

MINUTES  
**HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, February 04, 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:** Robin Nettinga, Idaho Education Association; Richard Westerberg, Matt Freeman, State Board of Education; Jess Hansen, Idaho School Boards Association; Steve Rayboral, Amy Lorenz, PTO; Helen Price, Phil Homer, Rob Winslow, Idaho Association of School Administrators; Harold Ott, Idaho Rural School Administrators; Clark Corbin, Educational News; Kelly Edgintar, Idaho Virtual Academy

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

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

**RS 24165:** **Rep. Kerby** spoke in support of **RS 241765**. He explained the number of days school districts contract with professional personnel is negotiated in the Spring. Certain positions, such as counselors and psychologists, are required to work a few more days than the contracted days. In the past, the standard contract had a separate section for extra contract days, and the extra days were not considered a property right, so school districts could have some flexibility with distributing extra days among personnel. Now, the number of contracted days, including any extra days, are in one line of the contract. This presents a budgeting issue for school districts, who are asking for the ability to put extra days on separate, supplemental contracts.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Kerby** explained the funding for the regular school year days comes from the Career Ladder Fund, and the funding for extra contract days comes from a different source. Typically, the standard and supplemental contracts are given at the same time.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Mendive** made a motion to introduce **RS 24165**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Matt Freeman**, executive director of the State Board of Education, gave a presentation on Board updates and initiatives. He said the classified salaries for state employees are sixteen percent below the private market salaries, and salaries for state higher education association salaries are 40-56% of median salaries, which present recruitment and retention challenges. He added he appreciates the governor's recommendation of a three percent increase in salaries.

The number of 25-34-year-old Idahoans with a post-secondary certificate or degree has been decreasing the last few years, from 42% to 40%, which is the opposite trend the state wants to see, with its goal of 60%. College retention rates have also gone down the last few years, said **Mr. Freeman**. Studies show students do not go on to post-secondary education if they do not enroll immediately after high school. The number of high school students who go on to post-secondary education varies by location in the state.

**Mr. Freeman** said the strategies to increase the Go On Rate include the following:

- Direct admissions to college - Acceptance letters were sent to high school graduates with the required grades and test scores for college entrance
- College Appreciation Week Activities
- Next Steps Website - Help for students and parents
- Lowest tuition increases in 15 years
- Increased financial aid opportunities
- Statewide dual credit - has grown almost 300% from 2008-2015
- Increased funding for the Idaho Opportunity Scholarship - the governor recommended almost double
- Increase need-based grants (Idaho near the bottom of the chart with approximately \$2 per eligible students)

**Mr. Freeman** said the governor recommended approximately \$5 million for the adult degree completion scholarship. Any help the legislature can give to increase financial aid will pay dividends to students and the state, he added. Currently, Idaho gives approximately \$60 per student in financial aid. The national average is \$210. He encouraged the committee to support enough annual appropriations to colleges to make up for a tuition lock.

**Mr. Freeman** said the governor recommended \$5 million to be used for efforts to turn the Eastern Idaho Technical School into a community college. Feasibility and economic studies are being done. Data proves post-secondary education provides a high return on investment, he added. People with post-secondary educations weather economic downturns better and will earn enough by age thirty-three to compensate for the years out of employment and the college costs.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Freeman** says he believes the governor's office will decide criteria for the adult completion scholarship. The criteria for the Opportunity Scholarship is a combination of grades and being the first applicants. The State Board of Education has been working with colleges to refine how to credit prior experience and make sure this option is not under used. Mr. Freeman said the Board would be willing to give a report on the progress of the prior learning initiative next year.

**Richard Westerberg**, State Board of Education, gave a presentation on the governor's task force for improving education. He said **H 110** in 2015 provided seed money for investigating mastery-based education and starting incubator projects. A change from average daily attendance to average daily enrollment for funding is recommended. The Idaho Core Standards were adopted in 2010. The task force found students should demonstrate literacy proficiency before moving on to courses with significant content. The governor added \$5 million to expand post-secondary access while in high school.

**Mr. Westerberg** said the ESSA gives states more flexibility in the accountability system, and the task force looked at restructuring the accountability structure. The task force recommends removing laws which impede flexibility, and moving the decision-making process to local districts. The annual strategic planning, assessment and improvement piece requires districts to have a strategic plan. It also recommends restoring the Operational Fund to 2009 levels. A phased implementation of the Career Ladder Compensation Model, which combines competitive salaries with rewards and responsibility, is recommended.

**Mr. Westerberg** said the task force recommended expanding the high-speed bandwidth and wireless infrastructure, and adopting a statewide system for educator collaboration. The technology grant was discontinued, and the funds are available for districts to use where they need them most, to ensure educators and students have adequate access.

**Mr. Westerberg** added some progress has been made, but more work is needed, and the 2016 Legislature is considering forming an interim committee to address tiered licenses, mentor programs, ongoing professional learning, site-based collaboration, school administrator training, enhanced pre-service, and improved state teacher preparation programs. Also, the question of how to implement pupil service into the career ladder information will be addressed.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Westerberg** said most decision making is made at the local district level, including the career ladder element. The task force is working on getting the earlier recommendations implemented and is not yet addressing early childhood education. **Vice Chair VanOrden** commented that much of the task force's recommendations are inter-connected. **Rep. Horman** and **Sen. Winder** are cochairs of a committee to work on the recommendations.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.

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Representative VanOrden  
Chair

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Jenifer Cavaness-Williams  
Secretary