

# Report to Senate Education Committee

Jan. 15, 2019

## Introduction

My name is Dwight Johnson and I am the State Administrator for Idaho Career & Technical Education. I'd like to introduce Steve Rayborn, my Deputy Administrator, and Amy Lorenzo, the Director of Policy and Organizational Planning, who are with me today.

We are passionate about the mission of CTE to prepare Idaho's youth and adults for high skill, in-demand careers. **So, we are excited to share two new initiatives we have launched this last year to enhance student growth and achievement.**

- The first is a new CTE teacher cohort model to help attract and retain more individuals from the private sector into the CTE teaching profession.
  - This is important because, as you know, we are facing a teacher shortage
  - Without teachers we cannot expand CTE programs and opportunities for students.
  - We have two sources for CTE teachers. One is the traditional route through Colleges of Education that train teachers. The other is from the private sector as a second or third career.
  - Before this year, we gave a limited occupational license to new teachers from the private sector and then required them to take 4 colleges courses over 3 years on pedagogy, classroom management, etc. to assure they had the necessary skills to be successful in the classroom. Once they had those classes we gave them their standard occupational license.
  - However, the cost of those classes came out of their own pocket. The cost, some \$4 to 5,000 dollars was a serious impediment to attracting teachers.
  - So, this last fall we started a new program that allows new teachers from the private sector to obtain their standard occupational license without any out of pocket expense and, we believe will provide a much better on boarding process leading to improved retention as well.
  - The new model provides for an intensive one-week academy in August before school starts, a one Saturday a month training in their region with other CTE teachers, a stipend for a mentor in their school and a visit in their classroom 4 times a year to provide feedback.
  - This model is repeated for their first two years and then they receive their standard occupational license without any out of pocket expenses.
  - We have 76 CTE teachers in our first cohort and are very excited about the launch of this new program.
  
- We are also in the middle of launching a new Program Quality initiative for CTE secondary programs.
  - We want to thank the legislature for appropriating \$300,000 for this effort and we will be proposing legislation this year that will codify this program.

- These funds can be used for both program incentive grants based on high performance or program improvement grants to help struggling programs.
- And in this initial year of the program we have focused on technical assistant grants.
- As part of our agency's implementation strategy, CTE staff conducted a total of 15 regional training sessions this fall with lead CTE teachers and administrators statewide.
- We had nearly 450 people attend these sessions from across the state where they learned about their programs' performance on three key CTE performance measures:
  - How their students performed on Technical Skills Assessments,
  - How their students performed on Workplace Readiness Assessments, and
  - What their participation rate was in Career Technical Student Organizations, where students have practical application of what they learn and participate in leadership opportunities.
- Programs and districts that fall below the statewide average on any one of those measures will be eligible to apply for a technical assistance grant as part of the initiative.
- The grant applications must clearly specify how these additional funds will lead to program improvement and must also explicitly state how and where the funds will be spent within their CTE program that will positively impact these key metrics.
- Invitations to apply for the improvements grant will be sent to districts by the end of January, with grant awards anticipated no later than the end of March 2018.
- We are very excited about launching this new initiative that ties spending to performance metrics.
- The Governor is recommending an additional \$300,000 for FY2019. This will provide a total of \$600,000 in ongoing funds for both incentive grants and program improvement grants.

**Based on recommendations of the Governor's Workforce Development Taskforce we are preparing two other initiatives to enhance student growth and achievement.**

One of task force recommendations was to better "Connect Education to Careers" and that Idaho's K-through-Career education system should value and support all pathways for students to achieve education, training and workforce skills that align to their career aspirations.

- So one of the things we want to do in the future that we are not doing now is to develop a strong Middle School Career Exploration program.
  - There is a great need in Idaho for students and their families to have greater exposure to career opportunities.
  - Currently, CTE programs in Idaho start in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and help prepare students for high-skill, in demand careers. So we are proposing legislation this session that would allow CTE programs to begin in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

- This new CTE Middle School program would focus on career exploration opportunities for students, helping ensure that Idaho 8<sup>th</sup> graders will have greater context and content for developing their required 8<sup>th</sup> grade career plan.
- The goal will be to make this career exploration a more meaningful experience for students and their parents and help ensure that the 8<sup>th</sup> grade plan will not be a one-time event, but an on-going process that will involve their families as they explore career opportunities.
- Increasing student career exploration opportunities in middle school would provide for more informed student choices on whether to participate in secondary CTE programs and increase student readiness and effective planning for college and career.
- Where appropriate, this proposal would also allow CTE programs of study to start earlier, leading to greater skill development and career preparation for postsecondary credits, industry certifications, and apprenticeship programs.

Another recommendation from the Workforce Development Taskforce was to Incentivize Idaho school districts to incorporate workforce readiness skills through secondary curriculum.

- So, we are proposing legislation that would establish a framework for creating Workforce Readiness Incentive program.
  - If this legislation is adopted the division will develop specific criteria to award incentive funds to school districts and CTE programs based on the number of secondary career technical concentrators who have demonstrated workforce readiness at the completion of their career technical education program.
  - This incentive-based approach would more clearly demonstrate the return on investment provided by career technical education. This approach will also help ensure more CTE students are ready for the workforce and able to meet the demands of business and industry.
  - The performance measures and procedures would be established by the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education and approved by the State Board of Education.

## **Conclusion**

We are excited about these new initiatives and appreciate the opportunity to present today. We look forward to working with the Committee and we are available to assist in any way we can.