

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 21, 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 3:05 p.m.

PRESENTATION: National Conference of State Legislatures. Dr. Matt Weyer, Senior Policy Specialist, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), presented to the Committee information regarding parental involvement in education and how it relates to K-3 literacy. He addressed the importance of parental and family involvement in early childhood education illustrating how family engagement promotes school readiness leading to future academic success (Attachment 1).

Dr. Weyer discussed strategies leading to deeper family engagement and cited pending and/or enacted legislation relating to those strategies. Strategies include: community school models, two-generation strategies, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State plans, and school-based strategies. He highlighted the strategies used for English language learners.

Dr. Weyer presented research on K-3 literacy, which showed students who are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to not finish high school. Some states have legislation requiring retention for students not reading at proficiency. He emphasized retention costs districts approximately \$10,700 per student with research indicating a student retained in K-5 is 60 percent less likely to finish high school. He noted research appears to show no correlation between proficiency levels in states having a retention bill and those without.

Dr. Weyer concluded the presentation with a brief overview of the State Policy and Research for Early Education (SPREE) working group. Founded in 2016, its focus is to help state legislators better understand the most important factors for improving early education outcomes.

Chairman Mortimer asked how schools were building relationships with parents to engage them at a deeper level. **Dr. Weyer** replied they are using capacity building structures which include creating professional development targeted to engaging families through liaisons.

Senator Nonini asked if he was familiar with a federal program called Parents as Teachers. **Dr. Weyer** replied he was aware of the program. He said he does not have much knowledge on the subject.

Joellen Kralik, Policy Specialist, NCSL, presented an overview of the apprenticeship policy with state legislative examples. She clarified that apprenticeships today are found in a variety of blue and white-collar fields and registered apprenticeships are specific in that they require registration and a sponsor. She gave an update on legislation based on apprenticeship. Legislation in 2017 revolved around three categories: 1.) changes in government structure to bring state law in compliance with federal law, 2.) tax credits given to employers for apprentices, and 3.) incentives for apprenticeships involving state funded and lottery scholarships.

At the federal level, an executive order increased funding for apprenticeships. Further, the Perkins Act was reauthorized and HR 2353, which attempts to simplify and align collaborative federal and state efforts, was passed. Among the states, innovative programs emerged: Careerwise Colorado, Apprenticeship Carolina, and P-Tech Grant programs. Notable in Idaho for 2017, the ESSA State plan includes apprenticeship in the accountability measurement and two executive actions created the Governor's Higher Education Task Force and the Workforce Development Task Force.

Senator Guthrie inquired of Arkansas' 2017 S 505 bill. He wondered what process Arkansas took to get an income tax credit program in place relative to their state budget and if any tangible measurements had been made. **Ms. Kralik** stated she would get the information for him.

Senator Winder asked if any cooperative efforts had been made with trade unions. **Ms. Kralik** replied she could get the information for him.

S 1279

Relating to the Idaho Opportunity Scholarship; Amend, Provide, and Make Technical Corrections so Certain Funds May Be Used for Scholarship Awards to Adult Students Meeting Certain Criteria. **Marilyn Whitney**, Deputy Chief of Staff, Senior Special Assistant for Government Services and Education, Office of the Governor, presented **S 1279** and stated Idaho needs a multi-faceted approach to reach the 60 percent goal. She detailed the post-secondary completion rates and stated the bill seeks to amend the opportunity scholarship to provide the Idaho State Board of Education (SBE) flexibility to use a portion of the funds for adult learners. She detailed the barriers facing adult learners who do not return to college by highlighting the importance of providing them financial assistance. She cited a Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce study entitled, "America's Divided Recovery."

DISCUSSION:

Senator Den Hartog asked how many students applied for the Opportunity Scholarship and did not receive it due to a lack of funds. **Ms. Whitney** replied it is a timing issue. The waiting list of eligible students is approximately 2,500-2,700 students.

