

MINUTES
JOINT FINANCE-APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 23, 2014
TIME: 8:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room C310
MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Cameron, Vice Chairman Keough, Senators Mortimer, Vick, Nuxoll, Johnson, Bayer, Thayn, Schmidt, Lacey
Chairman Bell, Vice Chairman Bolz, Representatives Eskridge, Thompson, Gibbs, Miller, Stevenson, Youngblood, Ringo, King
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: None
STAFF PRESENT: Headlee
CONVENED: Chairman Cameron convened the meeting at 8:00 a.m.

AGENCY PRESENTATION

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction**

To view the presentation, please click here [State Department of Education](#)

For the FY 2015 **Mr. Luna** requested \$33.8 million which is a 5.18% decrease from the current fiscal year, primarily due to the reduction request for one-time spending authority related to the Albertson Foundation grant. The budget request does include a one-time request to replace non-general fund computer items and a one percent CEC; he would prefer it be based on merit. He emphasized the following details regarding the budget request. 1) The FTP count of 142 is equal to the same number as last year; however, for this year five are one-time positions related to the Albertson Foundation grant and two are ongoing requests for a Financial Specialist and a Project Manager. Next year the five one-time positions will no longer be needed and there will be a request for two ongoing positions to manage the State's instructional management system going forward. 2) The Department is facing a challenge in FY 2015 regarding the fingerprinting and criminal history check program and associated fees. Currently \$40 is collected to process a fingerprint card when teachers first become licensed in Idaho or change school districts. In 2011, the Idaho State Police increased the fee. For the past two years the Department has used a free-fund balance to pay for the increase. A bill has been introduced this session to allow the Department to adjust the cost of the criminal history checks any time ISP increases fingerprinting fees. 3) Progress continues with the statewide longitudinal data system known as ISEE. The transition to the ISEE system has been challenging. Over time, districts have established strategies, business processes and provided data entry training to staff which has resulted in fewer errors and warnings and has also reduced the amount of time spent collecting data elements each month. The process will continue to be challenging but is improving and heading in the right direction,

due in part, to training the state has provided and assistance from the ISEE Regional Technical Coordinators. Another success is the addition of the new Five File Format Upload where districts have the option to upload data in five of the files as often as needed—every night if they so choose. The data automatically populates the State’s instructional management system, known as Schoolnet, and is readily available for districts to use. By the end of 2013, 36 of 42 districts piloting Schoolnet were successfully using the Five File uploads. 4) **Mr. Luna** also discussed the amount of funding available for statewide testing. From the Department budget about \$5.7 million a year is spent on the statewide standardized test which has been the ISAT with 30% of the funding from state General Funds and 70% from federal funding. In transitioning to the Smarter Balanced assessment to replace the ISAT, Mr. Luna does not anticipate requesting additional funds to administer the statewide test this year. The full cost of testing is determined by the grades tested and the assessment tools provided to teachers in the classroom. He indicated the cost of the test could increase by \$500,000 in the future.

PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPPORT

Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction

To view the presentation, please click the following link [Public Schools](#)

The investments being made and the policies in place have improved Idaho’s public schools. The Five Star Rating System is evidence that public schools are doing better—each year there are more five-star and fewer one-star schools. Another program that continues to excel is the Idaho Math Initiative; the majority of school districts across the state use Think Through Math which is a web-based mathematics program teachers can use in classrooms or to supplement instruction outside the school day. Teachers are benefitting from the Mathematical Thinking for Instruction (MTI) course where teachers learn strategies to better teach problem-solving and critical thinking skills; over 12,500 Idaho teachers and administrators have taken the course

Mr. Luna said his FY 2015 budget request was submitted in October in order for him to incorporate the 20 recommendations from the Task Force for Improving Education. (The estimated cost to implement the recommendations of the Task Force is between \$350 to \$400 million over a five- to six-year period; he would like to begin implementation this year.) The October budget requested an additional \$69.8 million or a 5.4% increase in General Funds from the previous year. He commented briefly on the following two areas of the budget: 1) the student population growth estimate has been budgeted at \$6.8 million; more accurate information will be available in February, and 2) \$6 million has been proposed for the second year of a three-year restoration of maintenance match funding to help districts maintain their existing school facilities. He focused on the following five areas of his FY 2015 budget proposal: professional development, technology, STEM education, school safety and security, and technical advisory committees.

