

MINUTES
Approved by the Committee
K-12 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM
INTERIM COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 12, 2013
8:30 A.M.
LINCOLN AUDITORIUM

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Cochairman Senator John Goedde. Other members present included Cochairman Representative Reed DeMordaunt, Senator Steve Thayne, Senator Jim Patrick, Senator Fred Martin, Senator Branden Durst, Representative Judy Boyle, Representative Wendy Horman, Representative Julie VanOrden and Representative Holli Woodings. Legislative Services Office staff in attendance included Eric Milstead, Paul Headlee and Toni Hobbs.

Others present at the meeting were Paige Kowalski, Data Quality Campaign; Rob Winslow, Phil Homan, Idaho Association of School Administrators; Chris Mazzeo, Education Northwest; Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Marilyn Whitney, Mike Rush, Amanda Nelms, Jess Harrison, Andy Mehl, Carson Howell, Richard Westerberg and Don Soltman, State Board of Education; Paige Kowalski, Data Quality Campaign; Georgeanne Griffith, Lakeland School District; Cindy Sisson and Bernadette Sexton, Meridian Joint School District #2; Robin Nettinga, Matt Compto and Penni Cyr, Idaho Education Association; Phil Hardy, Strategies 360; Tim Hill, Alex MacDonald, Luci Willits, Joyce Popp, Melissa McGrath and Camille Wells, State Department of Education; Karen Jarboe Singletary, Department of Labor; LeAnn Simmons, Idaho Voices for Children; Tom Taggart, Association of School Business Officials; Representative Janet Trujillo, District 33; Renee Sinclair, Apple; John Foster, Kestrel West; Lauren Willis, National Association of Social Workers; Brody Aston, Lobby Idaho; John Watts and Elli Brown, Veritas Advisors; Don Keller, Sage International; Raeleen Welton, Westerberg and Associates and Ken Burgess, Idaho Charter School Network.

After opening remarks by the cochairs, **Mr. Don Soltman**, President, Idaho State Board of Education started the meeting off with an overview of Idaho's educational system. His complete presentation is available at:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Mr. Soltman explained that the State Board of Education is the policy-making body for all public education in Idaho and provides general oversight and governance for public K-20 education, including community colleges. The Board serves as the governing board for all of the four year institutions in the state as well as Eastern Idaho Technical College.

The Board's mission is to provide leadership, set policy, and advocate for transforming Idaho's educational system to improve Idaho citizen's quality of life and enhance global competitiveness.

Idaho's education system services 284,318 public K-12 students and 108,658 higher education students. There are also 40,000 adults enrolled in short-term courses and programs at public higher education institutions.

In the last few years, improvement efforts have included the development and assessment of state standards, the redesign of high school graduation requirements, the promotion of programs and mechanisms to increase dual credit, and the creation of the Charter School Commission.

Mr. Soltman noted that it is not enough simply to initiate reform, progress must be measured and the information used to make improvements. Good data is the key to making that possible.

The Board also recognizes that collecting and using information comes with significant responsibility. Two years ago the Board created the Data Management Council to coordinate the data collection process and insure that data were protected and used appropriately. This Council has met monthly over the past two years. This past August the Board took specific policy action to protect student information.

Mr. Soltman commented that Idaho's high school graduation rate of 84% as one of the highest in the nation. Unfortunately, Idaho does not do so well at the postsecondary level. Only 35% of 25 to 34 year olds hold a postsecondary degree compared with 40.1% nationally.

Regarding the recent recession, people with different education levels fair quite differently. People with bachelor's degree or higher actually gained 187,000 jobs during the recession and gained another 2 million jobs in recovery. Those with some college lost 1.75 million jobs during the recession, although almost all have been gained back. Finally, those with high school or less lost 5.6 million jobs during the recession and another 230,000 since.

People with associate's degree or some college education lost 1.75 million jobs during the recession, but have gained almost all of those back during the recovery. (1.6 million jobs in recovery).

