

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, January 15, 2018

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, and Buckner-Webb

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Ward-Engelking

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 3:01 p.m. He opened with a reading from the book, *A Heap O'Living Along Life's Highway*, by Eager A. Guest, "Failures."

RS 25773 **A Concurrent Resolution; Honoring Lewis-Clark State College 125th Anniversary, Senator Dan Johnson**, District 6, explained this resolution recognizes the contributions of Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC), Lewiston, Idaho, in furthering higher education and its goal of connecting learning to life. He stated that LCSC will be celebrating the 125th anniversary later in the month. This resolution is to honor the school and all the positive work it has done for the State of Idaho. **Senator Johnson** asked the Committee to send **RS 25773** to print and send to the second reading.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Thayn** moved to send to **RS 25773** to print. **Senator Buckner-Webb** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

STAKEHOLDER OVERVIEW: **Marilyn Whitney**, Senior Special Assistant for Education and Government Services, Office of the Governor (Governor) said that education is the Governor's top priority with a proposal of \$100 million in new funding and remains the top budget priority. She explained what the Governor would like to do and those issues that are his top priority (Attachment 1).

Ms. Whitney explained the Governor's funding priorities in the following areas: Higher Education Task Force, mastery education, technology in the classroom, professional development, college and career advising, literacy initiative to include a larger student segment, STEM expansion, a new position on the State Board of Education to oversee all of Idaho's higher education, Opportunity Scholarship, degree audits and analytic systems, Workforce Development Task Force and Career Technical Education (CTE) counseling, expansion of CTE programs, and the medical residency programs. **Ms. Whitney** detailed the achievements, the future intentions, and the financial proposals of the priority programs.

Matt Freeman, Executive Director, Idaho State Board of Education (SBE), introduced members of the SBE staff in the audience. **Mr. Freeman** answered the question from the Education Committee: what SBE is doing differently now from last year to enhancing student achievement. These are as follows (Attachment 2):

1. Apply Idaho: a common online application process for all Idaho college admissions
2. College and Career Advisors Training: SBE funded a College and Career Program Manager position housed in the SBE.
3. FAFSA Portal: high school counselors can access the information that has been sent to SBE by the United States Department of Education to better understand which of their students are applying for financial aid.

Mr. Freeman explained to the Committee the items SBE would like to acquire to assist students. These are as follows:

1. Open educational resources (OER): this is an open source option online, free textbook portal.
2. Common course numbering: to provide greater transparency and seamlessness within the transfer processes. SBE has directed institutions to develop a common indexing convention for a core set of curricula.
3. Higher Education Task Force recommendations: SBE has those prioritized.

Sherri Ybarra, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Idaho State Department of Education (SDE), introduced the SDE staff present in the audience and thanked Idaho teachers for the hard work they do to ensure student academic achievement. She explained that the SDE's mission and focus is supporting schools and students achievement. The SDE has also worked to foster a "how can we help" culture.

Superintendent Ybarra updated the Committee on the programs that they are doing differently from the past year that will enhance student growth and achievement. These are as follows (Attachment 3):

1. Advanced Opportunities: students by earning college credits while still in high school save families money.
2. Mastery Based Education: personalized learning where students progress at their own pace
3. Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI): SDE is working on the replacement for this 20-year-old assessment. The new IRI gives up-to-date feedback to teachers allowing them to intervene on any reading problems encountered.
4. Smarty Ants: a reading program available in English or Spanish to build literacy skills for four-year-olds.
5. Red Tape Committee: addressing the burden of increased reporting paperwork at the local
6. Stat Team (Statewide Assistance Team): a SDE team that is helping districts get ready for the new Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) implementation.

Superintendent Ybarra stated two things she would like to see from the Legislature that would enhance student growth:

1. Address educator shortages: SDE initiated the "Be an Educator" campaign, which promotes the profession. The career ladder has also helped with teacher retention.
2. Rural schools support: 70 percent of Idaho districts are rural. Supporting those could be a fiscally responsible business approach to education

Superintendent Ybarra concluded her presentation by introducing the SDE staff members in the audience.

Dwight Johnson, State Administrator, Idaho Division of Career – Technical Education (CTE), introduced his staff members in the audience and explained to the committee the two new initiatives CTE has launched this last year to enhance growth and achievement. Those are as follows (Attachment 4):

1. New CTE cohort model to attract and retain teachers or to bring individuals from the private sector into the CTE teaching profession.
2. Program quality initiative for CTE secondary programs.

Administrator Johnson detailed the two programs CTE would like to employ in the future. These are as follows:

1. Middle school career exploration program: this program would begin in the seventh grade with career exploration and put students on a path to a career plan beginning in eighth grade.
2. Workforce readiness incentive program: specific criteria to award incentive funds to school districts and CTE programs based on the number of secondary career technical participants.

