

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, January 25, 2012
TIME: 9:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room EW41
MEMBERS: Chairman Nonini, Vice Chairman Shirley, Representative(s) Trail, Block, Nielsen, Chadderdon, Shepherd, Wills, Marriott, Thayn, Hartgen, Bateman, Boyle, DeMordaunt, Nessel, Pence, Chew, Cronin
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representatives Nielsen, Wills, and Bateman
GUESTS: Priscilla Bell, Mark Browning, Ron Dorn and Teresa Molitor, North Idaho College (NIC); Jerry Beck and Barbara Beck, College of Southern Idaho; Bert Marley, Idaho Education Association (IEA); Jess Harrison, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA)

Chairman Nonini called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Thayn** made a motion to approve the minutes of January 23, 2012. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Priscilla Bell, President of North Idaho College (NIC), gave a presentation to the committee. She explained that NIC is one of the oldest community colleges west of the Mississippi River. The main campus sits on the banks of Lake Coeur d'Alene. There are other locations throughout Northern Idaho. The total number of students attending the college's various programs in FY2011 was 24,320. Over seventy percent (70%) of their students receive financial aid. The average debt load of students has doubled in the last two years. She discussed funding shifts. She also mentioned that North Idaho College has some specific line item requests. The first is for partnerships with school districts, for a total of \$99,800. The second is to restart their Physical Therapist Assistant Program, for a total of \$250,000. The third is to consolidate student services, for a total of \$528,700. North Idaho College would also like the Idaho Legislature to consider a new bonding effort that would allow them to build a new facility. In addition, she urged financial support to supplement professional-technical education programs, which are very popular as shown by increased enrollment. There are currently waiting lists for students.

President Bell addressed weapons on campus. She stated that the issue is best dealt with locally. She expressed faith in NIC's Board of Trustees. NIC has grown its faculty to meet increasing enrollment, however, the staff has not been increased. There have been no cuts or reductions to program structure, and educational programs have been added to meet the changing needs of local employers. She presented comments from students who are receiving scholarships at NIC. Comments focused on motivation for success, and on the positive learning environment that is offered at NIC.

In response to questions, **President Bell** stated that NIC has been focusing on student success and college completion. She explained that data collection generally focuses on first time students who are degree seeking. In order to gain a more accurate picture, she is examining NIC's own student population, which is made up of degree and certificate seeking students as well as community members who are there for occasional classes. Reimbursement has not been updated since 1982. NIC would like to expand relationships with high schools through teaching at their local high schools. College financial aid staff works with students to help them gain as many grants and scholarships as possible, and discusses loans after those other options have been utilized. Increasing trustees from five to seven has staff resource and financial impacts. While trustees are unpaid, there are reimbursement, professional development, and other expenses. Currently trustee elections are nonpartisan. North Idaho College serves all of North Idaho. She is concerned that introducing districting for the Board of Trustees could create an environment that no longer supports the nonpartisanship that currently exists.

Responding to additional questions, **President Bell** explained that NIC has three satellite campuses in Bonners Ferry, Ponderay and Silver Valley. Programs and services are being built in all the regions that NIC serves. Lewis-Clark State College and University of Idaho both partner with NIC. A joint use building to house programs for all three schools has been proposed. All of Idaho's four year institutions work with NIC to promote awareness of higher education in Northern Idaho and to provide information about the benefits of higher education and financial aid that is available.

Chairman Nonini turned over the gavel to **Vice Chairman Shirley**.

Jerry Beck, President of College of Southern Idaho (CSI), gave a presentation to the committee. CSI offers four core themes: transfer education, basic skills education, professional-technical education, and community connections. CSI's service region is approximately the size of the state of Maryland. Enrollment is increasing, with full time equivalent (FTE) growth of sixty percent (60%) over the last ten years. The largest area of growth is in online learning. Thirty percent (30%) of students taking online classes are students who live in CSI's dorms. Another area of growth is the dual credit program. School districts control their own calendars, which is a challenge when putting together dual credit classes.

President Beck explained that while CSI has experienced student FTE growth of over thirty percent (30.3%) since 2007, they have only increased their faculty and staff by 4.4% during that time. Student costs have increased annually. He discussed economic development related to companies that are bringing jobs to Idaho, including WEL Companies, Inc., C3, and Agro Farma. These companies will require training for their employees. He expressed concern about current methods for measuring college success in Idaho, which do not include completion of specialized job training.

Funding requests include \$563,100 for occupancy costs for higher education buildings, as well as catch up funding for enrollment workload adjustment.

President Beck stated that Idaho Community College priorities include allowing existing college trustee election laws to remain unchanged, and to allow trustees and boards to retain their authority to determine whether firearms on campus are appropriate. He stated that CSI opposes guns on campus. Additionally, he said that Idaho community colleges request equity in funding, specifically for College of Western Idaho (CWI), which he believes is currently not receiving its share of state funding. He said that CWI is the largest community college in Idaho, but is receiving the smallest share of funding. College of Southern Idaho is continuing its partnership with College of Western Idaho (CWI) to assist CWI in meeting standards for accreditation.

In response to questions, **President Beck** explained that if costs for dual credit enrollment are not kept affordable at Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA), there could be a substantial decrease in enrollment. He stated that we may also see services being provided outside the State of Idaho, where credit may or may not be available. The Voluntary Framework of Accountability is a data collection system that is currently being piloted at community colleges around the United States. A new system needs to include community college successes that are not currently counted.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Representative Nonini
Chair

Mary Tipps
Secretary