People with high school degree or less lost 5.6 million jobs during the recession and an additional 230,000 jobs by February 2012 during the recovery.

Just looking at post recession, the growth has been in college level jobs. Bachelor degree jobs have grown by 82%; associate degree jobs by 41% and jobs at the high school preparation level or less have shrunk by 14%. Wages are also higher for higher education levels and unemployment rates are lower.

The Board has set an ambitious goal that by 2020, at least 60% of Idaho citizens age 25 to 34 would hold a postsecondary credential of one year or greater. **Mr. Soltman** said the Board realizes that this is a stretch because currently only 35% of our citizens in this age group hold associate degrees or higher.

To achieve this goal, the Board has developed a Complete College Idaho Plan. The plan has five key strategies:

- 1 – Strengthen the Pipeline
- 2 – Transform Remediation
- 3 – Structure for Success
- 4 – Reward Progress and Completion
- 5 – Leverage Partnerships

Senator Durst asked for clarification of the education pipeline. **Mr. Soltman** explained that it is the continuation of high school graduates moving into higher education. In response to another question from **Senator Durst**, **Mr. Soltman** stated that there is a lot of support for pre-K education but Idaho is currently K – 20 and the primary focus is on high school to college.

Senator Patrick asked whether there might be a professional technical education model to look at since 60% of professional technical students move on after high school. **Mr. Soltman** agreed that is something they need to look at.

Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction, was introduced to discuss perspectives on the K-12 system in Idaho. His presentation is available at:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Superintendent Luna explained that the Department of Education has been busy analyzing the results of the second year of the Five-Star Rating System. This is a system of increased accountability that uses multiple measures to evaluate teachers and students across the state. In this second year, Idaho has more five star schools and fewer one star schools and our schools are continuing to improve. He noted that Idaho students are also making strides. This past year, individual student data shows that 90% of Idaho students met or exceeded set standards in reading and 82% met the set standards in mathematics.

Superintendent Luna noted, however, that students are continuing to struggle after they graduate from high school. While more than 80% of Idaho students are at or above grade level in high school math and reading, nearly half or about 40% that go on to postsecondary education will qualify for remedial courses. Half of those students will not continue in postsecondary education for a second year.

This means that Idaho's K-12 standards need to be raised. **Superintendent Luna** stated that the Department is moving forward this school year with higher standards in math and English language arts. He said that this conversation of higher standards has led to a conversation of data collection. Data collection is a necessary part of any organization or industry. Data are necessary in the classroom, school, district and state level to make the best possible decisions. The collection of current, accurate, and quality data has been a cornerstone movement in education for decades. Without quality data down to the student level, there can never be true accountability.

Superintendent Luna said that in light of the Governor’s Education Task Force recommendations, it is clear that Idahoans want a system of education based on results.

When he first took office in 2007, Idaho was one of three states not to have a longitudinal data system. By 2008, we were the last state to have such a system. Idaho’s longitudinal data system is a data collection system that provides individual student data across multiple years K-12. It streamlines data collection processes at the state level allowing for the collection of more current, accurate and verifiable data. Prior to this the data collection system was very disorganized and required duplicative reports from different people during a single year.

Superintendent Luna explained that in 2008, he laid out a three year plan for Idaho to build and fully deploy Idaho’s longitudinal data system – known as the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE). That deployment was sped up in 2009 due the acceptance of federal stimulus money.

Idaho received accolades from the Data Quality Campaign for the quick progress made to meet the 10 Essential Elements. However, speeding up the timeline did not make the transition any easier on local school districts. Since the deployment of ISEE in 2010, there have been challenges. **Superintendent Luna** said the department works to constantly improve the system and there is still more work to be done. In his opinion, even with the challenges, Idaho has a better data collection system in place than ever before.

