

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 13, 2014
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayne, Patrick, Buckner-Webb and Ward-Engelking
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 Goedde** called the Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:04 p.m., and a silent roll was taken.

Chairman Goedde announced that today's meeting could be the last of the session. He called upon Madison Barno, the Senate Education Committee Page to tell the Committee about her experiences and what she had learned.

Ms. Barno said that she had loved the experience at the Senate. She not only learned how a bill becomes a law, but she also learned how to operate the copy machine. As a homeschooler, she had never operated one before. She enjoyed seeing the behind the scenes processes and activities both on the Committee and on the Senate floor. Despite the seriousness of the bills being considered and how they affect the citizens of Idaho, she enjoyed how members of the Senate joke around with one another. **Ms. Barno** said that through her experience as a Page she has gained more confidence in herself, both as an individual and in the way she interacts with people at work. Finally, the experience has peaked a political interest that she had not felt before. She thanked the Committee for their support.

Chairman Goedde offered Ms. Barno letters of appreciation from the Senate, letters of recommendation, and a gift.

H 568 **Representative Marc Gibbs** explained that Idaho's legislative districts were designed each to represent approximately 45,000 Idahoans. In urban areas, some legislators can walk their entire district in an afternoon. On the other hand, Representative Gibbs' district covers five counties and nine school districts. One size does not fit all, particularly in education. **H 568** addresses the need for rural school districts to fill non-academic positions with the spouse of a school board member, which has been against policy. Currently, two spouses are volunteering. **H 568** would allow spouses to be compensated in districts with less than 1,200 students. The job must be advertised annually.

TESTIMONY: **Robin Nettinga**, Executive Director, Idaho Education Association (IEA) stated that every school district, regardless of its size, is challenged to find highly qualified teachers at one time or another. The Idaho State Board of Education has several rules in place to provide districts with options for districts struggling to fill teaching positions with qualified staff. A currently employed teacher could earn a new certification, for example. The already-employed teacher can have up to three years to earn certification in another area while continuing to teach with the district, including the course for which s/he is working to obtain full certification. Another option available to districts is Content Specialist. Under this alternative authorization, the route to certification is expedited for individuals who are highly and uniquely qualified in a subject area but do not hold a teaching certificate. Under this option, the district with an identified need for teachers in a specific subject area may hire the individual and assign them to teacher in the district while they earn state certification. Again, under this alternative route, the individual has up to three years to earn full certification. The IEA requested that the Committee hold **H 568**.

Karen Echeverria, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association (IASA) stated that the IASA supports **H 568**.

Harold Ott, IASA and Idaho Rural Schools Association, stated that rural districts often lack certified teachers in performance areas such as drama and music, and those positions also cannot be replaced with online courses. Mr. Ott joined with Ms. Echeverria in supporting **H 568**.

Senators Nonini and **Patrick** spoke in favor of the bill.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** made a motion to send **H 568** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Patrick** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Senator Thayn will carry the bill on the floor.

H 599 **Tim Hill**, Deputy Superintendent, State Department of Education (Department) said that **H 599** provides more flexibility to school districts in coping with limited budgets by providing one-third relief in fiscal year (FY) 2015 from the requirement that school districts allocate a certain amount of funding for school building maintenance. This relief was provided in full for the FY 2010-2013 period, and for two-thirds of these monies in FY 2014. This legislation is consistent with the second year of a three-year, phased-in reinstatement of the maintenance match requirement approved in the FY 2015 public schools appropriation bill.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** made a motion to send **H 599** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Patrick** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Senator Patrick will carry the bill on the floor.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chairman Goedde passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Mortimer.

S 1410 **Chairman Goedde** explained that school districts must comply with wireless service standards in order to qualify for state appropriation. **S 1410** sets forth those standards. **Chairman Goedde** emphasized that **S 1410** details standards only. The Department will be charged with writing specifications in concert with the Idaho Education Technology Association (IETA).

Senator Thayn asked if the requirements would be written in rule. **Chairman Goedde** deferred to **Tom Luna**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, who stated that two methods were available: policy or rule. Timing becomes an issue because districts need to make decisions by July 1, 2014. **Senator Thayn** said that establishing specifications through policy would be the better course.

Senator Fulcher asked if the standards, functionality or testing criteria favored any particular supplier. **Chairman Goedde** replied that he was very conscious of that in drafting the bill. **Chairman Goedde** had the bill reviewed by people in his District No. 4 who are not involved with the Education Network of America, as well as IETA, and all were comfortable with the language of the bill. The standards could be used for any provider. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** noted that the Department had also vetted the standards.

MOTION: **Senator Fulcher** made a motion to send **S 1410** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Chairman Goedde will carry the bill on the floor.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Vice Chairman Mortimer passed the gavel back to Chairman Goedde.

Chairman Goedde thanked Elaine Leedy, Education Committee Secretary for her two sessions of service to him and to the Committee.

Chairman Goedde invited Tom Luna to the podium for closing remarks. **Superintendent Luna** thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak to them one last time. He stated that he had learned a lot about how bills were made and laws passed. "It has been a great eight years," he said, and he has greatly appreciated his time working with the Committee. "We have become friends."

Chairman Goedde also thanked Vice Chairman Mortimer for his service to the Committee.

MOTION: **Senator Nonini** made a motion to approve the Minutes of March 3, 2014. **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** made a motion to approve the Minutes of March 5, 2014. **Senator Fulcher** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

ADJOURNED: Having no further business before the Committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 3:34 p.m.

Senator Goedde
Chair

Elaine Leedy
Secretary