Administrator Johnson said the CTE staff looks forward to working with the Committee and the new career and technical opportunities.

Kari Overall, President, Idaho Education Association (IEA), explained the make-up of the IEA. She introduced the IEA members in the audience who serve on the government relations committee. She said the priority of the IEA is the recruitment and retention of quality educators.

Ms. Overall explained what the IEA is doing differently from last year and how those changes enhance student growth and achievement. These are as follows (Attachment 5):

1. Providing professional development opportunities.
2. Collaborating with Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA) in developing online courses through the IEA portal.
3. Partnering with the National Education Association Foundation peer mentoring program for teachers, especially in rural schools.

Ms. Overall outlined the two things the IEA would like to achieve and address. These are as follows:

1. Virtual mentoring for early career educators in rural areas.
2. School behavior, specifically bullying, in the school environment and electronic platforms.

Ms. Overall concluded by emphasizing the impact that a well-trained, highly-qualified teacher can have on student achievement.

Harold Ott, Idaho Association of School Administrator (IASA), addressed the Committee on behalf of Rob Winslow, Executive Director, who was unable to attend. He complimented Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC) for that institution's excellent teaching program.

Mr. Ott addressed the subject of student growth and achievement. He shared the following:

1. College and Career Advising and Advanced Opportunities: budget requirements indicate the success of these programs.
2. K – 3 Literacy: strong successes yet overall testing scores need to be improved.
3. Technology: more professional training in reading and mathematics.

Mr. Ott explained the areas the IASA would like to see improve. He shared his philosophy of "no shame, no blame, no excuses" as a precursor in addressing to the following points:

1. Reduction in reporting: administrators spend too much time on paperwork.
2. Recruitment and retention of effective teachers: perhaps a loan forgiveness program, especially for those teachers in rural and remote areas.

Mr. Ott emphasized the importance of a good teacher; they can have a meaningful impact on a student's success.

Karen Echeverria, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA), introduced the ISBA staff members in the audience. She emphasized that effective school boards have a positive impact on student achievement

She shared with the Committee what ISBA is doing differently to enhance student growth and achievement. These are as follows (Attachment 6):

1. Board training: statewide opportunities and workshops at the ISBA annual convention.
2. Provide data to help boards make informed decisions.

Ms. Echeverria said ISBA has only one request:

1. Remove line items and allow boards to make the decisions at the local level.

She concluded her presentation by thanking the Chairman for giving them the opportunity to share their requests.

Terry Ryan, Chief Executive Officer, Idaho Charter School Network (ICSN) and Bluum, explained that many of his comments have been heard from the other presenters.

Mr. Ryan outlined what they are doing differently from last year that enhances student growth and achievement. Those are as follows (Attachment 7):

1. Effective principals: investments in the leadership pipeline.
2. Collection of student data: awareness of student performance.

Mr. Ryan explained the two areas of educational operations ICSN would like to emphasize in order to enhance student growth. These are as follows:

1. Teachers: invest in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers.
2. Education Savings Account: allow parents to have a choice in their child's education delivery system.

Jane Wittmeyer, Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families (ICSF), introduced Murphy Olmstead, Lobbyist, ICSF, to present their report. **Mr. Olmstead** said he was here to testify on behalf of ICSF president, Tom LeClaire.

Mr. Olmstead responded to the question regarding what ICSF is doing differently this year to enhance student growth and achievement. These are the following (Attachment 8):

1. Request equal funding for charter schools and virtual schools.
2. Advocate for a student-centered system which meets state and federal accountability measures.

Mr. Olmstead answered the question regarding what ICSF would like to do to enhance student growth and achievement. Those are as follows:

1. Increase advocating for virtual schools: often they are the last options for some students.
2. Hold hearing opportunities statewide to understand educational issues.

Maria Johnson-Lorcher, Vice President of Advocacy, Parent Teacher Association (PTA), introduced State PTA board members in the audience.

Ms. Johnson-Lorcher addressed what the PTA is doing differently from prior years that enhances student growth and achievement. Those are as follows:

1. New chapters across the state are opening, which is increasing parental involvement.
2. Member of the SDE's Task Force on Assessment: giving parents information for better educational choices for their child or children.
3. Collaborating with IDLA and SDE to develop a parent portal for educational resources for student achievement.

Ms. Johnson-Lorcher explained what they would like to do in the future to enhance student growth and achievement. These are as follows:

1. Bilingual communication to enable parents to better understand educational issues.
2. Advocate for more school counseling at all grade levels.
3. Support Keep Idaho Safe Act: a do-not-call registry for children under the age of 18.
4. Support pre-K education.

Chairman Mortimer thanked all the presenters and expressed his gratitude for taking time to answer questions.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:16 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary