

**House Education Committee Recommendation**  
**To**  
**Joint Finance and Appropriation Committee**  
**Governor's Recommended American Rescue Plan Act Budget Plan**

The House of Representatives Education Committee has reviewed the Governor's Six ARPA Budget Recommendations and is providing this guidance.

**1. Empowering Parents Grants:**

The \$50 million ARPA budget recommendation for Empowering Parents Grant is similar to the 2021 Strong Families, Strong Students Grant plan. The House Education Committee would like there to be legislative input on the policy surrounding this budget recommendation. It will require a FY 2022 Supplemental of \$25 million, and a FY 2023 of \$25 million. While we have not held a hearing on Senate Bill 1255, we recommend that JFAC only utilize these ARPA funds in direct response to germane policy legislation, similar to S1255.

**2. University of Idaho Remote Worker Training:**

The \$1.27 million grant proposal of \$490,000 per year for three years is modeled after a Utah State University program. A detailed proposal from the University of Idaho for this Adult Computer Literacy Program to support training for an estimated 400 Participants to includes:

- a. Adult Basic Computer Literacy Skills Training
- b. Remote Home On-Line Worker Skills Training'
  - i. The fee for the participant is \$149, of which these funds would cover \$100, bringing the cost down to \$49.
- c. Small Business On-Line Bilingual Entrepreneurial Education targeting rural participants.

The House Education Committee has reviewed the proposal and recommends the JFAC appropriations are specific to the outlined proposal.

**3. Teacher \$1,000 Bonuses:**

The Governor's plan and State of the State address outlined this program as a \$1,000 bonus to teachers. A careful review of the plan indicates that the total budget of \$17,760,600 will not adequately cover the stated goal. The employer share of benefits was not included, which would result in less than a \$1,000 bonus. The many federally funded employees that local schools fund with various ongoing federal funds were not included. The House Education Committee has noted this discrepancy and suggest that JFAC review the priorities of all ARPA funds and appropriate sufficient ARPA funds to fulfil the stated \$1,000 promise. The Committee recommends classified and pupil service staff be considered in this ARPA \$1,000 bonus proposal.

**4. Head Start:**

Head Start ARPA proposal is a three-year appropriation of \$1 million per year for a total of \$3 million. The House Education Committee expressed a concern that using federal dollars to expand existing programs would not be sustainable beyond the three years. The start-up costs and staffing requirements would likely come to an end, creating reductions in staffing and disruptions to participating families. House Education Committee recommends that careful appropriation intent language assure that there is an appropriate exit plan at the end of three years. The State Director of Head Start has suggested that these new funds only be used to expand Head Start to students who have attained age 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and would be expected to enter kindergarten at age 5.

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**5. Career Ladder Acceleration:**

The House Education Committee supports the ARPA appropriation of \$36,473,700 to accelerate support for the Career Ladder Acceleration plan to the FY 2024 phase. Idaho Code 33-1004B includes the changes made in 2020 to add a third rung to the career ladder. To address the fiscal impact of the career ladder revisions in 2020, five annual phases of the career ladder were included from Fiscal Year 2021 - 2025. Without these ARPA funds, JFAC would only be addressing the impact of the fiscal Year 2023 Phase. The proposed use of ARPA funds would provide sufficient funding to appropriate as if we were in Fiscal Year 2024, but statutorily we remain in FY 2023. The Committee recognizes the advance funding the Career Ladder to FY 2024 will create some confusion and recommends germane policy legislation should be created. As proposed the plan will advance funding to the next phase, but not advance the phased schedule for Fiscal 2024. We have discussed that educators on the Career Ladder will appreciate the movement, but realize it was more of a one-time shift than an acceleration past the 2024 rungs. We would respectfully request that JFAC consider also funding (plan for) the acceleration with ARPA funds in FY 2024 to the FY2025 phase. This will require a prioritization of ARPA funds, comparable to the \$37 million planned for FY 2024. We are prepared to offer such policy legislation if ARPA can be re-prioritized. We would welcome working with JFAC members and LSO staff to avoid any unexpected budget considerations. While ARPA funds can be utilized for many deferred projects, the Career Ladder is already in statute as a priority. In simple terms we recommend there be a full acceleration of the final three phases to achieve the final phase of the career ladder in FY2024.

**6. Workforce Training for In-Demand Professions:**

The Workforce Development Council has been identified as the recipient of \$50 million over four years in support of our Idaho Workforce. One concern that we have discussed is how prepared the program is for the first two years that shows nearly all of the funds committed. We recognize the value of the work but would question the need for \$25 million in the first year. We would suggest that we not rush into the program without all the pieces in place. There are existing Workforce programs throughout Idaho that may be able to gear up immediately with a longer-term plan for 2024 and 2025. JFAC should consider a smaller 2023 appropriation that could expand existing programs at the various higher education workforce programs, allowing for a solid plan for fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

**Final Comment:**

JFAC should consider the overall existing policy for all of the ARPA funds, not simply education; and establish a prioritization based upon statutory requirements, past appropriation limitations, and growth over the next five years.