

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Thursday, February 11, 2016
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Nonini, Patrick, Den Hartog, Buckner-Webb and Ward-Engelking
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senators Souza and Anthon
- 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 3:00 p.m.
- PRESENTATION:** **Ron Pisaneschi**, General Manager, Idaho Public Television (IPTV), introduced staff members and board members in attendance. He explained IPTV is a State education agency that serves all ages and detailed the programming structure. This year IPTV celebrated 50 years of broadcasting in Idaho. The program "Outdoor Idaho" won another Emmy in 2015. He explained that IPTV is the most-watched PBS station per capita in the nation, with children's programming being most important. There are concerns with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) compacting channels, which could result in the loss of channels in Idaho. He played videos highlighting a variety of the programs on IPTV. In conclusion, **Mr. Pisaneschi** reviewed the funding processes and the issues IPTV is encountering concerning the lack of federal grants and state funding (see attachment 1).
- PRESENTATION:** **Sherri Ybarra**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education (SDE) introduced Dr. Cheryl Finley, Director of Assessment, SDE, and outlined her biography.
- Dr. Finley** explained the work of the Division of Assessment and Accountability outlining the federal requirements and Idaho requirements. She explained that assessments are a three-pronged program: 1.) interim assessments, 2.) Digital Resource Library, which includes the formative assessments and 3.) Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) summative assessment. She reported to the Committee the districts' performance results and reactions to the process. The SDE will consider all the factors when administrating next year's test.
- Dr. Finley** said the American Institutes for Research (AIR) scored the testing. They were slow in returning the testing results due to AIR's technical issues and shortage of staff. She detailed the issues the SDE encountered. She showed what an individual student report looks like and detailed the information a teacher or administrator might learn about a student's achievement.
- Dr. Finley** spoke about the training the SDE is doing for districts. She reported that districts are feeling better about testing and there seems to be less anxiety for the administration of the exams. She gave an update on the other assessments the SDE uses to meet Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reporting: 1.) ISAT – Alternative Education, 2.) ISAT Science, 3.) English Language Assessment, 4.) End of Course Exams (ECE) – Biology and Chemistry, 5.) Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), 6.) National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and 7.) international assessments (see attachment 2).

Vice Chairman Thayn asked how many students in the State passed the ECE. **Dr. Finley** stated she didn't have the numbers but would report them to the Committee.

Senator Den Hartog asked if Idaho is required to participate in the international assessment. **Dr. Finley** replied the tests are required in order to receive Title I funding. **Senator Den Hartog** asked if the contract with AIR had provisions or penalties for violating the reporting date. **Dr. Finley** replied in the negative. She explained she started with SDE in October and didn't participate in that process. She stated she will follow-up.

Senator Den Hartog asked if the AIR contract has been revised to allow for breach of contracts. **Superintendent Ybarra** replied that SDE's Deputy Attorney General reported the breach was not substantive enough to warrant seeking damages.

Chairman Mortimer did believe there was harm done. Due to the tardiness in AIR's reporting, SDE was not able to perform teacher evaluations in time. He said for future contracts, there must be some stipulations for adherence to deadlines. **Superintendent Ybarra** replied as a State we must look at the evaluation policies and timelines.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if there are enough days allotted for testing. **Superintendent Ybarra** said the flexibility at the elementary level is well received. **Dr. Finley** said every school has the flexibility to design their testing schedule.

Chairman Mortimer asked which test will be administered to the high school students. **Superintendent Ybarra** said that the ESSA reauthorization has allowed for flexibility. For 2015-16, they must take the current requirements. The State Board of Education (SBE) is currently evaluating options.

RS 24489

Blake Youde, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer, State Board of Education (SBE), presented **RS 24489**, Relating to General Powers of the Board of Trustees of Community Colleges Districts, a technical correction. This amends existing law to require community colleges to follow the same requirement as school districts when acquiring and disposing of real property.

MOTION:

Senator Den Hartog moved to send **RS 24489** to print. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

RS 24096C2

Senator Sheryl Nuxoll presented **RS 24096C2**, Relating to Public School Instruction. She explained this legislation is meant to relieve any fear or anxiety for students, teachers and parents, who desire to use the Bible for reference purposes in public schools by codifying a practice already allowed. She reiterated this legislation simply codifies what is already occurring. She stated that under this rule the intent is that other religious works imbedded in the scope and sequence of learning shall also be permissively discussed. She said there are 10 other states that have similar and somewhat stronger Bible legislation.

Senator Nonini moved to send **RS 24096C2** to print. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion.

Senator Ward-Engelking asked if the Bible is currently allowed to be used in schools. **Senator Nuxoll** replied in the affirmative. **Senator Ward-Engelking** asked could this legislation, if passed, cause the need for more religions' writings to be listed in code. **Senator Nuxoll** stated that is could be a possibility. The Bible is singled out because it is embedded in the U.S. culture through law. She said there are teachers who are fearful to teach using works from the Bible.

The motion passed by **voice vote**, with **Senator Ward-Engelking** requesting to be recorded as voting nay.

- RS 24501** **Vice Chairman Thayn** presented **RS 24501**, Concurrent Resolution stating findings of the Legislature. This addresses the rules that the Committee rejected. He explained that **RS 24501** is to reject **Docket No. 08-0203-1503**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Patrick** moved to send **RS 24501** to print. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**. Senator Thayn will carry **RS 24501** on the floor.
- RS 24503** **Vice Chairman Thayn** presented **RS 24503**, Concurrent Resolution stating findings of the Legislature. This addresses the rules that the Committee rejected. He explained that **RS 24503** is to reject **Docket No. 08-0203-1506**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Nonini** moved to send **RS 24503** to print. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**. Senator Thayn will carry **RS 24503** on the floor.
- RS 24504** **Vice Chairman Thayn** presented **RS 24504**, Concurrent Resolution stating findings of the Legislature. This addresses the rules that the Committee rejected. He explained that **RS 24504** is to reject **Docket No. 08-0203-1511**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **RS 24504** to print. **Senator Nonini** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**. Senator Thayn will carry **RS 24504** on the floor.
- MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Patrick** moved to approve the Minutes of January 20, 2016. **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to approve the Minutes of January 25, 2016. **Senator Nonini** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- Vice Chairman Thayn** announced that Chairman Mortimer received an award from the Idaho Education Technology Association for all of his work and efforts on broadband.
- ADJOURNED:** There being no more business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary