

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 26, 2021
TIME: 9:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room EW41
MEMBERS: Chairman Clow, Vice Chairman Kerby, Representatives Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Marshall, Wisniewski, Galloway, Shepherd, Yamamoto, McCrostie, Berch, Toone

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Legislative Advisor Suzanne Budge, STRIDE; Julie Oberle, Chief Financial Officer, State Department of Education (SDE); Kelly Edgington, Head of School at Idaho Virtual Academy; Karen Haines, Leader of Inspire and Empower Charter Schools; College of Southern Idaho President Fisher; College of Western Idaho President Glandon; College of Eastern Idaho President Aman; North Idaho College President MacLennan; Marilyn Whitney Deputy Superintendent, Communications & Policy SDE

Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Chairman Clow turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman Kerby**

H 22: **Vice Chairman Kerby** opened discussion regarding **H 22**. **Chairman Clow** stated two virtual charter schools were not going to be fully funded because of a cap on charter school support units. The language of the statute was intended to protect traditional surrounding schools from sudden funding changes, however the pandemic caused a surge in enrollment. The funds for the virtual schools have already been allocated but cannot be released until the correction is made.

Suzanne Budge, representing Idaho Virtual Academy and Inspire and Empower Charter Schools, presented details of the proposed legislation that deletes the clause of code.

Rep. Marshall expressed support for **H 22** and asked if there's been a decrease in the support units at the schools the students left behind. **Julie Oberlee** stated that the support units at the surrounding schools did decrease due to the movement of the students.

Kelly Edgington, Head of School at Idaho Virtual Academy (IDVA) spoke in support of **H 22**. The pandemic directly affected IDVA enrollment; the school accommodated by doubling its staff, unaware of the cap. Without **H 22** the school will experience a financial emergency.

Karen Haines, school leader of Inspire and Empower Charter Schools (IECS) spoke in support of **H 22** to prevent a pandemic-related financial emergency, of which they were just made aware.

MOTION: **Rep. Mendive** made a motion to send **H 22** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Alan Reed, Charter Commissioner Chairman, testified in support of **H 22**. He reiterated the need to cover the cost of the students that moved from the traditional schools to the virtual schools.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Roll call vote was requested. **Motion carried by a vote of 14 AYE, 1 NAY. Voting in favor** of the motion: **Reps. Boyle, Mendive, DeMordaunt, Moon, Ehardt, Marshall, Wisniewski, Galloway, Shepherd, Yamamoto, McCrostie, Toone, Vice Chairman Kerby, Chairman Clow.** **Voting in opposition** to the motion: **Rep. Berch.** Chairman Clow will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Vice Chairman Kerby turned the gavel over to **Chairman Clow.**

**UNANIMOUS
CONSENT
REQUEST:**

Chairman Clow made a unanimous consent request to extend the meeting to 11:00 a.m. There being no objection, the request was granted.

College of Southern Idaho **President Fisher**, College of Western Idaho **President Glandon**, College of Eastern Idaho **President Amanand**, and North Idaho College **President MacLennan** presented updates of their college programs virtually.

Dr. Glandon expressed relief they didn't have to raise tuition, that property tax revenue is back up to 2009 levels. **Dr. Fisher** expressed that there hasn't been a cost savings by teaching virtually.

Rep. Shepherd asked about dual enrollment credits for high school students who want to earn college credit simultaneously. **Rep. Toone** asked about the cyber security programs and if courses are currently available. **Rep. Ehardt** asked if the community colleges can offer a less expensive quality education, why can't the universities lower their costs.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Representative Clow
Chair

Christine Reynolds
Secretary