The budget proposes \$12.2 million in ongoing funding for professional development. He has proposed it as a separate line item because he feels it should not be a one-time effort when additional funds are available but rather funding should be a long-term, ongoing investment in students to ensure their teachers are receiving tools/resources needed to stay current in the classroom. In addition to the \$3.75 million specifically for professional development this fiscal year, the Legislature gave schools and districts flexibility to use up to \$8.4 million of the funding through differential pay toward professional development. The focus of funding has been on transitioning to higher academic standards (emphasizing critical-thinking and problem solving skills) which include providing regional coaches in English and language arts and mathematics who could provide immediate professional development to teachers and school districts. High academic standards are the foundation of a high-quality education system. **Mr. Luna** is also requesting \$250,000 to provide master calendar training to assist school administrators in creating time for job-embedded professional development and collaboration among teachers that best fits their needs at the local level; this is a Task Force recommendation.

The FY 2015 budget includes \$13.4 million for technology: \$8 million distributed directly to local school districts and public charter schools for classroom technology, \$2.25 million to create and maintain wireless technology in all public high schools, \$3 million for technology pilot projects, and \$150,000 to set up an online portal for parents and students. Phase I of the Idaho Education Network (IEN), a secure, broadband intranet system, connected every public high school to each other and to Idaho colleges and universities. Mr. Luna strongly supports Phase II of IEN to expand broadband access to middle and elementary schools, a budget request through the Department of Administration. Eleven schools representing different grade levels, demographics and different regions of the state were selected from 81 applications to pilot innovative technologies with the goal of improving student academic growth and financial efficiencies throughout the entire school.

Another focus area is STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education where \$500,000 was requested to continue the Idaho Science and Aerospace Scholars Program (ISAS). It is a competitive program designed specifically for high school juniors who take a course that focuses on space exploration which requires learning a broad range of STEM skills aligned with statewide standards. Students are then selected to participate in a weeklong, all-expenses-paid academy at Boise State University and the NASA Ames Research Center in California. Over 800 students have been involved in this program in the past five years.

The fourth area of focus is school safety and security. A stakeholder group met in 2013 and developed a valid, reliable, multi-hazard assessment tool and implemented it in 74 schools. It became apparent that schools need technical assistance and resources after areas needing improvement are identified. The budget request is for \$2.2 million to go directly to schools and districts with an additional \$500,000 to be used at the state level to provide hands-on assistance to local school districts.

The budget proposes \$300,000 for technical advisory committees that will work to implement Task Force recommendations, such as Tiered Licensure which is a work group already set up to determine expectations and authentic measures for Tiered Licensure. Other recommended advisory committees that need additional work from experts in their respective fields before being fully implemented are: 1) mastery-based education system, 2) literacy proficiency, 3) accountability and governance, 4) statewide electronic collaboration system, and 5) tiered licensure and career ladder compensation model.

Mr. Luna recommended three revisions to his initial budget proposal for FY 2015. 1) Initially budgeted \$16.5 million for discretionary funds in line with the Task Force recommendation, but some school districts requested it be restored at a faster rate. He fully supports the Governor's recommendation to restore \$35 million in FY 2015. 2) Revision to line item request for the Career Ladder, add an additional \$16 million for Leadership Awards this year and a 1% increase in salary-based apportionment for teachers. 3) \$3 million in Advanced Opportunities. The revised budget recommendation for FY 2015 has increased by \$66.9 million for a total Public School Support budget of \$1.368 billion to the General Fund, an increase of 5.1%.

ADJOURNED: Chairman Cameron adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

Senator Cameron
Chair

Peggy Moyer
Secretary