

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 01, 2016

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Lincoln Auditorium WW02

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Nonini, Patrick, Souza, Den Hartog, Anthon, Buckner-Webb and Ward-Engelking
Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman VanOrden, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Boyle, Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Mendive, McDonald, Dixon, Kerby, Pence, Kloc and Rubel

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 Joint Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:00 p.m. Voice roll call attendance was taken by each secretary.
Chairman Mortimer read the weekly poem. This week was "Failure," by Edgar A. Guest, from *Heap o' Living*.

SCR 134 **Brad Little**, Lieutenant Governor, State of Idaho, presented to the Committees **SCR 134**. He thanked the Chairmen for allowing him to present this important resolution. He stated the purpose of this resolution is to elevate public awareness and approval of the Governor's goal that 60 percent of 25 to 34 year-old citizens have a postsecondary certificate or degree by 2020.
Lieutenant Governor Little stated his personal view is that education is a holistic approach starting in the home. He gave an overview of the educational funding priorities from the Governor's recommendation. He outlined each of the priorities of the resolution. He emphasized the importance of career counseling and the rapid changes in technology. He characterized the resolution as audacious and explained it is paramount to Idaho to significantly increase the trajectory of the economy going forward.
Representative Kerby stated that the Governor's goal is lofty. Based on the current numbers, that amounts to 5 percentage points increase per year. He asked what needs to be done to attain that goal. **Lieutenant Governor Little** stated professional-technical education is the way to attain the goal. This goal was established by the Stated Board of Education in 2010. He detailed the many different opportunities that are available to Idaho citizens to achieve the goal.

TESTIMONY: **Rob Gramer**, President and CEO, Idaho Business Education (IBE), stated the business community believes Governor Otter's goal for education is essential for Idaho. He outlined the research indicating that eventually all the jobs in Idaho will require a post-secondary credential. He stated to attract and keep businesses in Idaho it is necessary to have skilled workers, which in turn will provide better paying jobs and improve the economy. By not achieving this goal there will be serious ramifications for the state. He asked the Legislature to support this resolution.

Representative Kloc asked how are business and education communities working together to achieve the Governor's goal. **Mr. Gramer** said this Legislature has done great work to pass policies and make the investments that set schools up for success. Stakeholders have been working together toward this end. IBE feels strongly that the 60 percent goal must be attained.

Representative McDonald asked how career counselors in the schools would achieve the 60 percent goal. **Mr. Gramer** said education is a continuum and starts in kindergarten. He explained issues of students not having the prerequisite skills and the problems encountered along their educational path. He explained that IBE will soon release a report showing that there is a low percentage of high school graduates who are ready for college or a career based on their SAT scores. He said the Governor's Task Force for Improving Education (Task Force) laid out a visionary plan to tackle these issues. He emphasized this is neither an easy nor a fast process, but it must be done.

Representative McDonald stated that when Governor Andrus introduced kindergarten into Idaho schools, the objective was to remedy education problems. He asked why that has not worked. **Mr. Gramer** explained there are many reasons, one being that the world has changed since 1974. He said kindergarten was a good start, but it is still voluntary and only a half day in Idaho. Educators report the earlier there is intervention, the better the students' educational successes. IBE believes that investing in early childhood education is a good investment for the State of Idaho. He reported there are a large number of kindergarten students in Idaho who do not read at grade level; if not helped, these children will not be able to read at grade level as they move through school. He strongly recommended that funds be invested to get children to read at grade level.

Representative Clow stated the 60 percent goal is important and we must work to get there; it will be a challenge. He reported that businesses have been hiring students who are still in school and have not yet earned certificates or degrees. He asked if there are employers in Idaho that are working to provide the certificates to count those numbers as a success. **Mr. Gramer** replied there are employers in Idaho that are trying to get their employees certificates. He stated the Governor's initiative of the College Completion Scholarship is an innovative way to encourage people who need just a bit more education to complete a degree, which will help to develop the needed workforce. **Mr. Gramer** stated that the IBE is in full support of that legislation.

