone who wants to understand what the data is and what it means. The public will also have access to what data requests that have been received, approved, researched and reported on, as well as the resulting product. Further, she confirmed that parents are considered stakeholders.

[8:45:15 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON suggested having the separate agencies de-identify the data prior to submitting it to ANSWERS, thus, relieving the commission of data security concerns. Further, he asked why individual identifiers would be retained in the system.

MS. BUTLER responded that once information is aggregated it can't be re-sorted.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON opined that if only anonymized data is used to generate aggregated averages, what questions are anticipated that would require individual data be retained and cause the expressed security concerns.

MS. BARRANS explained that questions, such as what an individuals' attachment is to the workforce one year or five years after completing K-20, requires an identifiable unit record.

[8:50:18 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD stated a fundamental disagreement with the ANSWERS program, as well as disappointment for the issuance of AO 261 that Governor Parnell issued to collect the data, and cited the Alaska State Constitution, Article 1, Section 22, which reads: "The right of the people to privacy is recognized and shall not be infringed. The legislature shall implement this section." She said it is important for everyone to know that the Online Alaska School Information System (OASIS) can be used to identify individual house numbers by using the zip plus four digit code. She asked whether there is a means for anyone to opt-out of participation, and further, how the various agencies are using the current data held in OASIS.

MS. BUTLER addressed the interoperability of the current data, and said it is sourced via the OASIS, as a subset. Regarding the question for opting out, she said there is not a provision and the information is required. The structure of ANSWERS does not provide an opt-out, due to the de-identification process.

[8:53:21 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER questioned whether the requirement is based on the state law that a district may not issue a diploma unless a student has completed testing requirements. He asked by what authority, in state and federal law, it is shown that opting out is not an option. He opined that federal money, extended by way of a grant, is done so for a specific purpose.

MS. BUTLER agreed to provide further information.

[8:54:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked for clarity regarding the lack of an opt-out proviso to ask whether two data bases are being established, one with identifiers, and one that is de-identified.

MS. BUTLER explained that when the information is received, the identifying aspects are removed in the system and held in one location, while the informative data are directed to another segment of the program.

MS. BARRANS added that there is a matching system in which the student could be identified for future use, but it is not accessible by staff. Further, this system does not contain complete data. A random identifier, which does not reflect a social security number, student identification, or birth date,

is assigned to the unit record and is what will be used to produce program level reports. Thus, there is not a comprehensive data base and a de-identified data base.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON continued to question how the identifier number might be used.

MS. BUTLER described how random identifiers are assigned to originating data upon arrival, and then personal identification is stripped away. As additional information arrives on the same individual, it is appended to the original information and linked to the random identifier.

[9:00:20 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD asked whether the school superintendents understand this process, and have parents agreed to provide student data for storage in this massive data base.

MS. BUTLER replied that informational meetings have been held with the superintendents to explain how the data will be used, and there is no mechanism for parents to opt-in or opt-out of the system.

MS. BARRANS added that the APEC is not a data gathering agency, but is acting as the managers for linking the data.

[9:01:29 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER recalled supporting the initial concept for gathering student information and making it accessible to educators and legislators. The context of the original concept, appears to have changed over time, however, and he expressed concern for the direction that the program has taken in linking the departments.

MS. BARRANS offered that a proof of concept order has been completed, which has provided districts with a cross-sector, postsecondary, outcome report in order to receive feedback from the superintendents, thus testing the effectiveness and security of the program and determining what data is most helpful.

[9:04:24 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD inquired where the social security numbers (SSNs) originate, if the source is linked to the Permanent Fund Dividend, and whether there is a student clearing

house that allows the information to be shared across state lines.

MS. BARRANS offered that the SSNs are sourced from two locations: the work force, and the Permanent Fund data base. Further, there is no state to state sharing of Alaskan data, but some states do participate in that practice.

[9:05:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON noted that the goal of the program is clear and easy to support, and should prove to be an asset for making decisions. However, the pre-kindergarten component will be limited considering that private facilities outnumber public pre-kindergarten programs and asked how this will be handled. Additionally, he questioned how variances will be applied when tracking grade students through college/workforce years and reporting on averages.

MS. BUTLER agreed that the pre-kindergarten data will be relatively small and primarily available from Head Start programs. Regarding the average population reports, it is anticipated that, over time, useful answers will be available, such as regression analysis.

[9:09:36 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND opined that for students attending private or home school, the corresponding data would not be included.