Superintendent Luna went on to explain that through ISEE numerous data elements are collected on students and staff in Idaho’s school districts. All of the data collected is required by a state or federal law or policy. These elements are collected by the school district and sent to the state for posting on the Department’s website for easy accessibility by any parent or patron. Most of this data is the same as what schools and districts have been collecting for years, the only difference is how that data is submitted to the state.

Data elements include:

- Student’ name
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Whether they receive accommodations on the statewide assessment
- Attendance records for state funding purposes

This data is used in many ways and one of the most obvious is to calculate funding for school districts and public charter schools. This is because Idaho’s funding formula is based on average daily attendance (ADA). ISEE allows the state to report more accurately because of individual student-level data. Before the data was submitted on an individual level, there was no way of knowing whether a student was being double funded. Through ISEE, the state was able to catch about 3,000 students who were over-counted for ADA purposes last year, saving about \$2 million in taxpayer dollars.

ISEE is also used for Idaho's accountability system, the Five-Star Rating System. Through ISEE, academic growth can be measured on a state level. This allows the state to evaluate schools based on multiple measures - not just whether students pass a test, but how much academic growth they showed the years they were in a certain school.

The greatest value this data system provides is the information that gets into the classroom and into the hands of every teacher.

Superintendent Luna went on to explain that thanks to support from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation and the Legislature, Idaho has been piloting a statewide instructional improvement system. This is phase two of ISEE. The first phase collects that data at the state level and the second phase turns the data into a useful tool that teachers can use in the classroom to individualize instruction for every child.

Through this system a teacher can see how all her students performed on the statewide assessment, not just this year, but in year past as well. A principal has access to all student's in the building and can better assign students to teachers based on that student's needs and the teacher's ability.

This system will also provide meaningful data for parents. The report card of today provides much more in-depth information than ever before so parents can become more involved in their child's education.

Many of the Governor's Education Task Force recommendations rely on current, accurate and verifiable data to be implemented, making this system even more important down the road.

Superintendent Luna stated that as important and exciting it is to have this data available to teachers, principals, parents and policymakers, it is equally as important to make sure that data remains safe and secure. In August, he sent a letter to Governor Otter and the Chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees about this topic. In his opinion, this can be accomplished through an Executive Order or legislation establishing a firewall that would ensure no personally identifiable data, with the exceptions of information required for the Migrant Student Database, shall be collected, tracked, housed, reported or shared with the federal government. **Superintendent Luna** emphasized that establishing and codifying a clear firewall would be a positive path forward to improve Idaho's public education system to focus on results and use data to drive instruction so that it meets the needs of every child in the classroom. **Senator Goedde** noted that he is working on legislation to address the privacy issue.

Senator Thayne asked who the data is shared with after it is collected. **Superintendent Luna** said currently the K-12 system information comes to the state level but the state does not share individual student information, just aggregate information. He said that the plan has been to have a P-16 longitudinal data system and that the State board is working on a system that will communicate and share with the K-12 system. He noted that the level of protection is such that

a parent can see their children, a teacher can see their students, principals can see an entire school, and the district superintendent can see all of the schools in the district.

Representative Woodings asked whether higher education institutions want to access this data instead of relying on ACT/SAT scores when assessing potential students. **Superintendent Luna** said he thinks that is a conversation that is going on but it will take some time to evolve. The state still requires students to take some sort of college entrance exam and the state provides the SAT. This information is part of the longitudinal data system. As far as higher education having access to the information and using it as an evaluation for college entrance, it is hoped that Idaho has a system that when we say a student is ready for college, the colleges agree with that. Today that is not the case, high school tests given today indicate that students are ready to move on to college but many still have to take remedial classes once they get to postsecondary education.

