

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 14, 2022

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

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

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of the session the sign-in sheet will be filed in the Legislative Library.

Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Bill Foxcroft, Executive Director, Idaho Head Start Association, shared an overview of the Head Start program. He explained the association is federally funded and follows the whole family model to ensure the whole family succeeds.

In response to Committee questions, **Mr. Foxcroft** explained the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money will be used to expand Head Start programs. He reported how the ARPA funds would be used to include four year old students within Head Start programs for as long as the funding lasts. He discussed how children two years and older are requested to be masked because Head Start is a federally funded program. When asked about staffing issues due to the vaccine mandate, Mr. Foxcroft shared how a few staff have left, but there is also an option to get tested once a week.

In response to Committee questions, **Mr. Foxcroft** explained how there is currently no state database to track Head Start students through their educational journey. There is a fall and spring assessment for kids in the Head Start program. He emphasized that 90% of the students are at grade level when they exit the program. He confirmed that there are teacher shortages, and detailed how the program lost 10% of their staff this past year. Mr. Foxcroft explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic there was extra money coming in for teacher bonuses. He emphasized that additional ARPA funding could increase teacher's salary.

The Committee discussed the Education Germane Committee Report on the JFAC ARPA Budget Recommendation for the Empowering Parents Grant. They discussed how **S 1255** would give the committee an opportunity to address funding.

In response to Committee questions, it was explained there is money which can be distributed this year. There was concern if there is time to implement this in Fiscal Year 2022.

The Committee approved the Empowering Parents Grant proposal for the JFAC ARPA Budget recommendation.

Rep. Marshall discussed the University of Idaho's Remote Worker Training program. There was discussion by the Committee on the importance of more money being put towards children's learning to read and not adult remote worker training.

The Committee approved the University of Idaho Remote Worker Training proposal for the JFAC ARPA Budget recommendation.

Rep. McCrostie discussed Teacher Bonuses and shared how people are working to enable the teachers to receive the full \$1,000 bonus and not lose some of the money to taxes. There was discussion on adding more money to cover the classified employees. He shared how they would encourage JFAC to look more closely at classified educator bonuses. There was support to ensure teachers receive the full \$1,000 bonus and possibly expanding it to all pupil service people, including classified employees.

The Committee approved the inclusion of pupil service staff and classified employees being added to the teacher \$1,000 bonuses in the JFAC ARPA Budget recommendation.

Chairman Clow went over recommendations on career ladder acceleration. This bonus moves teachers down but not over on the career ladder. There was discussion on making this a true acceleration. Committee members discussed how the legislature could help teachers by accelerating the funds one more year. Some committee members preferred it was labeled a bonus and not a career ladder acceleration because it misrepresents what it does for teachers salaries. There was discussion on using statute to move teachers up a rung on the career ladder. There was clarification that this is an allocation of funds which then goes to the school districts, and school districts can allocate it as they will.

The Committee approved the career ladder acceleration proposal for the JFAC ARPA Budget recommendation.

Rep. McCann discussed using money for Head Start to grant programs with space available to enable more four year old students to enroll.

The Committee approved funding Head Start to expand in the programs available spaces for the JFAC ARPA Budget recommendation.

Rep. DeMordaunt and **Rep. Galloway** discussed Workforce Training. Rep. Galloway explained several programs this fund would support and reminded the committee it would be used as a single use fund. The funding would help the workforce be trained for in-demand professions. They discussed how they would support funding this through the general fund to ensure the programs continued past the use of ARPA funding. There was discussion on purchasing a simulator to invest in students and not require further appropriation. There was discussion on expanding this to three years instead of two years.

Matthew Reiber, from the Governor's Office, clarified the money must be committed by 2026 and be spent by 2027-2028.

Wendy Secrist, Executive Director, Idaho Workforce Development Council, discussed the Workforce Training grants. In response to Committee questions, Ms. Secrist shared how they are creating a platform to expand the programs and spend the grant money.

The Committee approved the Workforce Training funding proposal for the JFAC ARPA Budget recommendation.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:48 am.

Representative Clow
Chair

Elbia Christensen
Secretary