After recognizing Sherri Ybarra as a member of the State Board, I introduced my staff in the audience:

- Tracie Bent, Chief Policy & Planning Officer
- Mike Keckler, Chief Communications & Legislative Affairs Officer
- Tamara Baysinger, Director, Public Charter School Commission
- Randall Brumfield, Chief Academic Officer

Then I responded to the assigned questions.

1. What are you now doing differently from last year that enhances student growth & achievement?

Apply Idaho: A new online common college application for Idaho high school seniors to use apply to Idaho's public colleges and universities. In four easy steps, students populate about 10 fields of data. They select which college(s) they want to apply. Once they click submit, their transcript data are sent directly from the state's longitudinal data system to their institution(s) of choice.

College & Career Advisor Training: The new college & career advising position funded by the Legislature last year is providing training to counselors and college & career advisors in the public high schools.

FAFSA Portal: Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) data are obtained from the U.S. Dept. of Ed. High School counselors have been asking for data about whether student have started, completed and submitted their FAFSA. A new online FAFSA portal was developed, so counselors can access these data as well as which Direct Admissions letter a student received, and the students Apply Idaho status.

2.   Name 2 things that you would like to do, that you are not currently doing, that will enhance student growth and achievement?

Open Educational Resources (OER): Board staff are actively working to make OER available for postsecondary students. OER are open-source (often online) free textbooks. The cost of textbooks are often a barrier to access to college for low income students.

Common Course Numbering: In order to provide greater transparency and seamlessness within transfer processes the State Board of Education (Board) has directed institutions to develop a common indexing convention for a core set of curricula. Common course indexing includes common course number and common course title. Institutions are expected to update these courses with common course indexing for inclusion in their course catalog no later than the 2019-20 academic year. Regular updates will be provided by OSBE to the Board throughout the 2018 calendar year regarding progress on these items.

Higher Education Task Force recommendations