Representative DeMordaunt commented that it seems that people should be excited about the change in data collection system but it seems that many people are frustrated and concerned. He asked why are there so many concerns. **Superintendent Luna** admitted that there are some legitimate concerns – one of the biggest is resources necessary to feed the correct information into the system. He added that some of the information gets pushed back to the districts because they are able to determine that it is not accurate. This requires more effort on the part of the district to find the errors and to correct them. In the past the information was sent in on the aggregate and accepted. There was no way to verify it. The fact that implementation was moved up by one year also that led to less ability to test the system. He noted that \$1.5 million was distributed to school districts when ISEE was rolled out and the Legislature has appropriated an additional \$2.5 million for school districts specifically to provide resources for the ISEE program.

Senator Durst asked about the transferability of data. He said that every other state adjacent to Idaho has a fully functioning longitudinal data system and he asked whether the data follows the student from state to state. **Superintendent Luna** said a later presentation would speak specifically to what happens when students move out of state. He noted that in Idaho, we have what is called a “digital backpack” that moves with a student.

In response to another question from **Senator Durst** regarding implementation of the higher standards and the smarter balanced assessment and how that will influence the star rating system, **Superintendent Luna** explained that this is the first year all school in Idaho are using the common core standards. He noted that considerable resources were made available to help with professional development. It is his experience that the implementation of the higher standards is going well. This is a long-term professional development that will need to be ongoing. With regard to the smarter balanced assessment, it was piloted in 20 schools last year and next year they hope to field test it in all schools and it will become part of the accountability and five-star rating system.

Superintendent Luna emphasized that once Idaho raises its standards and starts measuring students on the higher standards, there will be fewer students meeting those standards. Other states have experienced this also. He added that Idaho will have to figure out how to weigh that when putting it into the star rating system. This just means the students are being measured against higher standards. Over time students will meet these standards and be better off for it.

Representative VanOrden asked whether Idaho will be ready to address the affect this will have on the star rating when it happens. **Superintendent Luna** said that it needs to be transparent and open and we need to realize that when students are measured against a higher standard, the results will change.

Mr. Richard Westerberg gave an update on the Governor's Task Force for Improving Education. He is the chairman of the task force. His complete presentation is available at: <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Focus areas for the task force included:

- Fiscal Stability
- Structural Change
- Teacher/Administrator Effectiveness
- Professional Development
- Technology

These focus areas were broken into subcommittees:

- Structural Change (including Technology)
- Fiscal Stability, Effective Teachers and Leaders (including Professional Development)

The Task Force began meeting in January 2013. Recommendations were finalized and announced in August 2013. He noted that voting was unanimous in all areas except one.

The Structural Change Subcommittee submitted the following guiding principles:

- Structural changes are required to achieve 60% goal
- High performance schools require a high performance work environment for teachers and administrators

The guiding principles from the Fiscal Stability/Effective Teachers Subcommittee included:

- High Performing Schools Require Fiscal Stability - *In order for schools to achieve the student performance required of a world-class education system, the state needs a more equitable and adequate funding system.*
- High Performing Schools Require Effective Teachers and Leaders - *The classroom teacher is the most important school-related determinant of student achievement. Effective teachers increase student success, close achievement gaps and foster a student's ability to learn. This results in lower dropout rates, higher numbers of students going on to postsecondary experiences and increased employment and earnings opportunities.*

Strong administrators and leaders enable teachers to develop, grow and succeed in their profession.

The strategies and recommendations are included in detail in his PowerPoint presentation that is available at: <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Mr. Westerberg explained that the Task Force submitted its final report on September 6, 2013 and it is available on the State Board of Education website at: www.boardofed.idaho.gov. Public comments will be taken until September 27, 2013.

Representative Horman asked about a gap she noticed between the structural change subcommittee and the fiscal stability/effective teachers subcommittee. She noticed that the structural change committee has a specific recommendation about student outcomes while the fiscal stability subcommittee career ladder recommendation does not seem to focus on student outcome. **Mr. Westerberg** commented that there are probably many gaps between recommendations. He noted that there is still a lot of detail work on how the recommendations will be implemented. Some of these recommendations are very detailed but most are more in the way of philosophical statements.

