

Senate Education Committee, January 16, 2017

Helen Price, Idaho Association of School Administrators

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Helen Price, and I am the Legislative Assistant for the Idaho Association of School Administrators. Joining me today is executive director, Rob Winslow, and director of Idaho Rural Schools, Harold Ott. Rob, Harold and I represent the interests of public school superintendents, principals and special education directors across the state.

We enjoy strong working relationships with the Idaho School Boards Association and the Idaho Education Association. We speak as one voice when we can, and we maintain a collegial rapport when we cannot. We are honored to count both State Board and State Department staff among our trusted resources

Each fall our Legislative Committee convenes to identify the IASA's legislative priorities for the upcoming session, and those priorities are adopted by the IASA's Board of Directors. I am here to share those with you today, in no particular order.

We thank this committee for its work last year to restore operational funding back to pre-recession levels. The IASA supports legislation that results in the continued increase of operational funding to address current costs. Concerns include health care premiums, transportation and maintenance of technology infrastructure.

We continue to support implementation of career ladder funding to improve recruitment and retention of effective and dedicated teachers and pupil personnel. We understand that with increased funding comes increased accountability. Our members welcome any clarification and communication that will help them to meet your expectations regarding the evaluation process.

We support legislation that addresses obstructions to school-based Medicaid reimbursement. Public schools are required to provide services for Medicaid-eligible students, and the greater the federal reimbursement, the less that is paid out of state funding to address those costs.

At a meeting of the Public School Funding Formula Interim Committee last year, State Department staff estimated that school districts spend around \$1.60 for every dollar allocated to classified personnel, which includes a diversity of positions from clerical to custodial to information technology. We support legislation to enhance the funding for classified personnel, and we recognize that the Interim Committee may address this issue.

Additionally, we understand that the Interim Committee is aware of the need to minimize the impact of funding decisions that create big winners and losers. We support a thorough, equitable and uniform system of school funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our priorities. With that, I stand for questions.