

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 24, 2019

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Clow, Vice Chairman Kerby, Representatives Shepherd, Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Goesling, Marshall, Raymond, Wisniewski, McCrostie, Abernathy, Berch

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Maria Lorcher, Idaho PTA; Robin Zikmund, Decoding Dyslexia; Tracie Bent, SBOE
Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

MOTION: **Rep. Goesling** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2019 and January 22, 2019 meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Rep. Berch introduced visiting students from Ustick Elementary School and Lewis and Clark Middle School.

Maria Lorcher, Vice President of Advocacy, Idaho PTA, shared the organization's priorities and accomplishments for the year. The top priority is the overall well-being of children and students in Idaho, with a focus on student mental health. She expressed concern for schools needing to choose between paying for counselors or arts programs due to tight budgets and encouraged the legislature to increase discretionary school funding. The final priority she addressed was Idaho PTA's desire to give parents educational options by changing state policy to allow districts to use state funds to support pre-kindergarten and full-day Kindergarten programs. Ms. Lorcher announced three schools in Idaho have been recognized as National PTA Schools of Excellence. She also discussed organizational support for juvenile justice reforms that have been passed at the federal level.

In response to Committee questions, **Ms. Lorcher** stated Idaho PTA supports funding preschool and full-day Kindergarten through districts, but does not think children should be required to attend. Having a program available through their local school, in addition to paid daycare and church programs, would give parents more choices, she said. Some districts offer full-day Kindergarten, but at a cost to parents; state funding would eliminate this barrier. Parents would be able to choose the option that is right for their family, including caring for their child exclusively at home. She also clarified Idaho PTA supports pre-kindergarten for three and four year-olds, provided it is age-appropriate and play-based. She noted parental PTA dues are \$7.50; 70% of the funds stay in Idaho, while 30% go to the national PTA.

Dr. Chuck Staben, President, University of Idaho (U of I), gave an update on the state's land-grant university. He noted U of I's four and six year graduation rates are the best in the state, but the university does not have as many students coming as they would like. U of I is addressing affordability by encouraging enrollment, keeping tuition increases to a minimum, offering \$25 million in institutional financial aid and rolling out a need-based aid campaign. They have instituted "Durable Admissions" which allows accepted students to defer enrollment for up to four years, instead of one. President Staben observed that despite the state's heavy investment in Advanced Opportunities, most students entering U of I with dual credits still take four years to earn a degree and called for serious evaluation of the program.

President Staben expressed support for outcomes-based funding (OBF), but stated all the college/university presidents want to graduate students; changing the funding mechanism to motivate outcomes will not change U of I's goals. He did note current funding focuses on graduating Idaho residents, which aligns with the university's mission, while OBF treats all learners equally.

President Staben mentioned the Idaho WWAMI Medical Education Program, which has doubled in size and highlighted U of I's role as the state leader in STEM and doctoral degree production.

In response to Committee questions, **President Staben** discussed the university's Latino Advisory Council and efforts to increase the go-on rate among Latinos, which is 15% below the general population's. He also discussed upcoming efforts to reach out to former students who are eligible for the Adult Learner Scholarship.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:08 am.

Representative Clow
Chair

Erica McGinnis
Secretary