Senator Thayne commented that the mastery approach to learning part of the report does not give a lot of detail on how that will be achieved or how it will be measured. He asked where the committee could get further detail about that. **Mr. Westerberg** said that a lot of resource materials are attached to the report appendix for background but all of these are going to require more workgroups to get down to the nuts and bolts of how this will work.

Representative DeMordaunt, as cochairman of the structural change subcommittee, commented that outcomes were important to the Task Force. He also noted that there are models available that focus on mastery that they looked at.

Senator Durst asked about the decision behind the areas of focus for the Task Force and why Pre-K was not part of the discussion. **Mr. Westerberg** said that he could not recall a lot of discussion of Pre-K. The Task Force was allowed to decide what they wanted to work on.

Rob Winslow, Executive Director of the Idaho Association of School Administrators (IASA), spoke regarding the IASA's perspective of the K-12 system and the challenges and needs. The IASA consists of superintendents, principals and special education directors. They have about 640 members throughout the state and play a role in leading, advocating and partnering in the Idaho educational system.

The first challenge is the need for fiscal stability for school districts. **Mr. Winslow** explained that operation funding includes insurance premiums, utilities, fuel and other operating expenses. This funding has decreased significantly since 2008-09 while operating expenses have increased. School districts have had to make significant cuts in professional development, textbooks and content material, cut bus routes, implemented 4-day school weeks and cut staff.

Mr. Winslow advocated for the restoration of operation funding to get it back to adequate levels and maintain it with modest increases.

According to **Mr. Winslow**, another big challenge is recruitment and retention of teachers and staff. This has always been true for special education and math but now it is true for other areas as well. Staff retention is also an issue, especially for districts located near states that pay higher salaries. He said the IASA appreciates the steps the legislature took on the salary grid and increasing the starting salary to \$31,000. He added that they support the Task Force recommendation to move to a career ladder moving toward \$40,000, \$50,000 and \$60,000.

Mr. Winslow stated that the districts want to be involved in implementing the new Idaho Core Standards. He said that the biggest phase right now is professional development – to help with Idaho core value changes.

Senator Thayne commented that the task force recommendations seem to deal with the needs of the system but that students and parents seem to be left out. **Mr. Winslow** noted that the task force had parent representation and they did not try to leave anyone out.

In response to a question from **Representative VanOrden**, **Mr. Winslow** stated that teacher mentoring has been an area of interest over the years and has been effective in the past. He added that with the career ladder, mentoring others in your district could be a requirement for moving up to a certain level of pay. **Senator Goedde** commented that he thinks mentoring is still in statute but that it has not been funded since 2002 or so.

Senator Goedde asked how much discretionary funding was appropriated in 2010. Mr. Paul Headlee, Budget and Policy Office stated that the amount was \$85 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

Senator Goedde commented that insurance premiums take up part of the funding. He said he would like to see insurance costs as a comprehensive package and asked if there had been any thought of listing insurance premiums as a line item. **Mr. Winslow** said it was discussed but with the new health care system coming along they chose to wait.

Jessica Harrison, Director of Policy and Government for the Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA), spoke to the committee regarding the issue of discretionary funding. She said that according to the ISBA, this is the biggest issue they face.

To call these funds discretionary is, in their opinion, a bit of a misnomer. She said that the ISBA, in unison with the IASA, is making a concerted effort to call these funds operational moneys, to more accurately reflect their use.

In the world of school finance in Idaho the term discretionary funding means funding that goes to pay for crucial items including:
Utilities;

Classified staff;
Substitute teachers;
Insurance benefits;
Sick leave;
Supplies;
Ground maintenance; and
Others.

School districts receive these funds through what is called “support unit funding.” This is the amount the State allocates and sends to districts for each “unit” for which they qualify, based upon Average Daily Attendance. In 2009, the distribution factor was \$25,442 per support unit, in 2013, districts received \$19,706 – a decrease of more than \$5,700. These figures reflect the amount of money appropriated for each unit and are intended to cover costs not associated with staff salaries and specific line items.

