

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 24, 2012
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Andreason, Fulcher, Winder, Toryanski, Malepeai, and LeFavour
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Pearce
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.

MINUTES:

Chairman Goedde welcomed the group from North Idaho College (NIC) and called **Dr. Priscilla Bell** to the podium. She introduced those Board of Trustees who joined the committee for the presentation. Those in attendance are as follows: **Rick Armon**, Chair of the Board; **Judy Meyer**, Vice-Chairman; **Christie Wood**, Secretary; **Ron Vieselmeyer**, Treasurer; **Kent Howard**, Trustee; and Vice President of Community Relations and Marketing, **Mark Browning**. **Chairman Goedde** welcomed them all to the committee.

TESTIMONY:

Dr. Priscilla Bell, President of North Idaho College presented to the committee the past year's accomplishments of NIC. She stated that this is the same material that she presented to **JFAC** on the morning of January 24, 2012. so it will also include the financial aspects of the institution. Supporting document related to this testimony have been archived and can be accessed in the office of the Committee Secretary (see Attachment #1). **Dr. Bell** highlighted the different sites and locations of NIC campuses. The college has experienced significant growth and that upward trend is continuing. The current recession has resulted in a reduction of state funding to the institution, therefore, the burden of costs has shifted to the students. Unfortunately, students are taking on more debt to cover the cost of education and this is a concern to NIC administration.

The college is working with area high schools to continue the dual credit programs as it has proven to be successful. NIC would like to restart the Physical Therapist Assistant Program. The input from the community and the advisory board suggests that this educational program is greatly needed in the region for health care demands. The institution is also asking for a onetime funding request that will pay to remodel some existing space. This will allow student services to be consolidated into a single building site.

Some of the NIC's concerns moving forward are as follows: how to build buildings to accommodate the tremendous growth in enrollment, retention and adequate compensation of employees, and the continued growth of professional and technical education curriculum.

During this recession NIC, has not cut any programs, instead some have been added. This creates an added burden to the staff and faculty , but they have risen to the challenge. **Dr. Bell** then introduced the video that highlighted students' experiences.

Chairman Goedde thanked **Dr. Bell** and asked the committee for questions.

Senator Malepeai inquired what NIC has done to help returning students pay for school? **Dr. Bell** stated that the institution has helped students get money through financial aid, Pell grants, and work study. The school's foundation has also raised money to offset student costs. Federal financial aid guidelines are changing and this will hurt community colleges. The institution needs more grant money and state funded grants to help students with their educational goals.

Senator Andreason asked when was the last time NIC employees had a salary increase and what would be a good percentage increase? **Dr. Bell** responded that the employees have gone two years in a row without salary increases and that this year, salaries increased for faculty and staff by two percent. A satisfactory salary increase would be three percent for 2013.

Chairman Goedde asked **Dr. Bell** to explain if the consolidated student service building would be in conjunction with other area institutions? **Dr. Bell** responded that the building could be used jointly with other state and local entities. **Chairman Goedde** stated that the State Board of Education and the Governor have embraced the Complete College America Program, what is NIC doing to incorporate that effort? **Dr. Bell** responded that NIC is working to achieve the goal of student completion rates. Currently, a task force is working to identify and solve barriers to that goal. The report for the first time notes that NIC students are on track; the graduation rate has grown at a higher rate than the enrollment rate.

Having no more questions **Chairman Goedde** thanked **Dr. Bell** for her service and wished her well in her retirement this summer.

S1237

Tracie Bent, State Department of Education introduced **S1237**. The bill is in section 33-1002a of Idaho code. This section of code defines the term "online course." As the rules were being addressed it was found that the original definition was problematic saying that instructors could not be at the same school as the student. Rather, schools can have their own teachers teach an online course, but the students taking that course cannot be in classroom with the instructor at the time they are taking the course.

Chairman Goedde asked for questions from the committee. Having none, he asked for audience testimony.

TESTIMONY:

Penni Cyr, President of Idaho Education Association, stated that her organization has been and continues to be against the reform legislation. While this legislation doesn't alleviate the concerns it is an effort to make the legislation work better for the schools and students. Supporting document related to this testimony have been archived and can be accessed in the office of the Committee Secretary (see Attachment #2). **Ms. Cyr** did not receive any questions.

Senator LeFavour asked **Chairman Goedde** for him to clarify what would happen to this legislation if the referendum passes? **Chairman Goedde** replied that in all the "Student Comes First" legislation there has been a clause that if the referendum passes all this would go away, however, that is not in this bill. **Ms. Bent** added that this bill could be reworked to add those words. It is her understanding though that if the referendum passes all this legislation and codes for the education reform would go away.

Senator LeFavour is fine with the wording as long as that is the case. **Robin Nettinga** from the Idaho Education Association addressed the concern by stating that it is also the IEA's understanding from their lawyer's interpretation that if the referendum passes all rules and legislation will disappear. **Chairman Goedde** stated that he would have **Mr. Kane** from the Attorney General's office review this question.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** moved and seconded by **Senator Winder** to send **S1237** to the floor with a do pass recommendation. The motion carried by **voice-vote**.
Vice Chairman Mortimer will carry **S1237** on the floor.

ADJOURN: **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 3:47 P.M.

Senator Goedde
Chairman

LeAnn South
Secretary