

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 22, 2015

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn, Senators Keough, Nonini, Patrick, Souza, Den Hartog, and Ward-Engelking

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Buckner-Webb

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 Mortimer** convened the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

PRESENTATION: **Chairman Mortimer** welcomed Ms. Jane Wittmeyer of Wittmeyer and Associates, who presented an update on the Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families (Coalition).

Ms. Wittmeyer thanked the Committee for providing the time for the presentation (see attachment 1). **Ms. Wittmeyer** explained the Coalition was formed in 2006 to expand on public school choice and described the make-up of the organization. She invited the Committee to the Coalition's signature event to support the school choice rally, which will be held this year on January 27 at noon on the Capitol steps.

Senator Thayn asked about the front-loading of funding, and what would be the implications when a student registers with one school and then moves to another during the school year.

Ms. Suzie Budge, representing Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, took the podium to explain the funding formula. She said the receiving school is presently at a disadvantage because it receives only 25 percent of the new student's funding while the initial school gets 75 percent. She said that a revised funding formula will be required to address this problem.

Senator Patrick asked if legislation was in process to fix the problem. **Ms. Wittmeyer** replied in the affirmative.

Senator Nonini asked if there were upcoming laws and/or grants, which are favorable to charter schools. **Ms. Wittmeyer** did not have the details but promised to provide an answer as soon as possible.

Chairman Mortimer thanked Ms. Wittmeyer for her informative presentation.

PRESENTATION: **Chairman Mortimer** welcomed Mr. Bob Lokken, CEO of White Cloud Analytics. **Mr. Lokken** presented the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force Accountability and Autonomy Subcommittee (Subcommittee) for improving education (see attachment 2).

Mr. Lokken said two years of thorough research resulted in the Subcommittee's findings. He specified the determining factor for successful student achievement was not a magic formula or "secret sauce," but was simply focus. The Subcommittee patterned its findings on the Massachusetts model because of that state's success in student achievement. Massachusetts initially ranked in the middle of the pack and now ranks high in the category of students going on to postsecondary schools. The Subcommittee recommended the goal of 60 percent. He reviewed Idaho's current percentages in that area, which were predominantly well below that number. The three areas of focus in attaining the 60 percent goal are (1) autonomy and accountability, (2) high expectations, and (3) innovation and collaboration.

Senator Patrick asked how college readiness is determined. **Mr. Lokken** said the best current proxy was the State Board's standard of students scoring over 500 on each of the three SAT areas. **Mr. Lokken** commented that Idaho is at the bottom five in remediation and dropout rates. He concluded that Idaho's current average rate is 17 percent, yet the required set annual goal for schools is to achieve 60 percent of their students to be ready for college.

In response to question's from the Committee, **Mr. Lokken** responded that: (1) Common Core was used as the basis for the Subcommittee's scoring; (2) the current funding model was used but does require change; and (3) the Subcommittee's recommendations were approved unanimously.

Senator Ward-Engleking thanked him for his work and for having three active teachers on the subcommittee.

Chairman Mortimer thanked Mr. Lokken for the Subcommittee's hard work involving these complex issues and for the informative presentation.

PRESENTATION: **Chairman Mortimer** welcomed Dr. Linda Clark, Superintendent of the West Ada Joint School District.

Dr. Clark presented the Governor's Task Force (Task Force) Recommendations on Career Ladder/Tier Licensure (see attachment 3). She began by explaining how the Task Force was set up and refined.

Dr. Clark said the secret to attaining high achievement in Idaho's schools falls squarely on recruiting and retaining strong teachers. She said the Task Force uses the Charlotte Danielson model to arrive at a common definition of a good beginning teacher. **Dr. Clark** reviewed the career ladder, which is a three-tiered approach patterned after the New Mexico model.

Senator Hartog asked how the Task Force recommendations relate to special needs students. **Dr. Clark** replied the formula includes special needs students, which she identified later in her presentation.

Senator Patrick asked how the new formula affects current teachers. **Dr. Clark** explained the requirements established for (1) residency, (2) professional and (3) master certificates which are contingent on: performance evaluation, student achievement/growth, and individual professional learning.

Senator Nonini asked if all state agencies agree with this recommendation. **Dr. Clark** affirmed that all agencies were in agreement.

Senator Ward-Engelking asked if the recommendations were approved unanimously, and if the Task Force was made up of a diverse group. **Dr. Clark** answered that the Task Force was indeed diverse, and the recommendations were not unanimous but were approved by a majority. She emphasized the importance of moving forward on these recommendations.

Dr. Clark thanked Chairman Mortimer and Senator Ward-Engleking for their valuable contributions to the Task Force.

Chairman Mortimer invited Dr. Rod Lewis to recap the presentation. **Dr. Lewis** affirmed Dr. Clark's message that now is the right time to move forward with the recommendations to achieve meaningful improvements in student achievement. He suggested that a delay would be a mistake.

Chairman Mortimer thanked Dr. Clark and Dr. Lewis for their hard work and informative presentation.

Chairman Mortimer recognized and welcomed Superintendent Sherri Ybarra, who was in the audience. He also acknowledged Esther Henry from Rigby, Idaho, who had been in the audience earlier.

Senator Nonini asked Chairman Mortimer if he would be willing to reschedule the two remaining agenda items **Docket Nos. 08-0202-1402** and **08-0203-1402**. He expressed concern that these rules would require more time than was available. After a brief discussion, **Chairman Mortimer** agreed to reschedule **Docket Nos. 08-0202-1402** and **08-0203-1402**.

There being no further business, **Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Senator Mortimer
Chair

LeAnn South
Secretary

Jeanne' Clayton
Assistant Secretary