Senator Den Hartog said the policy and partnership of IBE is appreciated. She asked if there are indicators that businesses are helping employees with their continued education. **Mr. Gramer** replied employers in Idaho are currently helping their employees finish their degrees. He said that he and Senator Thayne are discussing a way to create a system where employers can contribute to their employees' education more systematically. The approach could be a significant addition to the other scholarship proposals from the Governor's office.

Senator Souza asked how school choice will affect the 60 percent goal. **Mr. Gramer** replied parents have many choices of where to send their children: public, private or charter schools. Each entity plays an important role in attaining the goal.

TESTIMONY: **Matt Freeman**, Executive Director, State Board of Education (SBE), spoke in support of **SCR 134**. He stated the SBE adopted the 60 percent goal in August of 2010. He explained there were projections made by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (Center) to support the goal based on workforce needs. He reminded the committees that this goal does not refer to the graduation rate but is the actual education status of the state's populace. He shared that the Center has updated the workforce needs for 2020 to 68 percent. While it seems difficult to attain 60 percent by 2020, workforce needs are still there and are a growing demand. He stated the SBE has adopted a Complete College Idaho plan as a strategy to achieve the 60 percent goal, which is in line with Idaho's institutions of higher education strategies. He shared the initiatives the SBE is implementing to achieve the goal.

Vice Chairman Thayn stated there is support for the goal but he is not sure how this can be achieved in four years. He asked how this is being tracked and how the projected fiscal impact is to be reported. **Mr. Freeman** replied the SBE has been measuring the populace which shows there is less than one percent growth. Based on those measures, that is why the SBE put in place their educational initiatives. **Mr. Freeman** said the fiscal impact on the institutions is determined by how many students will be in the institutions to attain their degree or certificate.

Representative Kerby wondered if the SBE could come up with a formula that could determine the cost per person to achieve the many different aspects of the 60 percent goal. **Mr. Freeman** replied that the request is duly noted.

Representative Rubel asked if there is information currently available in regard to the Direct Admissions initiative. **Mr. Freeman** explained applications are up significantly. The application closure date is February 15 and after that date they will know the exact number of applicants.

TESTIMONY: **Dwight Johnson**, Administrator, Professional-Technical Education (PTE) spoke in support of **SCR 134** and appreciates the Lieutenant Governor's leadership in bringing this resolution forward. He explained the importance of this resolution is in providing the opportunity for greater earning power through educational and skill attainment. This is a challenging goal, and there are many educational avenues available to realize that goal. He outlined the many areas beyond high school where people can receive degrees or certificates. He stated the Governor and the SBE have built a comprehensive package and detailed the following: 1.) career counseling; 2.) alignment of credits; 3.) direct admissions; 4.) improvement of access to higher education; 5.) expanding scholarship programs; 6.) tuition lock; 7.) credits for prior learning; 8.) expansion of enrollment capacity; and 9.) business and postsecondary partnerships. All of these, he said, work to move Idaho toward the Governor's goal.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Thayn** moved to send **SCR 134** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Souza** seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Thayn spoke to his motion stating the Governor's goal is critical for Idaho's people and economy.

Motion passed by **voice vote**. Chairman Mortimer will carry **SCR 134** to the floor.

PRESENTATION: Melyssa Ferro, 2016 State Teacher of the Year, Caldwell School District, explained to the Committee how she approaches teaching. She presented "A Lesson on the Ecology of Public Schools" from the viewpoint of a modern-day Lorax. She explained the Lorax is a Dr. Suess character who is a "parody of a misanthropic ecologist" and fights for an ecosystem. **Ms. Ferro** said that today she will be using him to tell the story about the ecosystem of public schools, using scientific terminology. She explained teaching: 1.) a collaborative effort; 2.) builds community partnerships; and 3.) uses resources. She concluded her presentation by telling the Committee how the State can help with education (see attachment 1).

PRESENTATION: Kim Zeydel, 2015 State Teacher of the Year, West Ada School District, discussed her efforts and work at Meridian Academy an alternative high school for at-risk students (Academy). She introduced the students that joined her for the presentation. **Ms. Zeydel** explained the type of student who enrolls in the Academy so the Committees can better understand the type of students she works with. She explained the goals set by the Academy for student growth, explained how the mentoring program works for students and why the graduation rate of the Academy does not fit with the Federal reporting model.

Students from the Academy addressed the questions from Senators and Representatives to explain why they like the school. They explained how the teachers work with them individually to get them caught up with subjects, the class sizes are smaller and the school atmosphere is very safe.

Ms. Zeydel explained that the Academy tackles the State's drop-out rate because these students have already dropped out and are making their way back. She considers the Academy graduation rate to be 100 percent. She concluded her presentation by highlighting the areas in which legislation will help them further their goals (see attachment 2).

PRESENTATION: Sherri Ybarra, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education (SDE), presented "Our Moment, Our Time in Education." She explained to the Committee her elected role as outlined by statute and proclaimed that SDE has a vision and a strategic plan; a first in many years. She said the vision is to support schools and encourage students to achieve. Each Committee member was given a binder of the SDE's vision and strategic plan.

Superintendent Ybarra reported the successful results of the Idaho Standards Challenge which was the review of the Idaho core standards in English language arts and math. She recommends those standards remain. She explained the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) will give the State more flexibility and keep decisions at the local level.

Superintendent Ybarra stated all the following information can be found in the binders. She outlined the three main goals of the strategic plan: 1.) All Idaho students persevere in life and are ready for college and careers; 2.) All education stakeholders in Idaho are mutually responsible for accountability and student progress; 3.) Idaho attracts and retains great teachers and leaders. She explained there are 16 remaining Task Force recommendations and how they will dovetail within the SDE's plan. She addressed how the SDE is implementing last year's legislation. She detailed her education budget requests and how they align with the Governor's education budget recommendations. Superintendent Ybarra concluded her presentation by discussing the various other issues the SDE is working to resolve and manage (see attachment 3).

Representative McDonald complimented her on the SDE's plan. He said there is a disparity in advanced placement classes offered in the state; 44 districts do not offer them. He asked what the state can do to remedy that issue. **Superintendent Ybarra** said that academic college and career advising needs to be expanded. Needs in districts should be reviewed so that every child in Idaho has the same opportunities.

Representative Rubel asked how the SDE is addressing education to avoid the high level of remedial courses that are needed in college. **Superintendent Ybarra** stated the SDE is implementing higher standards in testing. In approximately three years that data should be available.

Chairman DeMordaunt asked what Idaho can do to get better results for the return on the dollar in professional-technical education. **Superintendent Ybarra** explained the SDE is using local trainers who understand the training issues of the districts. By using those resources, the state will be saving money.

Senator Den Hartog asked if there are budgeted line items that can be redirected to other areas at the districts' discretion. **Superintendent Ybarra** replied the SDE has reviewed that possibility for the future. **Senator Den Hartog** asked if it will be disputed if the learning management systems are moved from the state level to the local. **Superintendent Ybarra** said the local level data is only beneficial to schools, and other state agencies are not interested in those specific statistics.

Representative Kerby asked how the SDE will measure the strategic goals. **Superintendent Ybarra** said each goal is measurable as outlined in the strategic goals that each committee member received. There are SDE deputies that oversee each area to make sure the goals are met.

Representative VanOrden asked if the SAT test is aligned with Idaho core standards. **Superintendent Ybarra** explained the reasoning for switching to the SAT test is to measure college and career readiness.

Senator Anthon asked if this policy is to happen, has the SBE been apprised of the SDE strategic plan? **Superintendent Ybarra** said the strategic plan is a vision for moving forward. The SDE has had conversations with the SBE.

ADJOURNED: There being no more business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 5:18 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary