

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 14, 2012

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Nonini, Vice Chairman Shirley, Representative(s) Trail, Block, Nielsen, Chadderdon (Malek), Shepherd, Wills, Marriott, Thayn, Hartgen, Bateman, Boyle, DeMordaunt, Nessel, Pence, Chew, Cronin

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative Nielsen

GUESTS: Tom Luna, Luci Willits, Tim Hill and Jason Hancock, State Department of Education (SDE); Bill Rogers, Daniel Cotten and Damon Woods, Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES); Geoffrey Thomas, Madison School District; Penni Cyr and Bert Marley, Idaho Education Association (IEA); Tracie Bent and Marilyn Whitney, State Board of Education (SBE); Tony Smith, Benton Ellis; Jess Harrison, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA); Brian Whitlock, Idaho National Laboratories (INL); Max Greenlee, Risch Pisca

Chairman Nonini called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Thayn** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 13, 2012. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Superintendent Tom Luna, State Department of Education (SDE), gave a presentation to the committee. He stated that in good years, budgets for public schools increased by four to six percent (4% to 6%) and each teacher received \$350 for classroom supplies. Ten million dollars was distributed for textbooks, and the State distributed five million dollars for rededication. That increased teacher base and minimum salaries, and the State fully funded the salary grid.

With the Students Come First plan, there is a uniform system of education as required by the State Constitution. Idaho is just a few months into implementing the reforms, but is already seeing a positive impact on schools and districts.

Most funding that is being requested by the SDE is statutorily required by Students Come First. Salary based apportionment provides funding for movement on the salary grid. Currently the law calls for an adjustment for salary based apportionment. An increase is being requested for classified staff members who do not participate in Pay for Performance. Teachers can earn bonuses by working in schools with high needs, working in hard-to-fill positions and accepting leadership opportunities.

Students who complete State graduation requirements by the junior year of high school are able to take college courses that are paid for by the State. Teachers will receive laptop computers in the Fall of 2012. Laptops will be deployed by thirds, with the first third receiving the computers in 2012, the second third in 2013, and the last third in 2014. Schools desiring to be part of the first group were asked to submit letters of interest. So far, 93 letters of interest from districts and charters have been received. Professional development is critical to implementing classroom technology successfully.

The FY 2012 General Fund Appropriation for the Public School Budget was \$1,216,488,500. The request for FY 2013 is \$1,273,587,800. A copy of the Public School Support Program and FY 2013 Public School Budget Request are attached.

In response to questions, **Superintendent Luna** said that a matrix will be developed in order to determine which schools will be in the first third of computer recipients. Decisions will be based on desire and need. Professional development is necessary and must be updated in order to be effective. If there is less federal money, there will need to be much more flexibility in how that federal money can be spent. Line item "m" in the Public School Support Program can be broken down into approximately nine million dollars to districts and four million dollars for professional development. Line item "p" in the Public School Support Program for \$2.5 million is for technical support staffing. Devices will be deployed to teachers and administrators this year, and support will be needed. Superintendent Luna stated that additional funds for technical support staffing could be necessary in future years.

Responding to additional questions, **Superintendent Luna** stated that every student and teacher in every classroom in every school will have the technology they need because technology is now part of the statutory funding formula. The SDE's FY 2013 budget proposal is in line with the Governor's proposal. Superintendent Luna does not think that levies should be increased, however, many districts are renewing existing levies. Any district that plans to increase taxes needs to be completely transparent and identify all sources of funding to taxpayers.

HJM 8:

Rep. Bateman presented **HJM 8**, a House Joint Memorial asking for the repeal of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. He stated that it calls for unreasonable expectations, with nearly half of America's public schools failing to meet the annual adequate progress requirements. He said that the Act causes subjects other than math, language, and science to suffer. Teachers under the No Child Left Behind Act are forced to teach to the test rather than being able to offer creative lessons that develop a love of learning and a thorough understanding of material.

Geoffrey Thomas, Superintendent, Madison School District, testified in support of **HJM 8**. He stated that the Federal Government does some things very well, and cited space exploration and public highway systems as examples. He does not believe that this level of federal involvement in public education is necessary or helpful. He believes that parents and educators know how best to educate their children. He provided a quote from President Obama calling the Act punitive. Thirty-eight states are currently opting out of No Child Left Behind due to the problematic nature of the requirements. He said that currently the Federal Government is approximately \$27 billion short of what was promised, making No Child Left Behind an unfunded mandate.

Penni Cyr, Idaho Education Association (IEA), testified in favor of **HJM 8**. She said that the No Child Left Behind Act is punitive and strips away local control.

MOTION:

Rep. Shirley made a motion to send **HJM 8** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Geoffrey Thomas responded to a question. He stated that his district would benefit from a repeal of the No Child Left Behind Act.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Chairman Nonini called for a vote on the motion to send **HJM 8** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. Motion carried by voice vote. **Rep. Bateman** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Bill Rogers, Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES), gave a presentation to the committee. He stated that CAES is seeking to secure sustainable energy solutions through research, education, economic development, and by serving as a portal to the Idaho National Laboratories (INL). Their research initiatives include geofluids energy science, energy efficiency, advanced materials, bioenergy, and nuclear science and engineering. Twenty-two mini grants were given to teachers last year. CAES was recognized as having a top internship program for college students. They have partnerships with Hewlett-Packard, Micron, Avista and other companies. They are also a major pillar in the IGEM (Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission) program.

Damon Woods, Boise State University student, stated that he is currently working on a project related to energy. His experiments and research have practical applications. He is currently in contact with Hydrovolts, a company that manufactures small turbines that can be dropped into irrigation canals to produce power.

In response to questions, **Mr. Woods** stated that computer models allow researchers to conduct virtual experiments.

Daniel Cotten, Boise State University student and CAES intern, stated that he has been working on engineering research projects with the Industrial Assessment Centers (IACs). Idaho has one of four IACs West of the Rocky Mountains. The presence of the IAC provides a \$1.5 million grant from the Department of Energy, and also provides training opportunities for student engineers.

Bill Rogers, Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES), stated that CAES is uniquely successful in the United States, due in major part to its partnerships with local universities and businesses.

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

Representative Nonini
Chair

Mary Tipps
Secretary