

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Monday, February 05, 2018
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Winder, Nonini, Den Hartog, Guthrie, Crabtree, Buckner-Webb, and Ward-Engelking
- 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 Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:08 p.m.
- PRESENTATION:** **Idaho Teacher of the Year, Becky Mitchell, Vision Charter School. Sherri Ybarra**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Idaho State Department of Education (SDE) introduced Mrs. Mitchell. She told the Committee of Mrs. Mitchell's extensive skill set; she has taught courses in Spanish, physics, engineering, English, and chemistry. **Superintendent Ybarra** said as the 2018 Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Mitchell would like to be the spokeswoman for the go-on rate.
- Mrs. Mitchell** gave a brief background on herself and what brought her to Vision Charter School. In 2009, she moved to Caldwell, Idaho to accept a position as a science consultant at Vision Charter School. **Mrs. Mitchell** stated she has taught dual credit physics, engineering, chemistry, and language arts.
- Mrs. Mitchell** discussed three topics and how they apply in her school: 1.) technology; 2.) teacher mentoring; and 3.) student growth and achievement. She remarked how technology has changed since she first started teaching. Classrooms are now equipped with short-throw projectors, interactive whiteboard pens, and document cameras. She stated the way to use technology is to model it to students.
- Mrs. Mitchell** remarked two years of teacher mentoring is required by the State of Idaho and Vision Charter School will mentor their teachers regardless of prior training. She discussed how Vision Charter works with student growth and achievement in the classroom. She stated they differentiate instruction in two ways: 1.) standardized testing and 2.) goal setting
- Mrs. Mitchell** offered suggestions for improvements regarding standardized testing and assessments. The first suggestion is the use of the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) as Idaho's standard achievements test. Secondly, she mentioned offering the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) in place of the SAT for those opting for a military career. Finally, she mentioned the possibility of offering the PSAT for all 11th graders for support through Khan Academy in preparation for their SAT's.
- Mrs. Mitchell** concluded her presentation with a discussion regarding the go-on rate. She expressed her concern about how the go-on rate is calculated. She said she appreciates the funding from the Fast Forward program as it gives students the availability to take dual credits where they could not before. She said the challenge to this is in the area of career technical education.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if money being raised for Career Technical Education (CTE) courses will be used for the classes or assessments because Advanced Opportunity money can be used for assessments. **Mrs. Mitchell** replied the Fast Forward funds could be used for \$245 for a class; yet an Emergency Medical Training class is \$1,200. The money raised would be used to pay the additional cost for the class. **Vice Chairman Thayn** commented that Advanced Opportunity funding was originally created for assessments, but they see the need for CTE classes, and are reviewing a way to address the need.

PRESENTATION: Celebrating Idaho Teachers and Public Schools. Kari Overall, President, Idaho Education Association (IEA) thanked the Committee for hearing the perspectives of her fellow IEA members from across the State. She stated how educators in public schools take on varied roles in often diverse environments.

Hannah Henry, Early Career Educator. **Ms. Henry** said she is an elementary school teacher, teaching a combination first and second grade classroom. **Ms. Henry** discussed her classroom strategies and explained the leveled rotations in her classrooms. She said the focus is primarily on reading and math, where she works with students' individual needs. **Ms. Henry** remarked she would like the option for more hands-on and project based learning.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked three questions: 1.) what is she using for the Star Literacy test and is she familiar with Istation; 2.) is mastery-based learning being used in her classroom; and 3.) how is the K-3 literacy money being used? **Ms. Henry** replied that she is familiar with Istation; however, her school was not selected as a pilot for it. She stated she is using the Star Literacy test and the Star Reading test. **Ms. Henry** stated her district does not currently use mastery-based learning; she is implementing a version of it in her classroom. In regard to the K-3 literacy money, **Ms. Henry** said a large portion went to literacy night, and in purchasing a three-year agreement with Lexia Reading Core5 program.

Senator Nonini inquired as to what district Ms. Henry was from. **Ms. Henry** replied the Bonneville School District. **Senator Nonini** asked if she was aware of the STEM Science Festival and Hands-on Learning event at Boise State University. **Ms. Henry** replied she was not aware of the event.

Shelly Hopkins, Kuna Middle School. **Ms. Hopkins** introduced herself and stated she is a seventh grade language arts teacher at Kuna Middle School. She is also the president of the Kuna Education Association. She focused on three classroom strategies: 1.) direct instruction, 2.) learning space, and 3.) technology. **Ms. Hopkins** stated her school is a pilot for mastery teaching and standards based grading. Direct instruction allows for greater feedback and interaction with the students. Modern updated equipment and flexible seating would make the classrooms more functional and welcoming for the children. Finally, she remarked as a young educator, she was trained to teach with technology.

Senator Crabtree asked what are the reasons for the reading disparity levels in the classroom. **Ms. Hopkins** replied it could be attributed to a variety of factors: exposure to content, changing population of students, ability to attend to tasks, learned behaviors, or other outside factors. She said it takes times to isolate the source of the problem and then individualize instruction.

Karen Lauritzen, Second Grade Teacher, Mullan Trail Elementary, Postfalls, Idaho. **Ms. Lauritzen** explained the complex needs of her students and how she provides targeted instruction to every student. She said she focuses on reading comprehension and critical reading and thinking skills. **Ms. Lauritzen** expressed concern for Kindergarten education. She explained the merits of full-day Kindergarten. Studies show children who have attended full-day show greater reading, math, and achievement gains than those in half-day programs. She emphasized students confidence in their abilities leads to greater classroom success.

Senator Guthrie asked if Ms. Lauritzen felt there would ever be a time when children could advance in school based upon the merits of competency. **Ms. Lauritzen** replied in the affirmative. She said it would allow everyone an equal opportunity.

Senator Den Hartog asked if were possible within her district to use the K-3 Literacy money to help fund full-day kindergarten. **Ms. Lauritzen** replied the funds in her district are being used for staffing purposes.

Senator Ward-Engelking asked if enrichment was still available when a child masters a concept. **Ms. Lauritzen** stated they try to get every child to the enrichment level.

Aaron McKinnon, Veteran Teacher, Athletic and Academic Coach, Science Teacher, South Junior High, Boise, Idaho. **Mr. McKinnon** stated he has taught for 22 years; He is a hands-on teacher and trains other teachers. **Mr. McKinnon** answered three questions: 1.) What are you doing in your classroom that is having a direct impact on student achievement?, 2.) What would you be doing in your class if you could?, and 3.) How can the legislature help you? **Mr. McKinnon** said for student achievement he creates engaging, entertaining, and fun activities that can assess his students' progress. He also uses standards based grading and a reassessment policy to help the students evaluate progress and areas of weakness. In terms of what he would be doing in the classroom if he could, **Mr. McKinnon** remarked that he uses project-based learning to develop his students critical thinking skills and to challenge them to apply knowledge to real world situations. **Mr. McKinnon** responded to the final question by saying the legislature could protect the time and efforts of the teachers.

Crystal Tibbals, Troy Elementary School, Troy, Idaho. **Ms. Tibbals** stated she is a sixth grade teacher from a rural community. There are approximately 342 students K-12 that share one building. **Ms. Tibbals** focused on the importance of parental and community involvement in the students' education. It takes a community to raise a child and it benefits the education of the child to have the family actively involved. Persistence, determination and innovation, allowed them to turn parental involvement in the child's education around.

Senator Guthrie complimented the work Troy Elementary School is making in the best available use of limited resources.

Vice Chairman Thayn asked if their school used Istation. **Ms. Tibbals** replied her school was selected to pilot the program; so far, teacher feedback is positive. **Vice Chairman Thayn** asked if she knew how long it took to administer the test. **Ms. Tibbals** replied in the negative.

Dave Gibson, K-5 Music Teacher, Morningside Elementary School, Twin Falls, Idaho. **Mr. Gibson** discussed how he uses technology in the classroom. **Mr. Gibson** detailed for the Committee the variety of technological applications he uses to teach music. Mr. Gibson feels music instruction is important for all students and tries to keep all his students actively engaged.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:52 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary

Diane James
Assistant Secretary