Ms. Harrison added that one of the largest differentials covered by operational funds is the classified salary appropriation versus the salary levels that are actually paid by school districts. Classified employees are those that do not have a teaching or administrative credential, include secretaries, crossing guards, bus drivers and special education aides. Many of these employees work for the district for many years and even with their modest salaries, they receive salaries that exceed the allocated amount paid by the State.

Classified staff, referred to as “super classified” personnel includes employees that are highly skilled in technology. Schools technological needs are increasing and the market value for these highly skilled employees make their salary levels much higher than a school secretary or lunch worker. Still districts receive the same allocation for each category. It is the norm for districts to have to use the salary appropriation for multiple employees to make up the salary for just one of these individuals. She noted that the 2013 appropriation did include some relief for technology staff.

Another area paid out of the operational budget includes employee benefits. The amounts paid out differ for each school district. Meridian pays approximately 60% of their operational funds for employee benefit costs. Many school districts face health insurance premium increases between 10% and 20%, with the group plan offered by the Idaho School District Council instituting increases of 12% over last year’s premiums.

As a result, school districts remain in a position where increases in any of these expenses necessitates cuts in other areas of operations, areas most school districts have already reduced significantly over the last few years.

ISBA has received a joint resolution calling for increased operational funds submitted by Idaho Falls and Meridian school districts. It proposes that the restoration of operational funds be a priority in the upcoming legislative session and that funding be known in the future as “operational” rather than “discretionary” in order to better reflect its actual use. The resolution

has been given a do pass recommendation by the ISBA Executive Board and it is expected to pass unanimously at their annual convention in November.

Ms. Harrison briefly addressed some other resolutions the ISBA has received that support the Governor's Task Force recommendations as follows:

- A Joint Resolution supporting the Idaho Core Standards
- A Resolution seeking to move away from the current state salary reimbursement index based on education and experience
- A Resolution seeking to focus on student mastery rather than seat time for advancement and to move away from the current funding formula based on Average Daily Attendance

Ms. Harrison explained that all of these will go before the full membership of the ISBA at the November convention and those that pass will establish the ISBA's legislative platform for the next session.

In response to a question from **Senator Goedde, Mr. Headlee** stated that changing from "discretionary" to "operational" would only take a wording change.

Penni Cyr, President of the Idaho Education Association was the next speaker. Her complete presentation is available at:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Ms. Cyr was asked to speak to the committee about the challenges facing Idaho's public schools. She began with some successes. Idaho has 13 high school seniors who have won the prestigious National Merit Scholarship for 2013. According to the latest data from the State Department of Education, 90% of all high school seniors in Idaho graduated. Also, more than half of Idaho's schools were rated as four-star and five-star schools this year.

She noted that even with all of these successes, there are still many challenges. One of the greatest challenges is fiscal. In 2009, lawmakers lamented the need to make cuts to our public schools. However, Governor Otter and legislative leaders made it clear that when the economy turned around, the first dollars returned to the budget would be for education. **Ms. Cyr** commented that now is the time to redirect the priorities toward ensuring the success of our public schools. It is the time to reinvest in our schools by lowering class sizes, implementing plans to assure our state's ability to recruit and retain the best and brightest teachers, and by giving educators the support they need to guide Idaho's children from preschool through high school, ready for college and a career.

She quoted from an opinion piece by Governor Otter that was published in newspapers around the state:

- *“Just as economists work with supply and demand, so should education. When Idaho students are equipped with relevant skills, they’ll earn higher wages and Idaho businesses will prosper.”*

The Governor also said recently to the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce:

- *“We’ve got to backfill some things. There were some cuts made between ’08 and ’10 that were necessary but unfortunate. What we can do is set ourselves on a course that we accomplish so much every year, and four or five years out we accomplish the entire package.”*

Ms. Cyr stated that the IEA agrees with Governor Otter. The sheer increase in the number of successful levy elections reinforces the need for Idaho to begin now to reinvest in our schools. Idaho citizens want great public schools, and if the legislature is unwilling to put money into their local schools, the electorate will either vote to tax itself to ensure schools have the funds they need or the system will suffer as parents, students, and educators flee for a better, more supportive system.

