

ATTACHMENT 2

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. My name is Matt Compton and I am the Public Policy director for the Idaho Education Association. I would like to make it clear from the onset that the IEA is not opposed to innovation. In fact, recommendation number 6 of the Governor's Task Force for Improving Education is to Empower Autonomy by Removing Constraint and specifically, the recommendation calls for the Governor's Office, the SBE and the SDE to evaluate existing education laws and administrative rules and work with the Legislature to remove those which impede local autonomy, flexibility, and the ability to be agile, adaptive, and innovative. The IEA was part of the Governor's Task Force, agreed that this recommendation was a priority and we continue to support all of the Task Force Recommendations.

But HB 570 takes a different tact than described in recommendation 6- this isn't an evaluation of existing laws and administrative rules. This actually allows participating schools, building by building, to opt out of any existing laws or rules that they find cumbersome.

Last year, the legislature considered a number of good ideas for improving education and to attract and retain highly qualified teachers in Idaho. Stakeholders and lawmakers spent the summer in subcommittees fleshing out specific details to deal with mastery-based education, the career ladder, student mobility, school funding, teacher evaluations, and master teacher premiums. Each subcommittee considered all possible and plausible circumstances and conditions... and we believe the concepts and ideas outlined in HB 570 deserve the same scrutiny.

A number of unintended consequences may result with the passage of HB 570 as currently written. For example, state and federal funding may be compromised for the entire district if an innovation school selects a particular path. Additionally, HB 570 raises a number of questions:

- What roles do parents to have in the development of a school's innovation plan?
- Are parents' voices included in determining if a school should set course towards becoming an innovation school?
- Will students be included in forming the principles, visions, goals and essential characteristics of the innovation school?

- Where is the oversight that ensures student learning objectives are being met?
- What is the trigger for schools to lose flexibility if they are not meeting goals and expectations?
- Can the innovation school hire teachers that are not certified to teach in Idaho?
- Can an innovation school ignore the Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators?
- Are there any limits on the number of rules or laws that a school can waive?
- Why does the legislation not consider a report of innovative practices that are successful and those that are not so that all schools can learn from what's working and what is not?

If all stakeholders have buy-in on the initial policy that improves everyone's ability to be agile, adaptive, and innovative and drive continuous improvement we can avoid the uncertainty and instability we are experiencing in these final weeks of this legislative session.

For those reasons we ask that you hold HB 570 in committee and instead, direct the SBE to convene meetings over the interim to begin the work outlined in Task Force Recommendation # 6. As the Governor has said himself, the task force for improving education was implemented after voters rejected the process, pace and policies in 2011, and should legislation be necessary for school improvement that stakeholders be involved in building consensus around those ideas. Mr. Chairman, please give all stakeholders an opportunity to work collectively, to look at existing education laws and administrative rules and work with you and your colleagues to inspire innovation in our schools. Process is incredibly important and adhering to process will go a long way toward fostering real innovation and eliminate doubt, concern and confusion.