

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, January 18, 2016

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman VanOrden, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Boyle, Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Mendive, McDonald, Dixon, Kerby, Pence, Kloc, Rubel

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Tim Corder, Sherri Ybarra, Charlie Silva, Lisa Colon, State Department of Education; Robin Nettinga, Dave Harbis, Matt Compton, Idaho Education Association; Phil Homer, Helen Price, Rob Winslow, Idaho Association of School Administrators; Troy Rohn, Boise School District; Harold Ott, Idaho Rural School Administrators; Clark Corbin, Education News; Blake Youde, State Board of Education; Ken Echevarria, Idaho School Boards Association; Mark Browns, North Idaho College; Carter Gustafson, student

Chairman DeMordaunt called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Chairman DeMordaunt turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman VanOrden**.

MOTION: **Rep. Rubel** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2016, meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

DOCKET NOS. **Tim Corder**, State Department of Education, explained that the department would like the committee to reject **Docket Nos. 08-0203-1503, 08-0203-1506 and 08-0203-1511**, because of an incorrect date. The department will re-draft the rules with the correct dates.

MOTION: **Rep. Wills** made a motion to reject **Docket No. 08-0203-1503**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

MOTION: **Rep. Kloc** made a motion to reject **Docket 08-0203-1506**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

MOTION: **Rep. Pence** made a motion to reject **Docket 08-0203-1511**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

DOCKET NO. **Tracie Bent**, State Board of Education, spoke to **Docket No. 08-0202-1501**. She explained that, after going through the negotiated rule-making process, the parties had arrived at consensus on all parts but one. The majority of the changes are the re-ordering and re-organization of the certification requirements, to put them in the same section of code for easier reference. New terms, "professional learning plan" and "student learning objective," were added during the last legislative session, and the Docket adds more clarification to those terms.

Ms. Bent explained the sections of the Docket which did not have consensus during the negotiated rule making process were the sections related to alternate routes to teaching certification. The Board tried to balance solving the problem some districts, especially rural ones, have of filling certain teaching positions, and the concern about not putting less-qualified or unqualified people in teaching positions.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Bent** explained the term "less-closely compatible" to an endorsement area means that if a teacher has an endorsement for one content area, he could demonstrate he is also qualified to teach a closely-related content area. In order to access the alternate route to certification, a district must show it has an emergency need for that position.

The original goal of the State Board of Education was to make a higher requirement for certification, but it was told that this would make it too difficult for some districts to fill positions. The Board decided that, in emergency cases, requests for a provisional certificate can be forwarded to the State Board of Education for approval. The intent is to allow more flexibility to the school district.

Ms. Bent told the committee that the Idaho Education Association had agreed to disagree with the changes to alternate certification routes at this time. Both the State Board of Education and the Idaho Education Association agree that having a quality teacher in the classroom is very important. However, they have agreed that, for the time, having a less-qualified person in the classroom is better than having nobody to fill a classroom position.

She explained that a teacher is allowed the alternate route to certification for only one year. Within that year, the teacher must complete the state-approved mentor requirement and pedagogy assessment. The three hardest positions to fill are math, special education, and positions requiring a qualified PTE endorsement, but some districts may experience difficulty filling other positions as well.

In response to concerns regarding the use of alternate routes to certification becoming the norm, rather than used only for emergencies, **Ms. Bent** said she feels the new language would limit that scenario, and the Board will propose changes next year to make the use of alternate routes to certification more strategic. One alternate route is for teachers who already have an endorsement in a content area to add an endorsement in a similar content area. The other alternate route is for someone who has content knowledge, but no teaching certification, to become certified.

Matt Compton, Idaho Education Association, testified **in opposition** to the alternative certification section of the rule, and asked the committee to reject it. The Idaho Education Association feels the terms "highly and uniquely qualified" and "uniquely qualified" are too vague and subject to multiple interpretations and applications. The term "demonstrated content knowledge" is also vague. The vague terms could present a problem for districts when they make hiring decisions. He gave an example of a district which recently asked for an alternative certification for a job applicant, passing over another job applicant who possessed the proper certification. The Association believes that not clarifying terms and standards can create unintentional difficulties and challenges regarding employment decisions, and that the flexibility put into the rules will create more problems than it solves.

Mr. Compton added that the Idaho Education Association understands the dilemma school districts face, and the difficulty of finding teaching candidates. However, he believes this rule should require a threshold level of actual demonstrable need before seeking an alternative route certification, or this exception will become the norm, and a university-educated teacher the exception. The Association believes that the state should not be implementing policy which lowers the bar for those entering the classrooms to work with students, at the same time it is raising expectations for both teachers and students.

MOTION:

Rep. DeMordaunt made a motion to approve **Docket No. 08-0202-1501. Motion carried by voice vote.**

Vice Chairman VanOrden turned the gavel over to **Chairman DeMordaunt.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Representative DeMordaunt
Chair

Jenifer Cavaness-Williams
Secretary