

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021

**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW55

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Thayn, Vice Chairman Crabtree, Senators Den Hartog, Woodward, Lent, Johnson, Cook, Ward-Engelking, and Nelson

**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 Thayn** called the meeting of the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:08 p.m.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Woodward** moved to approve the Minutes of February 11, 2021. **Senator Johnson** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**Senator Den Hartog** moved to approve the Minutes of February 15, 2021. **Senator Lent** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**Senator Cook** moved to approve the Minutes of February 16, 2021. **Senator Nelson** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**PRESENTATION:** **Penelope Johnson**, third grade teacher, Davis Connect Online School, gave a presentation to the Committee about the school's successes in the classroom (see Attachment 1). **Ms. Johnson** also walked the Committee members through a lesson plan created for third graders so they could navigate the school's online program.

**DISCUSSION:** **Senator Johnson** asked Ms. Johnson to identify the optimal class size for this platform. **Ms. Johnson** said 26 students is ideal, but teachers have had 24-30. **Senator Den Hartog** asked what Ms. Johnson's online class prep time is compared to teaching in a traditional classroom. **Ms. Johnson** said prep time is pretty much the same, but she is planning for different lessons while teaching online. **Senator Den Hartog** asked if Davis Connects online program will continue after the pandemic. **Dr. Ryan Hansen**, Director, Digital Learning, Davis School District, said that before the pandemic they had 100 students learning online, or participating in online classes. After the pandemic they had 1,100. Administrators conducted a survey with parents, and expect 1,000 students will continue with online learning. **Senator Lent** asked how Davis Connect ensures instruction aligns with State standards. **Ms. Johnson** said she relies on her school district to make sure Davis Connect is meeting State standards.

**Senator Cook** asked Ms. Johnson to delineate the experiences gained from online learning. **Ms. Johnson** said student connections and engagement are most important in student success, and she will no longer take that connection for granted. **Senator Cook** said sometimes teachers see issues with students before a parent sees them, and questioned whether they can still see those issues while teaching remotely. **Ms. Johnson** said she is still able to monitor such issues with students, even to the smallest of events such as when a student begins to turn off their camera, and she will check in with them privately to see what might be wrong. **Senator Lent** asked what type of professional development Idaho should explore for expanding online learning. **Dr. Hansen** said the three computer programs that helped with their online learning success were Canvas, Microsoft Teams, and Nearpod. These software programs allow teachers to collaborate and communicate, he said.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Thayn** adjourned the meeting at 4:14 p.m.

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Senator Thayn  
Chair

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Florence Lince  
Secretary