

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 25, 2018

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, 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.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT: **Re-Appointment by the State Board of Education of Dr. David Hill of Boise, Idaho to serve a term commencing July 1, 2017 and expiring July 1, 2022.** **Matt Freeman**, Executive Director, Office of the State Board of Education (SBE) introduced Dr. Hill and explained Dr. Hill's past participation with the SBE.

Dr. Hill said it is an honor to be asked to continue to serve on the SBE. He told about his work at Idaho National Laboratory (INL) and life experiences in science and technology. He explained he is retired from INL but prefers to stay busy and highlighted his volunteer work and other science education based entities.

Senator Nonini asked him to update the Committee about the STEM Action Center Board. **Dr. Hill** replied the STEM Action Center is growing and making a difference. He said many teachers and students have been impacted and the funding has been evenly distributed across the State. He acknowledged the work of the STEM Action Center staff.

Vice Chairman Thayn spoke about the changes in K-12 education. He asked what would be good changes to higher education. **Dr. Hill** explained his role on the SBE; he stated he has pushed "systemness" behavior for public institutions. He explained digital learning in education will force the State to modify the systems to be able to keep up with or be ahead of the trends. He said one of the recommendations from the Governor's Higher Education Task Force the creation of a digital university.

Senator Nonini asked in light of the changes in the State's university presidents, will the SBE have an opinion regarding the new institutional leadership. **Dr. Hill** replied the SBE considers each institution individually when deciding what qualities to seek in a university presidential candidate; each college is quite different. He said the SBE believes this is an opportunity to further systemness. One of the criteria is how effectively each candidate is able to look at the statewide system and work together.

Chairman Mortimer asked what the most difficult issue has been in the past and what the most difficult issue is for the future. **Dr. Hill** replied the hardest past issue is how to incorporate change. He stated change is difficult and education is slow to change. He said future issues face the same concern; the pace of change is so fast that education has a difficult time

PRESENTATION: **Boise State University (BSU), Dr. Bob Kustra**, President, said the questions provided to him were a perfect way address the endeavors at BSU. Those are as followed:

1. What are you doing to reduce the cost to students and provide greater accessibility to students. **Dr. Kustra** said they have a variety of scholarship programs available to students. He detailed the most current scholarship campaign and said BSU raised \$52 million through 18,000 donors. He highlighted the True Blue and Opportunity scholarships. He said there is a great need for more funds to help students move through school; to reduce costs for students, they need to move through the system faster. **Dr. Kustra** reported BSU has an 80 percent student retention rate from the first to second year. He stated flexibility in course offerings help students to move through school much faster. He detailed the many online courses and degrees available.
2. What are you doing to ensure dual credits and concurrent classes provided have the necessary rigor and credibility that college courses require. **Dr. Kustra** stated concurrent enrollment moves students through school faster. He stated BSU has served 6,000 students with a total 21,000 credits. He reported some of the problems of dual credits. BSU belongs to the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships which is an accrediting body to help ensure the rigor of the program. **Dr. Kustra** stated the dual credit students have higher grade point averages, higher retention rates, and higher graduation rates.
3. As workplace requirements continue to rise, more jobs will require individuals to possess advanced credentials and degrees and a broad mix of academic, technical and workplace skills employers prefer. How does your coursework and curriculum offered meet the workforce needs and demands to make students more employable? **Dr. Kustra** said in the past, academics didn't focus on technical and workplace skills. He outlined the program called Beyond the Major and explained the successes. He spoke about the importance of liberal arts and the programs that integrate students into the workforce. He detailed the collaborative efforts with area businesses to develop better employees.
4. What is being done from year-to-year to retain students? What incentives and resources do you have to ensure on time completion? **Dr. Kustra** said BSU has reformed math education and composition. He explained the classroom structure and detailed students' use of the software programs to improve their completion rates. He spoke about the Learning Assistant Program which helps students succeed in the STEM classes. **Dr. Kustra** explained the 15 to Finish program and stated it is vital if students are to complete college in four years. The Finish in Four Program is a contract between the University and the student. If the student is unable to complete college in four years due to an issue from the University, BSU will pay the extra tuition.

Dr. Kustra addressed the two things not done today that he would like to see done in the future for higher education. Those are as follows:

1. A more precise and accurate way of funding higher education. He explained the current funding program, the Enrollment Workload Adjustment, and the problems that have occurred due to funding issues. He said outcomes-based-budgeting would be the preferred way to budget for higher education.
2. Reworking the higher education structure. He said he would like to see the universities have governing boards like the State's community colleges.

Senator Den Hartog commented about the increased focus on sports in college. She stated the highest paid state employee in Idaho is the BSU football coach. She asked if the revenue recognized by athletics benefits the entire university. **Dr. Kustra** concurred and stated he is writing an article which addresses the issues of football coaches' salaries and buyout contracts. He explained the football stadium expansion repayment process to BSU. He said the football program provides a marketing source and has brought students to the campus.

Senator Nonini said he likes Dr. Kustra's honesty. He told Dr. Kustra he will be missed. He affirmed Dr. Kustra's comment concerning football's positive impact on other university programs. **Dr. Kustra** stated the large coaching salaries provide great public relations for universities. His concern is the amount of money that goes to the buyout contracts for poorly performing coaches.

Senator Winder thanked Dr. Kustra for his service. He said his time at the BSU has impacted the awareness of the University. He explained there are many local corporations that have contributed to BSU to help build it into the successful institution.

