

MINUTES  
**HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Thursday, February 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:** Bert Glandin, College of Western Idaho; Rick Aman, Eastern Idaho Technical College; Andrew Grover, Melba School District; Connie Banke, Vallivue School District; Matt Masdor, Jeff Church, State Department of Education; Phil Homer, Rob Winslow, Idaho Association of School Administrators; Harold Ott, Idaho Rural School Administrators; Trent Clark, Monsanto; Jim Stoor, Idaho School Boards Association; Clark Corbin, Idaho Educational News, Jess Harrison; Jayson Ronk, Micron; Kent Kunz, Idaho State University; Marilyn Whitney, Governor's Office; Mark Browning, North Idaho College

**Chairman DeMordaunt** called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Mendive** made a motion to approve the minutes from February 12, 2016.  
**Motion carried by voice vote.**

**H 458:** **Senator Thayn** spoke to **H 458**. He said the bill concerns Advanced Opportunities. Four programs to increase post-secondary education access were established over eight years at different times, but they all fit together, he said. The state pays for dual credit classes, advanced placement classes, CLEP tests, and professional-technical classes. Students in Idaho can receive sixteen college credits for \$90. This bill clarifies eligible overload credits as high school credits only, extends the definition of "full course load" to include the maximum number of credits offered during the regular school day, and clarifies the definition of "school year" as beginning upon the conclusion of the Spring semester. The bill makes it easier for students and school counselors to understand how state funding can be used to pay for college credit, he added.

There is a cost savings to the state and student if a student earns an associate's degree while in high school, rather than earning it in college, said **Senator Thayn**. Also, discipline problems decline as students are engaged in their education. Spending \$6 million on Advanced Opportunities is equal to spending \$12 million at college, added Senator Thayn.

In response to questions from the committee, **Senator Thayn** said the bill should simplify processes and paperwork. Advanced Opportunities is a separate line item on the budget from the Opportunity Scholarship, he said, and this is not a replacement for the Opportunity Scholarship. Any student can take advantage of the state funding for college credit. The state spends \$6,300 a year per student. The College Level Placement Tests are tests which have been given to college students completing the course, explained Senator Thayn.

**Bert Glandon**, President of the College of Western Idaho, spoke **in support of H 458**. He said it will be a cost savings to the state of Idaho and will help Idaho meet the 60% goal by 2020. Being able to complete some college credits while in high school is an incentive to students, he added.

**Andrew Grover**, Superintendent of the Melba School District, spoke **in support of H 458**. He said 260 Melba students earned 202 college credits when the school district implemented Advanced Opportunities last year. In the Melba School District, 66% of students are at the poverty level, he added, which is a similar demographic to the state average. This last year was the first year some students graduated with post-secondary certificates, he said, and the rate of students going on to post-secondary education was increased from 52% to 62%. This was also the first year Melba High School had students graduate early in December. Each year, the Advanced Opportunity Process has improved, he said, and **H 458** makes the process easier at the local level. The state's goal of 60% will be achieved more easily with this bill, he added.

**Connie Banke**, Vallivue School District, spoke **in support of H 458**. She is a high school counselor with 500 students on her case load, she said, and one-fourth are seniors. She is responsible for educating students and parents about dual credit, advanced placement classes, and CLEP tests. Ms. Banke said parents love the cost savings, and these opportunities make going to college less discouraging to parents and students. Anything that can be done to simplify the process will be helpful, she added. One student called to say \$40,000 had been crossed off his tuition bill at A & M University, because of the credits he had earned in high school.

**Matt Masdor**, State Department of Education, spoke **in support of H 458**. He said a computer portal for students had been created, and the bill will help streamline the process. The computer portal will help smaller districts understand and access Advanced Opportunities.

**MOTION:**

**Rep. Harris** made a motion to send **H 458** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Kerby** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**H 477:**

**Rep. Kerby** spoke to **H 477**, which provides college scholarships to students who earn college credits while in high school. Students who earn 10 credits are eligible for up to \$1,000 a year for two years, providing they have another merit-based scholarship. Students who earn 20 credits are eligible for up to \$2,000 a year for two years, providing they have another merit-based scholarship. Students who earn an associate's degree while in high school are eligible for up to full tuition for two years, providing they have another merit-based scholarship. Students must graduate from an accredited Idaho high school or the equivalent, and the scholarship is for use at state-funded Idaho colleges. The scholarship will be part of the Advanced Opportunities line item on the budget, added **Rep. Kerby**. The goal, he said, is to encourage more students to attend post-secondary education after high school in Idaho. Students who attend high school and college in Idaho are more likely to stay in Idaho to work, he added. Currently, 70% of students who received associate's degrees while in high school left Idaho for colleges elsewhere, he explained.

The three goals of the bill, said **Rep. Kerby**, are to encourage students to attend post-secondary schools in Idaho, encourage students to enter a post-secondary field of study which leads to jobs which pay well, and to encourage students to take vigorous classes while in high school. He said he hopes this scholarship will encourage parents in school districts which don't offer dual credit opportunities to ask their school districts to add those classes. Credits taken while in high school are less expensive than credits taken in college, he added, and students can begin college with one or more years already finished.

In response to questions from the committee, **Rep. Kerby** said the scholarships could be used at publicly -funded institutions of higher education in Idaho. The dual credits earned in high school are accepted from private colleges as well as public ones. The matching merit-based scholarships will come from sources such as business and industry, said **Rep. Kerby**. School counselors probably know how many merit-based scholarships are available, he added.

**Trent Clark**, Monsanto, spoke **in support** of **H 477**. He said jobs at his company are more technical than they used to be. The company has worked with the University of Utah to develop a robotic arm to tap the furnace. This was done for safety reasons, because of the electric-arc furnace's high temperature. The tapper job, which did not require post-secondary education, will be replaced by three electric technicians to service the robotic arm. Businesses have a need for a highly-educated workforce, he added.

**Mr. Clark** said this scholarship will help pay for the costs of higher education. Monsanto offers merit-based scholarships to the children of its employees, he added, which is an example of a matching merit-based scholarship required for these scholarships. He said more scholarships are needed, because the costs of higher education are going up, and the Opportunity Scholarship and business scholarships may not be adequate.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Clark** said Monsanto didn't recruit from Brigham Young University in the past, but its need for employees with post-secondary education has caused them to recruit from colleges. Perhaps the scholarship should not be restricted to state-funded institutions of higher education, he added.

**President Glandon** said, if the wording was changed to allow the scholarship to be used at colleges other than state-funded ones, the wording should include that the institutions be accredited by the Northwest Accrediting Association of Colleges and Universities, because credits earned at unaccredited colleges are often not transferable. This bill could help encourage businesses and institutes of higher education to communicate with each other, he added. It provides incentive for the process of partnerships between education and business. Instead of allocating money to higher education, the state is providing incentive to students to continue with higher education.

**Jayson Ronk**, Micron, spoke **in support** of **H 477**. He said it is very important to Micron to have access to an educated workforce.

**Senator Thayn** spoke **in support** of **H 477**. He said it creates a connection between businesses and students, and this dialogue will help high school males, who have a low go-on rate, see the relationship between higher education and a quality job. He agreed that access should not be limited to only publicly-funded institutions.

In response to suggestions from the committee, **Rep. Kerby** agreed with changing the definition of eligible institutions to be Idaho institutions accredited by the Northwest Accrediting Association of Colleges and Universities, which would include accredited private colleges, as well as state-funded institutions.

**MOTION:**

**Rep. VanOrden** made a motion to send **H 477** to **General Orders** with a committee-suggested amendment attached.

**Chairman DeMordaunt** explained the committee would be sending the bill with amendment to General Orders, at which time other amendments could be made by anyone on the floor. The scholarship money is going to the student to use as he or she sees fit, he added, not to an institution.

**Rep. Clow** said he felt comfortable with the bill and amending language. He added that federal government PELL Grants can be used in private colleges, and the state of Idaho offers scholarships which can be used at private colleges.

**VOTE ON MOTION:**

**Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Kerby** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**H 459:**

**Marilyn Whitney**, Governor's Office, spoke to **H 459**. The bill creates an account for the start-up of a community college in Eastern Idaho, she said, and then voters in Eastern Idaho will have the opportunity to expand on it. The goal is to provide resources to turn Eastern Idaho Technical College into a community college, in the one area of the state which does not have a community college. **Governor Otter** made a pledge that he would support any community which wants to create a community college, said **Ms. Whitney**, and this bill deposits \$5 million for the purpose of creating a taxing district in Eastern Idaho. In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Whitney** said this is similar to what happened when the College of Western Idaho was created.

**MOTION:**

**Rep. Kloc** made a motion to send **H 459** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Whitney** said the \$5 million would be appropriated to the State Board of Education to appoint trustees for the first year and hire staff. The following year, the citizens of the new taxing district will vote on the trustees. If the voters do not vote for a community college, the money would stay in the higher education fund, unless the legislature voted to take it back.

**Bert Glandon**, C.W.I., explained Eastern Idaho Technical College just needs more academic programming added to become a community college.

**Rick Aman**, Eastern Idaho Technical College, said the community sees the money as an expression of Idaho's commitment to higher education, and it will improve the go-on rate. Businesses are requiring employees with higher education. The Idaho National Laboratory (INL) is contributing \$20,000 towards these efforts, and the region is ready to move to a community college. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Aman said the funds provided by INL are going to be used to commission an economic study on the addition of a community college. The INL thinks a community college is important, and it will bring a lot of economic benefit to the area. Community colleges allow four-year institutions to shift money away from remedial courses and focus on junior and senior classes and advanced degrees.

**Kent Kunz**, Idaho State University, spoke **in support** of **H 459** and asked the committee to send **H 459** to the floor with a do pass recommendation.

**Mark Browning**, North Idaho College, spoke **in support** of **H 459**.

**VOTE ON MOTION:**

**Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Horman** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

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Representative DeMordaunt  
Chair

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Jenifer Cavaness-Williams  
Secretary