

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 08, 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 3:00 p.m.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT: **Senator Nonini** asked for unanimous consent to send **RS 26029, RS 25982, RS 25885C1, RS 25694, and RS 26081C1** to print. There were no objections.

S 1267 **Relating to Education; Amend and Revise STEM Diploma. Senator Bob Nonini**, District 3, presented **S 1267**. He said the proposed legislation is for the student who receives more than the minimum requirements of science and math credits to obtain a STEM diploma. He emphasized this is for students who exceed the minimum requirements and outlined the requirements which are overseen by the State Board of Education (SBE). He explained the necessity of the emergency clause; students graduating in 2018 would be able to receive the STEM diploma. He provided and detailed for the committee written testimony to support the legislation (Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5).

Senator Ward-Engelking commented this is a good idea; it will help students obtain scholarships and enhance college applications. She asked if there is a high level of proficiency for the diploma. **Senator Nonini** replied the students receiving the diploma are proficient. There are minimum graduation standards set by the SBE which the students must meet; this diploma exceeds those standards.

Senator Den Hartog asked how the STEM diploma is intended to be used. She asked if this is being done in other states. **Senator Nonini** replied his focus is on STEM and Idaho is trying to be aggressive and a leader in this arena. He said this designation would be helpful for student resumes, scholarship applications, and college admittance.

Senator Nonini stated there is an error in paragraph two, line 12. He said if the Committee chooses to send it to the floor he is asking that it be sent to the 14th Order to make the correction.

TESTIMONY: **Dr. Angela Hemingway**, Executive Director, STEM Action Center, said Ohio and Colorado have a STEM school designation on the diploma. She explained students who enter STEM education have taken more difficult coursework and may have a slight shift in their GPA. The designation shows that they may have taken more rigorous courses; a higher level than what is required by the State.

Chairman Mortimer asked if there should be a minimum proficiency for this diploma. **Dr. Hemingway** replied often the STEM diploma students are high achieving students. There are minimums built in the matrix from the SBE that all students must meet in order to receive a high school diploma.

MOTION: **Senator Ward-Engelking** moved to send **S 1267** to the **14th Order** for amendment. **Senator Den Hartog** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: Education Budget. Robyn Lockett, Principal Analyst, Legislative Services Office, reviewed the State Department of Education's requests versus the Governor's recommendations (Attachment 6). The requested increase for 2019 is 6.8 percent versus the Governor's recommendation of 6 percent.

Committee members asked for clarification on items which included: health insurance costs, discretionary funding, centralized services, literacy, and advanced opportunities.

Janet Jessup, Analyst, Budget and Policy Analysis, Legislative Services works with the higher education budget (Attachment 7). She reviewed the higher education budget as it pertains to colleges and institutions. The requested increase for 2019 is 5.7 percent versus the Governor's recommendation of 3 percent.

Chairman Mortimer advised the Committee to study the budget schedule. If needed, they may request additional clarification from Ms. Lockett and Ms. Jessup at the budget priority setting meeting.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary