

Thank you Chairman and members of the committee for allowing me the opportunity to testify. My name is Dani Backer - I am the social studies consulting teacher for the Boise School District. I am here to testify against section 105.01.g (page 89) specifically the proposed change in graduation requirements for the Humanities.

I urge the committee to question what this change is trying to accomplish and its effects on Idaho school districts. What is the purpose of this change and what is the overall motivation for removing literature, history, philosophy, and architecture from humanities requirements in our high schools?

What failure in the current system has provoked a change that brazenly changes the universal definition of humanities? If the motive is to add an arts requirement or a world languages requirement then why not have a transparent conversation about that change and the impact on schools - particularly in rural areas.

The proposed rule change excludes literature, history, philosophy and architecture in direct opposition to how humanities is offered at colleges in Idaho and to the Idaho Humanities Council which defines humanities as to "include history, literature, philosophy, jurisprudence, cultural anthropology, comparative religion, art history and criticism, music history and other interpretive disciplines that through study yield wisdom."

At NNU, students general education requirements in the humanities include courses in literature, art history, music history and US History. Approved humanities courses at University of Idaho include courses in literature, philosophy, and history. The Arts and Humanities Institute at Boise State University includes in its mission "to bring together disciplines that differ in their modes of expression but share common interests and methods of inquiry: these include; the fine and performing arts, letters, languages, history and philosophy." Outside the state of Idaho it is more of the same at all Ivy League colleges and the National Humanities Council. Why would we institute a rule change in our public schools that is not supported in colleges and career? Are we not tasked with preparing our students for college and career post high school?

The Boise School District Superintendent, Don Coberly, asked me to share with you that as for the humanities requirement as it stands in the Boise District, US History 9 has satisfied the requirement for 20+ years, and students have done just fine, taking multiple music and art classes in high school as they see fit. Our United States History 9 Course explores the music, art, literature and values of American Society of the Nineteenth Century. Through historical thinking, our students explore the cultural contributions of those who came before us. I am urging that you please cast a no vote on this section of the proposed rule.

Thank you Chairman and members of the committee for considering my testimony. I am happy to stand for questions.