Senator Winder asked if the Math 25 program is a credit offering course. **Dr. Kustra** replied in the affirmative. **Senator Winder** asked in regard to the coaches salary, what percentage comes from donors. **Dr. Kustra** replied 75 percent comes from donors.

Senator Winder said the discontinuation of the wrestling program was a disappointment. He stated it was a great program. **Dr. Kustra** replied he appreciates his understanding and agreed it was a difficult decision. He noted all the wrestling scholarship students have been accommodated with transfers or completion of schooling. The goal was to make sure all were able to find a program in which they were able to compete.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if freedom of expression on campus is discouraged. He explained an incident regarding a BSU professor who wrote a controversial article; this led to the students calling for his termination. **Dr. Kustra** replied the professor in question is a conservative member of the faculty. He stated that his constitutional right to speak was adhered. His academic freedom and tenure were recognized. Never once was he threatened by the administration with termination. From this situation, BSU has a student led initiative to discuss the issue of civility and free speech.

**PASSED THE
GAVEL:**

Chairman Mortimer passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Thayn.

**DOCKET NO.
08-0501-1701**

Rules Governing Seed and Plant Certification. **Vice Chairman Thayn** explained to the Committee that **Docket No: 08-0501-1701** was sent to the Agricultural Affairs Committee to review the rule for content expertise. The Agricultural Affairs Committee heard the testimony and determined the proposed changes were acceptable.

MOTION:

Senator Ward-Engelking moved to accept **Docket No: 08-0501-1701**. **Senator Winder** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**DOCKET NO.
08-0203-1704**

Rules Governing Thoroughness – Idaho Special Education Manual – Deaf or Hard of Hearing. **Duncan Robb**, Chief Policy Advisor, Idaho State Department of Education (SDE), presented **Docket No. 08-0203-1704**. He said this is the Special Education Manual which also includes changes in the incorporated by reference manual. He said the Special Education Manual is a resource for teachers who are serving students with special needs. He said the proposed changes to the definitions regard deafness and hard of hearing students. These adjustments will allow students to receive the appropriate services to succeed in school. **Mr. Robb** acknowledged the writers of the Manual and thanked them for their work. He detailed for the committee the proposed changes and stated the updates are in alignment with the current practices.

MOTION:

Chairman Mortimer moved to accept **Docket No. 08-0203-1704**. **Senator Crabtree** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**DOCKET NO.
08-0203-1708**

Temporary and Proposed Rule – English Language Proficiency Assessment. **Mr. Robb** presented **Docket No. 08-0203-1708**. He said the proposed changes are included in an incorporated document. He said the rule incorporates Idaho English Language Proficiency Assessment Achievement Standards; these are the standards for English language learners. He deferred all questions and further commentary to Karalyn Laraway, Director of Assessment and Accountability, SDE. She explained the charts in the incorporated by reference document reveal the ranges for the cut/achievement scores in each particular grade level of the subtests and composite level scores for the English language proficiency test. She detailed the different levels.

Chairman Mortimer asked if the cut scores are new. **Ms. Laraway** said the assessment is new; this is the second year it has been administered. **Chairman Mortimer** asked if this changes the reporting. **Ms. Laraway** replied the old test no longer meets the new standards for English language learners.

MOTION:

Chairman Mortimer moved to accept **Docket No. 08-0203-1708**. **Senator Guthrie** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**DOCKET NO.
08-0203-1711**

Rules Governing Thoroughness – Assessment. **Mr. Robb** presented **Docket No. 08-0203-1711**. He said the proposed rule incorporates by reference the Alternate Assessment Achievement Standards. This document works with the content standards that apply to the one percent of severely cognitive disabled students. He explained the universal strikethrough and universal new text exist because there are new standards which will need new assessment standards to be in alignment with the content.

Chairman Mortimer asked what is the impact if the proposed assessment rule is approved and the proposed content standards are not. **Mr. Robb** replied the new assessments would be aligned with the old standards and would not be relevant.

Chairman Mortimer asked if these proposed rules could be used for both the standards and the assessment. **Ms. Laraway** replied standards, by definition, provide a guide of what students know and are expected to do. The core content connectors take the very basic premise of the grade level standards for students K-12 and break it down to a learning progression framework for students. She explained because of the severe nature of a student's disability, not all students enter learning at the same level or will reach the same level. Standards provide a roadmap for teachers to follow. **Ms. Laraway** said the assessment is a reflection of those standards at the basic premise of what is expected at a particular grade level. The skill scores of those assessments reflect where the student may be and their learning progression at a particular grade level. The new standards and the new assessments work together for the benefit of student learning.

Chairman Mortimer expressed his concerns regarding the length of the new standards; he asked for more clarification. **Ms. Laraway** explained the new core content standards are in a different format to show special education teachers, parents, and the students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, how their learning aligns with the same expectations for all students.

MOTION:

Chairman Mortimer moved to hold **Docket No. 08-0203-1711** at the call of the Chair. **Senator Nonini** seconded the motion.

Chairman Mortimer stated the proposed assessment docket is tied to the connectors docket. He believes this should be addressed after the connectors docket is decided. These proposed changes are dependent on the passage of the standard docket.

The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**PASSED THE
GAVEL:**

Vice Chairman Thayn passed the gavel to Chairman Mortimer.

ADJOURNED:

There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary