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MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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DATE:	Wednesday, February 13, 2019
TIME:	3:00 P.M.
PLACE:	Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Den Hartog, Crabtree, Woodward, Lent, Buckner-Webb, and Ward-Engelking
ABSENT/ EXCUSED:	None
NOTE:	The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.
CONVENED:	**Chairman Mortimer** called the Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:05 p.m.
PRESENTATION:	**Alan Reed**, Chairman, Public Charter School Commission (PCSC), presented Moving the Needle for All Students. He explained how the Commission is working with the charter schools to fully educate students. He said charter schools are taking on a different look. He highlighted the work of the virtual charter schools and their accomplishments. **Mr. Reed** said charter schools have many unique educational methods benefiting all types of students. The school formats extend to virtual online academies, those that are STEM education focused as well as international baccalaureate programs. He stated there are more charter schools entering the state with a diversity of educational opportunities. He spoke about the demographic challenges of the charter schools and shared with the Committee the variety of school models which are addressing diversity.
PRESENTATION:	**Matt Strong**, Founder, Elevate Academy (Academy), presented Engaging the Larger Community and Targeting At-Risk Students. He reported why the Academy was founded and its educational history. He said they visited many of the area's industries to determine what students needed to know to become successful employees and with that knowledge, they created a hands-on academy. **Mr. Strong** explained the exploratory model for students in grades six through ten and the path selection course work beginning for students in the eleventh grade students.
	In response to Committee questions, **Mr. Strong** explained how the Academy incorporates cultural learning into the curriculum. He reported the difficulties they have incurred in hiring Career Technical Educators (CTE). He said students have complete their high school degree while they address the CTE required course work.
PRESENTATION:	**Amanda Cox**, Administrator, Future Public Charter School, presented Serving Low-Income Families with a STEM model. She explained the partnership they have developed with the Boys and Girls Club of Ada County. The goal of the school is to build engineers to become the problem solvers of the future. She reported the diverse demographics of the student population. **Ms. Cox** spoke about the importance of the facility and how the classrooms are furnished. She told the Committee of the school's projected growth.

PRESENTATION: **Terry Ryan**, Director, Bluum, presented the overview of the Federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grants which is funded under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); the grant award to Idaho was over $17 million. He outlined Idaho 2018 CSP Grant Objectives: 1.) Increase the number charter school seats in Idaho; 2.) Support the Public Charter School Commission's effort in expanding quality authorizing; and 3.) Evaluate and disseminate the successes and lessons of high-quality charter schools to impact the broader education system. He spoke about the variety of grants available for charter school expansion and detailed the logistics of those grants (Attachment 1).

In response to Committee questions, **Mr. Ryan** explained his role as the Director of Bluum and its responsibility to Idaho. He detailed the study performed by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) and its importance of establishing a measurable performance baseline for Idaho's charter schools. He said they are hoping to redo the study in approximately three years.

PRESENTATION: **Tamara Baysinge**r, Director, Idaho Public Charter School Commission (PCSC), presented Capacity Building for Charter Schools. She explained the current and projected increased rate of charter school openings. She stated the PCSC staff is building processes and programs to ensure the leaders of the new charter schools are well equipped to lead and explained the partnerships they have with the State Department of Education (SDE) and the State Board of Education (SBE) to advance this goal. **Ms. Baysinger** said they have received a federal grant to support those efforts. She detailed the partnership PCSC has with Bluum to disperse the grant dollars.

Ms. Baysinger detailed the areas of training charter school leaders are receiving from the PCSC, such as, governance, academic data, and financial management. She said currently, that training is limited, but it is an area the PCSC would like to expand.

Addressing questions from the Committee, **Ms. Baysinger** said all charter schools have a performance certificate. The standards for the certificates indicate academic and financial strengths. Each charter school's rating is listed on the PCSC website. She stated some charter schools are growing, but those that are not are usually staying small because that was the intent of the charter school.

Alan Reed concluded the PCSC presentation emphasizing that those who lead schools and teach children are passionate about education. He said there have been difficulties regarding the concern that charter schools were to be an incubator and were to transfer information to public schools. He said that goal is slowly moving forward (Attachment 2).

Chairman Mortimer thanked the presenters for sharing the new and exciting opportunities for charter schools and the PCSC .

RECORDING LINK: To hear the complete Charter School presentations, go to: https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2019/standingcommittees/SEDU/.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

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Senator Dean M. Mortimer   LeAnn Mohr
Chair   Secretary