

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Monday, February 12, 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. He opened the meeting with a reading from the book, "A Heap O'Living, Along Life's Highway", by Edgar A. Guest, "Tomorrow."
- RS 26083C1** **Relating to the Public School Transportation Support Program; Amend and Revise. Senator Den Hartog** presented **RS 26083C1**. She said during the economic downturn the transportation reimbursement model was changed. Some costs were covered at 85 percent and other costs were lowered to 50 percent. The proposed legislation changes the reimbursement model back to where all types of transportation are reimbursed at 85 percent. She explained school districts' confusion regarding which items are reimbursed at what level. **Senator Den Hartog** said the State Department of Education (SDE) was consulted about the legislation.
- MOTION:** **Senator Guthrie** moved to send **RS 26083C1** to print. **Senator Buckner-Webb** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- RS 26119** **Relating to the State Board of Education; Amend and Revise Provisions. Marilyn Whitney**, Deputy Chief of Staff Senior and Special Assistant for Government Services and Education, Office of the Governor, presented **RS 26119**. She said the proposed legislation seeks to amend current statute to provide the State Board of Education (SBE) with the flexibility to hire executive-level staff and to determine a structure that can best support development of plans to implement the recommendations of the Governor's Higher Education Task Force (Task Force).
- Ms. Whitney** said the Task Force unanimously supported the recommendation to take immediate action. The recommendation is to put a leadership structure in place to execute the change in management needed to move higher education towards "systemness." She detailed the specifics in the proposed legislation. She emphasized the legislation does not specify titles or duties of the position; the SBE will make the decisions about how to structure staff and allocate resources.
- Ms. Whitney** said the Governor's recommendation is to add this position in fiscal year 2019. This would ensure the new officer would be able to participate in the scoping study on consolidation. She emphasized this position will create savings for the State by eliminating duplication of systems and duplication of administrative staff at individual institutions. She said there are many questions around this system. She asked for the Committee's support to introduce **RS 26119**, so it is in the public domain for further discussion.
- MOTION:** **Senator Buckner-Webb** moved to send **RS 26119** to print. **Senator Nonini** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: STEM Action Center (Action Center). **Dr. Angela Hemingway**, Executive Director, STEM Action Center, presented the overview of the work in the Action Center. She spoke about the job market in the State and the needs of the industry. She stated the goals based on the legislation and detailed the variety of educational events sponsored by the Action Center. The goals are as follows: 1.) coordinate and facilitate implementation of STEM programs throughout Idaho; 2.) align education and workforce needs throughout Idaho; and 3.) increase awareness of STEM throughout Idaho. **Dr. Hemingway** explained the activities the Action Center has undertaken to encourage each of the goals (Attachment 1).

Senator Winder asked if the Action Center is doing more oral coding. **Dr. Hemingway** replied many schools are implementing programs into the classroom that are voice responsive. She stated it is important for teachers to be leaders in new technology trends. She said it is important that we partner with technology businesses, so they can help educate teachers as to new programs.

Senator Den Hartog asked Dr. Hemingway to explain how the financial officer for the Action Center can also work for the 501(c)(3) foundation. **Dr. Hemingway** replied they are following the same models set up by other State agencies, such as, Idaho Public Television and the Idaho State Historical Society. She stated having a single person in that position helps to streamline financial tracking processes.

Chairman Mortimer asked if she was familiar with what the military is doing with STEM programs. **Dr. Hemingway** explained the program hosted with the Air National Guard at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho.

DISCUSSION: Public School Funding Budget Discussion. **Chairman Mortimer** outlined to the Committee the important issues regarding the education budget. He led the review and discussion of the Committee's budget priorities prior to his presentation to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC).

Chairman Mortimer asked Committee members to prioritize the budget request items. The preferences are as follows: 1.) career counseling; 2.) technology for the classroom; 3.) health care for education professionals; 4.) attention to English language learners; 5.) mastery-based learning; and 6.) professional development.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 3:57 p.m.

Senator Dean M. Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn Mohr
Secretary