

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 21, 2017
TIME: 9:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room WW02
MEMBERS: Chairman VanOrden, Vice Chairman McDonald, Representatives Shepherd, Boyle, Clow, Mendive, Kerby, Cheatham, Amador, DeMordaunt, Moon, Syme, Kloc, McCrostie, Toone
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None
GUESTS: Sandra Miller, Cassia School Dist #151; Teresa Fabricius, Fruitland School Dist; Gaylen Smyer, Cassia School Dist; Ken Hurt, Nezperce Joint Dist; Jess Harrison, ISBA; Jim Fazio, citizen

Chairman VanOrden called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

H 113: **Rep. Clow** presented **H 113** relating to teachers benefits who have retired and returned to work. This will also allow the retirement age of 62 to be reduced to 60.
Blake Youde, State Board of Education, explained this bill would not effect retired teacher's PERSI benefits if they elected to go back to work and they would not need to contribute to their retirement. They would be funded only by the school district's contribution to their employee's retirement. This would allow retired teachers to come back as full or part time employees, thereby, decreasing the qualified teacher shortage, and keeping those teachers in Idaho. The rural districts would especially benefit as it would bridge the gap they have now in finding new, qualified teachers.
Don Drum, Executive Director of PERSI, stated their PERSI benefits would not be affected by the earlier retirement at age 60. He explained the IRS has changed the allowable age to retire from 62 to 60, which now allows PERSI to change their rule on age of retirement.
Jess Harrison, ISBA, and **Gaylen Smyer** from the Cassia School District, **testified in support of H 113**. They were encouraged by the legislation to reduce the teacher shortage Idaho has at this time.

MOTION: **Rep. Amador** made a motion to send **H 113** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Clow** will sponsor the bill on the floor.
Marg Chipman, ISBA President, stated she is here representing school districts, charter schools, and the Board members who govern them. ISBA currently represents 114 school districts and 38 charter schools. Idaho is the only state in the nation that has included charter schools as full members of the association. ISBA's statement for this year is: "The ISBA Executive Board supports the principle of local governance for public schools, the full funding of the career ladder, and the appropriation of operational funds from 2009 up to 2017 adjusted for inflation. Until this has been achieved, the Executive Board will not support any resolution or legislation that would result in any new line items in the State Education Budget." The two items most important to ISBA are funding and local governance. In addition to focusing on the career ladder and operational funding, they will be looking at funding their classified staff and possible options for facilities funding. Another item they are focusing on is related to school-based Medicaid reimbursement for the services of speech and language pathology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychological, and nursing. These funds are not state dollars and do not impact the

state Medicaid budget. They are federal flow through dollars. That means if the appropriate laws and rules existed in Idaho, we could nearly double the amount of reimbursement we are receiving from the federal government.

Ms. Chipman stated that ISBA is always here to work with the Education Committee to answer any questions and is willing to work with all stakeholder groups to try to come to consensus on any topic. They are disheartened when legislation is printed and moved forward and has significant impacts on both traditional districts and charter schools, but they have not been consulted. This forces them into a position of opposition because they have not had time to review the legislation. They are asking that the legislature reach out to them so they can work together on legislation.

Tim McMurtrey, Deputy Superintendent of Operations, introduced **Duncan Robb**, Chief Policy Advisor to present the Teacher Recruitment and Retention presentation.

Duncan Robb explained the teacher shortage presentation is made up of teacher vacancies questionnaire results, consideration of rural communities, feedback from the field, and strategies to consider. The qualitative questionnaire was made up of two questions and was sent out to all the school districts at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year. The questions were, 1. At the start of your year, were there any teaching positions that were still unfilled and, if so which subjects? 2. Have you declared a hiring emergency? Charter LEAs are not included in these results. Eighty seven districts responded and thirty four did not respond. Thirty-three school districts reported 120 vacancies on the first day of school. Most vacancies were in Special Education, Math and Science(core), and Technology. A hiring emergency was declared in 29 districts, and 58 districts did not declare a hiring emergency. The districts have had to get more creative with how they fill the vacancies so more alternative authorizations are being granted than ever before.

Mr. Robb explained that rural communities are hit especially hard. Urban areas tend to have a larger pool from which to draw and tend to be nearer to educator preparation programs. ISAT results also show a gap between rural and non-rural. Urban students tested 43.8% proficient in ISAT math, while rural students tested 36.8% proficient at math. Urban charter schools tested at 50.8% proficiency, and rural charter schools tested at 42% proficiency. The rural areas need to attract qualified teachers to bring the proficiency to a higher percentage.

Mr. Robb gave some of the solutions that they have proposed as follows: Encourage individuals to advance along the pipeline toward professional teaching certification, make it easier for professionals from related careers to obtain certification (e.g., RNs who want to teach certified nursing assistant courses or middle school science), make it easier for retired educators to reenter the profession as **H 113** is proposing, rural education support networks that help districts share scarce resources and educators, move toward Mastery Education learning and recruitment. He stressed the urgency and stated that more legislation is coming to improve the situation.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:16 am.

Representative VanOrden
Chair

Ann Tippetts
Secretary