

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Monday, February 22, 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
- ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Rep. Toone
- GUESTS:** Representative Furniss; Quinn Perry, Policy & Government Affairs Director, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA); Karen Pyron, Butte County School District Trustee; Tracie Bent, Chief Planning and Policy Officer, State Board of Education (SBOE); Mike Keckler Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer SBO; Marilyn Whitney Deputy Superintendent, Communications & Policy, State Department of Education (SDE); Tim McMurtrey, Deputy Superintendent, Operations SDE.; Lisa Colon Durham; Director, Certification and Professional Standards SDE; Dr. TJ Bliss, Chief Academic Officer SBOE; Dr. Jonathan Lashley, Association Chief Academic Officer SBOE.
- Chairman Clow** called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.
- H 111:** **Rep. Furniss** presented legislation that clarifies the law to allow teachers to complete their certification while working. When a teacher has not yet completed the professional endorsement of a three-year interim certificate program, a school board will have the ability to retain the employee until the certification is complete.
- Quinn Perry**, ISBA, discussed that the alternative authorization from a school board is an extension which must be renewed each year. The resolution was brought to the ISBA from a rural district which struggles with the recruitment and retention of certified teachers. Ms. Perry answered Committee questions regarding how prevalent the issue is with respect to the career ladder and district loss of teachers. She stated required teacher mentor assignments and classes can both be challenges with smaller staffs. The legislation will change the type of contract the teacher is offered.
- Trustee Pyron** testified in support of **H 111** to assist rural districts to grow their own qualified teachers. The legislation will stop the loss of teachers when districts and candidates cannot meet the three-year requirement due to varied circumstances on both ends. In answer to committee questions, Ms. Pyron stated the issue is a frequent problem in her district.
- Vice Chairman Kerby** and **Rep. Moon** spoke in support of **H 111** and the unique challenges of rural districts.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Moon** made a motion to send **H 111** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Furniss** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Dr. Bliss, Chief Academic Officer for the SBOE, presented the capabilities created by an approximately \$4 million grant for Online Idaho. The program connects both students and teachers to career technical and academic courses offered by educational institutions through the program. The SBOE anticipates the program will improve distance learning in Idaho by increasing access, affordability and flexibility, and map the future of online learning. He does not anticipate they will need to request any additional funds to run the program. In answer to committee questions, they are not currently connecting students to private universities.

Dr. Lashley, Association Chief Academic Officer SBOE discussed the merits and challenges of an online education because no one institution offers all of the programs, courses and services needed to offer a comprehensive learning environment for all students but they can be connected through Online Idaho, consolidating online courses, streamlining pathways to degrees and improving digital learning infrastructure for the higher education institutions in Idaho. The collaborative effort between institutions is anticipated to reduce the expense to students; the total cost of each course is listed for transparency.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Representative Clow
Chair

Christine Reynolds
Secretary