

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 29, 2012
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Andreason, Pearce, Fulcher, Winder, Toryanski, and Malepeai
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator LeFavour

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** called the meeting to order at 3:07 P.M.

PRESENTATION: **Chairman Goedde** introduced **Patrick Lowenthal** from Boise State University as an Instructional Designer. **Chairman Goedde** stated that **Mr. Lowenthal** is intimately involved in online education. He gave two presentations to the technology task force.

Mr. Lowenthal passed out his presentation to the committee. He talked to the committee about his experiences as a teacher, online student, and now as a parent of two girls in school. He designs and manages online course programs. He has done about everything there is to do when it comes to online learning. Today he is here today as a parent. Based on the new legislation he is wondering what schools were going to do to make the statements happen.

He said that at the pace of technology changes he wonders what colleges will look like in five years. There are all these predictions that online school will eliminate Liberal Art colleges. Ten years ago there were no iPods, iPads, or TiVo: The world has changed drastically. He continued his presentation citing number of students over the past four years taking online classes. Online courses are the way today's and tomorrow's children will be learning. The students are choosing online courses.

Mr. Lowenthal said that today in 2012 one-third of students K-12 are taking online courses. How many will be taking online courses in the next three years? Online courses are going to be here and most colleges will have a mix of face to face and online classes. He said he wants his children to be prepared for college, so how will that happen. Learning online is a skill set that needs to be taught to teachers.

He said there are high quality online courses as well as lousy ones. But in the best schools, there are lousy face to face teachers, and in the worst schools there, are good face to face teachers. There is nothing about face to face teaching that makes it wonderful. Schools will never get rid of teachers they will just use their qualities in different ways.

He reminded the committee in many corporate settings managers and staff learn skills online. There must be skilled teacher to teach online. He broke down one slide of what questions should be about when designing quality online classes. Supporting documents related to this testimony have been archived and can be accessed in the office of the Committee Secretary (see Attachment #1).

He concluded his presentation stating even the colleges, like Princeton, that never wanted online courses are going online using BlackBoard with their students. Society needs to understand that online courses are here, now how are they to be taught better.

- QUESTIONS:** **Chairman Goedde** thanked **Mr. Lowenthal** and asked him are there companies that have standards for rating online classes, from his perspective are they good or is there room for improvement. **Mr. Lowenthal** replied there is room for improvement. He would like the rating to show a variety of aspects of the program from content to teacher. **Chairman Goedde** said that the State Department of Education is charged to create a rubric by which they are going to weigh online classes to see if they are up to the standard that they are requiring. He hopes that the DOE will give **Mr. Lowenthal** the opportunity to be a part of the process.
- Vice Chairman Mortimer** asked **Mr. Lowenthal** what he believes is the single most difficult challenge to the implementation of online learning in K-12. **Mr. Lowenthal** said the single most challenge is fear of unknown and fear of change.
- Chairman Goedde** thanked **Mr. Lowenthal** for the presentation and enthusiasm.
- Chairman Goedde** said there are three sets of minutes to approve.
- MINUTES APPROVAL:**
- MOTION:** **Vice Chairman Mortimer** moved, seconded by **Senator Fulcher**, to approve the January 19, 2012 minutes. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Fulcher** moved, seconded by **Vice Chairman Mortimer**, to approve the February 6, 2012 minutes. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Winder** moved, seconded by **Senator Fulcher**, to approve the February 13, 2012 minutes. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- ADJOURN:** Having no more business, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 3:43 P.M.

Senator Goedde
Chairman

LeAnn South
Secretary