Senator Guthrie inquired as to the total fund balance. **Ms. Whitney** replied the legislation would allow SBE to use up to 20 percent of whatever is appropriated for the Opportunity Scholarship to target adult returners. There are ongoing funds of \$10 million; the Governor recommended adding an additional \$5 million. **Senator Guthrie** asked, with the waiting list and potentially \$3 million going to the adults, how priority will be established. **Ms. Whitney** responded the intent was to establish a working group to determine the issues.

Senator Nonini asked if the scholarship is to be used for specific degrees. **Ms. Whitney** answered it was open for discussion.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if finances were the main barrier, how much of a barrier were other issues. **Ms. Whitney** replied there are a lot of barriers and they are working on how to address them. **Vice Chairman Thayn** asked how successful the efforts have been without the money. **Ms. Whitney** responded many states are implementing these programs for returning adults. It offers them the ability to attend part-time.

Matt Freeman, Executive Director, SBE, outlined the basis for the 60 percent goal. He stated it was based on an updated study conducted by Georgetown University in 2012. The study showed by 2020, 68 percent of jobs will require some form of post-secondary education. This was reaffirmed by a study conducted by Idaho Business for Education in 2013. Referencing the *Complete College Idaho Report*, **Mr. Freeman** said, Idaho needs adult learners to earn 20 to 40 percent of certificates or degrees to attain the 60 percent goal. He remarked, nationally, the demographics of college students have changed, 44 percent of college students are age 24 and older, and 46 percent attend part-time. There is a misperception that those who have left college were not in good standing. The reasons they leave are as varied as the students themselves.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Nonini** asked if the scholarships are to be used for specific degrees. **Mr. Freeman** replied the scholarship is for a certificate or a degree, rulemaking will decide if it will cap out at an associates degree.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked who would receive priority and if it were open to certificates. **Mr. Freeman** said it is open to certificates. Currently, it is prioritized on a need and merit basis: 70 percent need and 30 percent merit, with a minimum 3.0 GPA. Rulemaking will decide priority. **Vice Chairman Thayn** commented priority was important, if awards for the adult learners were based the same as the current system, he would be less likely to support the bill. **Mr. Freeman** reiterated before rulemaking there would be discussions regarding direction.

Senator Guthrie questioned the reasoning behind starting a new program when the current one lacked funding. **Mr. Freeman** stated it is important to include this population in order to close the skills gap.

Senator Buckner-Webb commented she is encouraged by the legislation, as the need for opportunity does not lessen as one gets older. **Mr. Freeman** responded the SBE strongly supports the legislation.

TESTIMONY: The following individuals spoke in favor of **S 1279**:

Dwight Johnson, State Administrator, Idaho Career and Technical Education (CTE) (Attachment 2)

Vice Chairman Thayn inquired as to the type and length of short-term CTE programs. **Mr. Johnson** said there is broad range of occupations and the time required to complete certification ranges from a few months to two years.

Kent Kuntz, Director of Government Relations, Idaho State University (Attachment 3)

Mark Browning, Vice President, Communications and Government Relations, College of Western Idaho (Attachment 4)

Julie Custer, Co-President, American Association of University Women of Idaho (AAUW-Idaho) (Attachment 5)

Rod Gramer, President and Chief Executive Officer, Idaho Business for Education (Attachment 6)

Mark Wheeler, Dean of Extended Studies, Boise State University (BSU), (Attachment 7)

Laura Rumpler, Chief of Communications and Government Relations Officer, North Idaho College, submitted written testimony (Attachment 8)

The Committee asked questions regarding the barriers adults learners encounter while trying to return to school, corporate funding for scholarships, and the number of student who are over 30. All inquiries were answered to the satisfaction of the Committee.

Chairman Mortimer commented the Committee would hear the balance of the testimony on **S 1279** and hold the vote until the next meeting.

Ms. Whitney commented on making the best use of scarce resources. She stated there is a need for more scholarship resources and flexibility in order to address this key demographic. The Governor is making data-driven decisions. Considering foregone earnings and foregone tax revenue, this investment in the individual, is an investment in the State.

Chairman Mortimer said public testimony on **S 1279** is complete and the vote will be taken at the next meeting. He said **S 1211** will be heard another day.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:42 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary

Diane James
Assistant Secretary