MS. BUTLER pointed out that if a home school or correspondence report is made to EED the information will be included, such as students being reported for APS eligibility. She agreed that data on a sector of home and private school students would not be captured.

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND noted the limited information available on pre-kindergarten programs, due to the lack of state operated facilities.

[9:12:51 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER opined that parents who home school, without receiving state support, are effectively opting out of the system. On inquiry, he received confirmation of this assumption.

9:13:35 AM

REPRESENTATIVE COLVER returned to the question of using SSNs and asked if that is how the data is primarily tracked.

MS. BUTLER explained that a number of different identifiers are used for linking purposes, one of which is the SSN; the only identifier on a DOLWD data set is the SSN.

REPRESENTATIVE COLVER asked what process could be used to allow students to opt-out and if a statute or regulation would be needed to allow for that action. Additionally, he cautioned that data breeches occur and the opportunity exists for putting private information at risk. If the state can analyze data without using the SSN, it would be a great privacy practice on behalf of EED, he opined.

MS. BUTLER offered to provide further information regarding a means to opt-out of using the SSN as an identifier.

9:16:16 AM

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD expressed interest in instituting an opt-in, versus opt-out approach. Also, use of the SSN presents a concern, and she asked for further information regarding its use as an identifier, as well as information regarding the use of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), or other systems, which may require data to cross state lines.

MS. BARRANS responded that ANSWERS will not be interoperable with the national student clearing house system. Data is downloaded from the clearing house regarding where Alaskan students attend postsecondary programs outside of the state, in order to follow APS recipients and track out migration.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD maintained concern for the transfer of data across state lines, and the assurance that it will be protected. She referred to a committee handout, titled "FACT SHEET: UNLOCKING THE POWER OF EDUCATION DATA FOR ALL AMERICANS, Office of Science and Technology Policy Executive Office of the President, January 19, 2012," and urged members to explore the searchable link labeled "education.data.gov," and the "MyData Button." She explained that a "PowerSchool" student information system is a portal to student information and ties into the application programming interface (API), then asked if the commission is aware of these programs.

MS. BARRANS said the PowerSchool program is not relevant to the discussion, nor does the commission hold any expertise regarding that program, only a passing knowledge that it is a school level or district based data management system.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD asked what interaction ANSWERS will have with the federal government, particularly any requirements tied to the grant.

MS. BARRANS said the data base is not designed to interact with the federal government at all. Rather it is designed expressly to provide Alaska a means to analyze outcomes of in-state educational/training programs. Additionally, she categorically stated that there is no intent, nor design, to share data across state lines. It is designed by, and for the use of, Alaskans to understand how effective and efficient the programs are that are offered to train workers for communities around the state.

[9:22:09 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER queried whether a statement of intent would be in order.

MS. BARRANS agreed that a statutory prohibition against sharing the ANSWERS data to the federal government would be reasonable.

[9:22:46 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD stated that ANSWERS is federally funded, and returned to the cited grant, directing attention to page 12, Roman numeral IX, titled "SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS," to paraphrase from the language, which read [original punctuation provided]:

Applicants should budget for travel and accommodations for two senior project staff to attend a two-day meeting each year in Washington, DC with other grantees and Institute staff to discuss accomplishments, problems encountered, and possible solutions/improvements.

MS. BARRANS concurred that it is a federally funded project and there is a goal for having data that can be compared state to state to arrive at national averages. Different designs comprise the individual state longitudinal data systems, with the goal of analyzing comparable information, but not sharing of

data across state lines. States are able to measure their own performance and determine how that compares with another state.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD recalled the APS being established with the passage of SB 221, and asked if data base requirements were part of that legislation.

MS. BARRANS said the only relevance is the statutory requirement for the commission to report the APS outcomes on an annual basis. The agencies required to comply in that analysis are the UA, DLWD, EED, and ACPE.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD referred to the NCLB waiver and asked if the P-20W was required as part of that application.

MS. BARRANS deferred.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD established that ACPE is not aware of an organization named McKinsey & Company. Through further inquiry, the cost for operating ANSWERS was stated by Ms. Barrans to be estimated at \$1 million per year.

[9:27:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON noted that eventually, regression analysis could prove helpful to the committee for setting stated education policy. The ANSWERS policy questions, included in the overview, do not appear to include information that will provide the legislature with relevant answers for statutory action. He said it would be helpful to have questions that are relevant to the legislature and to know the time frame that will be required, to obtain meaningful results for the committees review.

MS. BUTLER explained the policy questions are a high level framework, under which research questions of the type the member has described could also be entertained, and she agreed to provide further information.

[9:30:49 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD indicated interest in gaining further information regarding the governance team, and any interactions that the commission has with the [Institute for Educational Statistics] (IES), at USDOE.

MS. BUTLER said that IES is charged with management of the grant program for the USDOE. A monthly meeting is held with the IES and the governance team to report on grant progress, and, as noted by the member, attendance is required for the annual best practices conference in Washington, D.C.

MS. BARRANS reiterated the seats held on the governance team by the participating agencies. Additionally, these members are supported by stewards who are experts in their fields for data submission and technical knowledge. The stewards act as advisors and review all actions for administrative benefit. She said that these are the individuals who are ultimately responsible for the data being input and analysis reports generated.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD noted that the governance document indicates that metadata, from external sources, will be added by private vendors. What will be added to the data base and how will it be monitored, she asked.

MS. BUTLER responded that the external information would be an appending of descriptive data to the actual data elements and the contractor is creating place holders in the infrastructure to flag the metadata input. To a follow-up questions, she said GeoNorth is the contractor building the system and that she is not familiar with the Master Pearson Index.

[9:35:48 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER asked whether GeoNorth is an Alaska based company.

MS. BUTLER answered, "Yes."

[9:36:08 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD questioned the commission's authority to track the educational information on Alaska's children.

MS. BARRANS responded that of particular interest, on the part of the commission, is to assess the effectiveness of the education being offered in the state, to the extent that school districts are informed of how well students are being prepared for the work force and continued learning. The leadership at UA is concerned about what the return on investment the state is getting as well as individual students. Analyzing the outcomes can inform improvements to educational programs, which should be of interest to society as a whole.

9:37:28 AM

CHAIR KELLER commented that the legislature has a vested interest in ensuring a return on investment in education and the evolution of this process will have stemmed from that need.

MS. BARRANS added that concerning the return on investment, the most important recipient of an improved educational system are the children that come next. She said it is part of the state's responsibility to identify system deficiencies to the benefit of individual Alaskans.

CHAIR KELLER directed attention to the overview, page 3, titled "Why ACPE," to note that ANSWERS is being developed pursuant to AS 14.42.030, which is a broad authority.

MS. BARRANS agreed, and added that for over 20 years, questions have been asked by the legislature which have not been answerable, resulting in frustration, which has been part of the impetus for the partnering of the agencies around this project.

9:39:24 AM

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD expressed that it is the responsibility of the parents and students to track and evaluate their information. She opined that establishing and funding this type of data base is not a good use of state money, which should be directed to the classroom. The focus should be excellence in education by providing resources in the classroom and empowering the parents, rather than tracking, data mining, and social engineering, she stressed. The legislature is taking the wrong direction in this case, and she maintained her concern for the costs, the data usage, and the constitutional responsibilities held by members.

CHAIR KELLER responded to Representative Reinbold, stating that what is before the committee is not based on a conspiracy theory. Collection of information is currently rampant in today's society and often provides benefit, such as frequent shopper discount cards. To stop the entire ANSWERS project would not be in keeping with the current flow of information, and to cease and desist would not be productive; providing sideboards could be in order. It is appropriate to understand why an opt-out measure has not been included, and perhaps DOL will provide that answer, he said.

[9:42:31 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE DRUMMOND opined that accountability is what continues to arise, and the ANSWERS database will provide that needed oversight. Additionally, having the ability to do regression studies may be helpful in alleviating the cost of corrections in the state.

[9:43:58 AM](#)

CHAIR KELLER qualified a previous statement, clarifying that the process of collecting data is not endorsed by the chair; however, it may not be an option to change direction at this time, and creating sideboards may be the best direction for the committee to choose.

[9:45:06 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON reminded committee members that the collection of data is not occurring, the databases already exist in various agencies, schools, and districts. The ANSWERS system creates an amalgamation of previously collected data into an accessible, reportable format. He predicted that the amalgamated data will benefit the legislators by providing a means to identify and act on the most cost effective programs. He reminded the committee of the repercussions for not meeting NCLB or waiver requirements and the inherent federal funding that would be redirected by failing to act in a timely manner to ensure compliance. Additionally, the requirement for teacher evaluations to be based on student performance is of concern.

CHAIR KELLER agreed with the member and thanked the day's participants, then announced the upcoming meeting.

[9:49:16 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.