For the past several years, the IEA has raised concerns about the number of teachers still leaving the profession and the state. The latest numbers from the State Department of Education show that the departures continue at historic levels. It is critical that we identify how we can recruit and retain the best and brightest to become teachers and to stay in Idaho. This will require that we reevaluate systems that ensure those with expertise in educating our children have the professional autonomy and resources to do so.

Idaho’s public schools today are hampered by political bureaucracy. As the Governor’s Task Force recently pointed out in one of their recommendations, Idaho’s K-12 schools are governed by laws and rules - many of which have caused an erosion of local control. For example:

There is a detailed and technical requirement that school districts provide any potential employer with personnel file information. It is incredibly onerous for school districts and is not required for any other public employee. I.C. § 33-1210

School Districts are forbidden to have long terms master agreements with teachers, even if it is in the Districts best interests. (akin to a favorable long-term lease) I.C. § 33-1275.

School Districts are forbidden to hire retired teachers that participated in the early retirement incentive program, thus limiting a district’s options. This is especially critical in rural areas. I.C. § 33-1004H.

Ms. Cyr stated that Idaho’s ability to reach the State Board of Education’s goal by 2020 will require that we re-evaluate funding for higher education and the costs for students to attend

college. We need to increase funding and eliminate the cost barriers for students to earn a degree or a certificate.

The IEA joined with *Idaho Parents and Teachers Together* in urging Governor Otter to convene a broad-based group of Idahoans to help develop recommendations designed to reform our current system. The IEA also supports the Governor's Task Force recommendation and hopes the he will work with legislative leaders to move forward on those recommendations.

Senator Durst asked whether there have been many teachers who have left the Moscow area to go to the Pullman area. **Ms. Cyr** stated that Moscow is unique because it is a college town but since Washington does pay better, several have moved in the last five or so years to the Washington area. **Senator Goedde** noted that other school districts have that problem also. He stated that he knows of teachers from Idaho Falls/American Falls/Pocatello that have left the area and gone to Wyoming because they pay a lot more.

Representative DeMordaunt commented that a study by OPE last year actually showed that there has not been an increase in teachers leaving the state. He asked whether she had looked at that data. **Ms. Cyr** stated that the information that was received from the State Department of Education showed that the number of teachers leaving the profession in 2007-08 was about 756, in 2010-11, 1,276 teachers left, in 2011-12 that number was 1884 and in 2012-13, 1,584 teachers left the profession. Most list personal reasons for leaving.

Senator Goedde commented that while she mentioned class size, reducing class size was not included in the Task Force recommendations. He asked whether it was discussed. **Ms. Cyr** said class size was discussed and noted that the recommendations are just concepts and that the details need to be worked out.

Senator Goedde asked, relating to the local autonomy/local accountability recommendation, whether the IEA is ready to accept the accountability side of this. **Ms. Cyr** said yes.

Paige Kowalski, Director of State Policy and Advocacy for the Data Quality Campaign was introduced to give an overview of best practices of longitudinal data systems and considerations for policy makers. Her complete presentation is available at: <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Ms. Kowalski said that everyone wants to know whether their child is on track to graduate college and is career ready. She noted that with the information that is received today, it is hard to know the answer to that. The data needs to help parents learn the answer to this question. It also needs to work for educators.

Data can help us make better decisions. She noted that in the education sector, leaders make decisions by hunch or anecdote or throw darts hoping to hit the bull's-eye. In other sectors, leaders make decisions based on data. To get from here to there in education, leaders must lead a culture change and support data use for continuous improvement.

