

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 25, 2021

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Clow, Vice Chairman Kerby, Representatives Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Marshall, Wisniewski, Galloway, Shepherd, Yamamoto, McCrostie, Berch, Toone

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Sherri Ybarra, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Marilyn Whitney, State Board of Education (SBOE). Tom Luna, Waterford UpStart; Rich Stombres, Waterford UpStart; Representative Wendy Horman, District 30; Mike Munger, Office of School Safety and Security Manager; Don Drum, Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI); Mike Keckler, Executive Director, SBOE; Tracie Bent, Chief Planning & Policy Officer, SBOE; Karen Echeverria, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA); Tim McMurtrey, Deputy Superintendent of Operations, SDE

Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Tom Luna, Waterford UpStart, presented the kindergarten readiness program, UpStart. The evidence-based strategies of the non-profit program have helped students reach literacy by third grade. UpStart offers an in-home program which is parent-driven, provides computers, and has been beneficial for Idaho students who participated; 93 percent arrived ready for kindergarten at the intermediate or advanced levels.

Rick Stombries, Waterford UpStart, discussed the high rate, over 90 percent, of rural participants in Idaho. Participants in multiple states have been assessed to exceed literacy, math and science averages. Child outcomes, regardless of socioeconomic class, have exceeded state averages and have better prepared students for school success. Waterford UpStart's assessment of core skills include phonics, phonological awareness, comprehension and vocabulary. Longitudinal data demonstrates students do not lose their early advantage as they continue through elementary school.

H 172: **Rep. DeMordaunt** presented legislation to allow school boards to develop policies to provide school credit for challenging courses and lessons that develop student proficiency. Policies and skill assessment are to be determined by the school board. In response to committee questions, Rep. DeMordaunt stated school boards will develop policies in conjunction with the SBOE.

MOTION: **Rep. Mendive** made a motion to send **H 172** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. DeMordaunt** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 173: **Rep. Horman** presented legislation to transfer the oversight of the Office of School Safety and Security from the Division of Building Safety to the SBOE.

Mike Munger, Program Manager of the School Safety and Security, testified in support of **H 173**.

MOTION: **Rep. DeMordaunt** made a motion to send **H 173** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Horman** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 203: **Rep. Mendive** presented legislation to allow retired school bus drivers receiving Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI) benefits to continue to work to alleviate the school bus driver shortage.

MOTION: **Rep. Moon** made a motion to send **H 203** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Mendive** will sponsor the bill on the floor. **Rep. Toone** declared Rule 80 stating a possible conflict of interest due to her currently drawing PERSI benefits. **Rep. Shepherd** declared Rule 80 stating a possible conflict of interest as he is currently a licensed school bus driver. **Don Drum**, Executive Director of PERSI, testified **in support** of **H 203**.

H 175: **Superintendent Ybarra** presented legislation to require school districts to explore providing in-person instruction to students if local safety precautions can be achieved.

In answer to Committee questions, **Marilyn Whitney** clarified the goal of the legislation is to provide in-person instruction when local educational authorities determine it is safe to do so. Deputy Whitney stated all students learn more effectively through in-person instruction, particularly students with learning challenges. She stated the precise wording of the additional language in the bill was created based on meetings with legislators, legislative staff, feedback from stakeholders, and constituents.

MOTION: **Rep. Marshall** made a motion to send **H 175** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Rep. DeMordaunt** made a substitute motion to send **H 175** to General Orders.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Roll call vote was requested. **Substitute motion failed by a vote of 7 AYE and 8 NAY.** Voting **in favor** of the motion: **Reps. Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Wisniewski, Galloway, and Shepherd.** Voting **in opposition** of the motion: **Vice Chairman Kerby, Reps. Ehardt, Marshall, Yamamoto, McCrostie, Toone, Berch and Chairman Clow.**

ROLL CALL VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: Roll call vote was requested. **Motion carried by a vote of 10 AYE and 5 NAY.** Voting **in favor** of the motion: **Vice Chairman Kerby, Reps. Mendive, DeMordaunt, Ehardt, Marshall, Galloway, Yamamoto, McCrostie, Toone and Chairman Clow.** Voting **in opposition** to the motion: **Reps. Boyle, Moon, Wisniewski, Shepherd and Berch.** Rep. Marshall will sponsor the bill on the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST: **Chairman Clow** made a unanimous consent request to extend adjournment beyond 10:50 a.m. There being no objection, the request was granted.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Representative Clow
Chair

Christine Reynolds
Secretary