

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 21, 2022

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW02

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Thayn, Vice Chairman Lent, Senators Den Hartog, Crabtree, Woodward, Blair (Johnson), Cook, Ward-Engelking, and Nelson

**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.

CONVENED: **Chairman Thayn** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:01 p.m.

PRESENTATION: **Jason Knopp**, Idaho School Board Association (ISBA) President provided a presentation on **School Board Members as Public Servants**. **Mr. Knopp** briefly went over a few of the challenges that ISBA has faced over the last two years, including staffing issues and COVID. He explained that the school board members are in support of full day kindergarten which has seen gains in literacy scores. **Mr. Knopp** stated that during the executive board meeting, ISBA decided to not continue the relationship and membership with the National School Boards Association (NSBA). **Mr. Knopp** explained that the classified personnel is the most difficult to retain due to the competitiveness between the public and private sector.

Senator Woodward asked for further clarification regarding the decision to not continue the membership with NSBA. **Mr. Knopp** explained that although other states had left NSBA, Idaho decided to continue the relationship. However, during the Pacific region meeting recommendations were made, and those suggestions were not followed by NSBA. Therefore, the relationship was terminated.

Senator Crabtree stated that on the finance committee, the salaries of classified employees is something that they are trying to deal with. Due to inflation, the decision to level or raise the salary is being grappled with.

Senator Blair pointed out that competing wages in a rural area has an affect on people coming into the school system as classified staff.

Chairman Lent encouraged the ISBA group to continue on with professional development and building capacity for your boards. He stated that there is money set aside for the districts for training and contributing to the board and taking on a challenge to learn more about it is very important. (See Attachment 1)

DISCUSSION: A member of the Board of Trustees asked a question regarding competitive salaries for the teachers in small school districts that are worried about funding. **Senator Crabtree** replied that changes were made on two rungs of the career ladder, and bonuses were distributed which should alleviate some of the salary supplement.

A member from southeast Idaho asked if the new building lots in a small district in southeast Idaho who are experiencing growth, but have not passed a levy. **Senator Den Hartog** stated that this would require a constitutional amendment to determine the impact on residents to break out the cost for potential school construction.

A member from the Caldwell School District asked a question regarding bond limitation. **Senator Ward-Engelking** replied that Idaho has a high threshold for passing a bond with a two-thirds vote and one suggestion is to put money into a bond matching grant program. **Senator Lent** commented if a bill was to be run, that discretion should be used, and communicate to the community.

Nancy Gregory, ISBA President-Elect, asked for support with all-day kindergarten.

DISCUSSION: **Chairman Thayn** stated that the governor's office will have a bill that will change K-3 literacy money distribution based on poverty levels, and perhaps proficiency scores. He explained that there are contributions to learning outcomes in early education, first is parental contribution, and second is teacher contribution. **Senator Ward-Engelking** commented that she is in support of the option to send children to full-day kindergarten.

Senator Crabtree stated that at least two-thirds of the people in Idaho want all-day kindergarten.

PRESENTATION: **Ms. Melanie Coleman** provided a presentation on **All Day Kindergarten**. Ms. Coleman went over some of the pros and cons of all-day kindergarten. (See Attachment 2)

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT VOTE: **Senator Crabtree** moved to appoint Cynthia Siddoway of Terreton, Idaho to the Idaho State Board of Education. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Thayn** adjourned the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Senator Thayn
Chair

Katy Morden
Secretary