

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

- DATE:** Monday, January 27, 2020
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Den Hartog, Crabtree, Woodward, Lent, Buckner-Webb, and Ward-Engelking
- 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 Mortimer** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:01 p.m. He opened with a reading from *A Heap O' Living Along Life's Highway* by Edgar A. Guest, the poem "Noisy Place."
- PRESENTATION:** **Matt Freeman**, Executive Director for the Idaho State Board of Education (Board), announced that Idaho was only the second state in 21 years to receive the Education of the States Frank Newman Award. This award recognizes states for enacting innovative reforms or implementing programs that go beyond marginal or incremental changes to improve student outcomes on a large scale.
- Mr. Freeman** discussed the Board's priorities (see Attachment 1). He explained the outcomes of the dual credit program, Opportunity Scholarship, career technical education work group, and statewide teacher retention.
- Tracie Bent**, Chief Planning and Policy Officer for the Board, responded to questions from the Committee regarding retention of teachers. **Ms. Bent** stated that 700 teachers in 2017-18 did not return to the classroom, pointing out that this is not unusual. When asked about exit interviews for teachers leaving the profession, **Ms. Bent** replied the two main reasons for leaving were salary and lack of support at the building and classroom level.
- Mr. Freeman** concluded his presentation stating that a full report of teacher retention was yet to come.
- PRESENTATION:** **Sherri Ybarra**, Superintendent, Idaho State Department of Education (Department), introduced Aaron McKinnon and Karla Phillips-Krivickas.
- Aaron McKinnon**, Coordinator of Mastery Based Education for the Department, gave an update on the Idaho Mastery Education Network (IMEN) beginning with a definition of mastery based education (MBE). He defined MBE as a system whereby student progress is based on demonstration of mastery of competencies and content, not seat time or the age or grade level of the student (see Attachment 2). He outlined IMEN's main responsibilities and future goals. **Mr. McKinnon** provided a timeline showing the history of the program, and he provided a breakdown of IMEN's budget utilization.
- S 1234** **Mike Keckler**, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer for the Board, explained that **S 1234** reduces the number of names of finalists for Idaho university presidents required to be made public from five to three. He explained the bill would encourage future applicants by protecting their privacy and would reduce the costs to universities.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Woodward** asked why the bill applied only to university presidents, rather than to all state employees. **Mr. Keckler** responded that this was because the Board had jurisdiction in the selection of university presidents. He continued that the Idaho Press Club had agreed not to oppose the change in number of publicized finalists' names as long as the change only applied to university presidents.

**MOTION:** **Vice Chairman Thayne** moved to send **S 1234** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Lent** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senators Den Hartog** and **Woodward** requested they be recorded as voting nay.

**S 1235** **Mike Keckler**, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer for the Board, explained that, in the spirit of Governor Little's Red Tape Reduction Act, **S 1235** eliminates Idaho Code §§ 33-3720 and 33-3721, which established the Professional Studies Loan program in 1983. **Mr. Keckler** noted that this program has never been funded nor enacted.

**MOTION:** **Senator Den Hartog** moved to send **S 1235** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Winder** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**S 1236** **Mr. Keckler**, Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer for the Board, advised the Committee that **S 1236** would make it easier and less expensive for school districts to hire educational interpreters. It deletes the "kindergarten-grade 12" wording and replaces it with "school-aged," as some students needing interpreters are school-age even though they do not fall in the kindergarten-grade 12 range. This change will allow school districts to hire educational interpreters rather than licensed interpreters. **Mr. Keckler** requested **Tracie Bent** explain the difference between the two types of interpreters. **Tracie Bent**, Chief Planning and Policy Officer for the Board, explained that the licensing requirements under the Bureau of Occupational Licensing are dependent on the specific type of interpreter, and that the training for those are extensive, providing them with a higher salary. She pointed out that it is difficult for many rural schools to provide licensed interpreters so they employ unlicensed educational interpreters.

**TESTIMONY:** **Joelyne Ball**, State Interpreter Education Coordinator, stated she provides support for educational interpreters throughout Idaho, and for the school districts that employ them. **Ms. Ball** spoke in support of **S 1236** which cleans up some of the language in the statute, and offers continuity within a school setting. She indicated that hiring educational interpreters could have a positive fiscal impact on local education agencies.

**MOTION:** **Senator Lent** moved to send **S 1236** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

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Senator Dean M. Mortimer  
Chair

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Morgan Howard  
Secretary

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Carol Cornwall  
Assistant Secretary