Effective data use means continuous improvement. The past was about compliance, the present is focused on accountability, and the future is about continuous improvement. Longitudinal data improves the picture. **Ms. Kowalski** explained that longitudinal data means recording individual student data over time – not just a snapshot. The data focuses on whether the student is on track to graduate college, not just what their test score was this year.

There are ten essential elements to a longitudinal data system (LDS) that include statewide student identifiers, student-level enrollment data, student-level test data, statewide teacher identifier with a teacher-student match, as well as student level SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exam data.

She noted that every state has the capacity to empower education stakeholders with data and added that 36 states had all 10 elements in 2011, up from zero in 2005.

Ms. Kowalski said that in order to move forward, we need to determine what questions we want answered. She said to start with the knowledge and work backwards to the data.

To answer the questions you must:

Support effective data use by linking data across systems, ensuring appropriate success and building capacity from use. Overcome snags including the four Ts: turf, trust, technical issues, and time.

She noted that changing culture is harder than building systems. Along with the ten elements, there are also ten state actions. No state has implemented all ten actions as of 2012. Idaho has implemented five.

Ms. Kowalski went on to say that there is also a need to balance the access to information with the need to ensure student privacy. The system needs to provide clear information on what data is collected, for what purpose and who has access. User-friendly privacy policies should be posted on state websites. Agency and P-20 data governance structures need to be established to delineate roles and responsibilities. There is also the need to ensure that data collection and use is led by policymakers instead of IT and mid-level agency staff.

Ms. Kowalski concluded that the legislature's role should be to:

- » Determine your role in tackling the 4 T's
- » Develop your state's policy questions
- » Ensure your state's data system is aligned to your state's policy objectives
- » Ensure data governance and privacy policies are established and implemented
- » Ensure stakeholders have actionable information and the skills to use it effectively and ethically
- » *Communicate, communicate, communicate!*

Senator Durst commented that Idaho has struggled with implementation of a longitudinal data system. He asked how many resources does it take to get this system implemented and whether our struggles are common. **Ms. Kowalski** said it is difficult to pin down costs because there are so many factors and it depends on the system that is already in place, how many districts and the like. She said it is not cost prohibitive but every state is different. With regard to the struggles of states to implement, most states did not struggle as much as Idaho. This is mostly due to the timeline. She reminded the committee that most states spent 10 -12 years to implement their systems.

In response to another question from **Senator Durst** about scalability, **Ms. Kowalski** said that the size of district does not matter, it is the number of districts there are.

Representative DeMordaunt commented that it seems that Idaho is at the phase where information has been submitted for compliance and now it needs to become actionable. He asked about models out there to look at because this is where the longitudinal data system and what it can do becomes more exciting. **Ms. Kowalski** said that Colorado's School View.Org is a good model and that Georgia has a good model of getting information to teachers. She added that Delaware has good model on how to take the next step of action.

Senator Goedde asked whether any states are collecting biometric data. **Ms. Kowalski** said no one is doing this. She stated that it is hard to collect data and it is important to have a data collection board that makes decisions transparently. The changes in the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) do not explain what can and cannot be collected, it just says what information can be shared.

Joyce Popp and Alex MacDonald, State Department of Education, were introduced to give an overview of Idaho's longitudinal data system (ISEE Phase I and ISEE Phase II – Instructional Management System).

Ms. Popp stated that being the last state in the nation to deploy a longitudinal data system did come with advantages. The state was able to learn from the challenges other states faced and incorporate those lessons into our development and deployment.

Through a longitudinal data system, states can ensure that:

- Student records are easily transferred from district to district;
- Student privacy is protected through high-level security;
- Data definitions and requirements are standard from school to school and district to district; and
- Data systems are organized to provide clear, transparent information to educators, policymakers, parents and taxpayers.

With a longitudinal data system, the state can receive verifiable, student-level data for the first time ever. She also noted the ten essential elements required in every state data system based in the Data Quality Campaign that **Ms. Kowalski** mentioned. She added that these ten elements

were also required when the state chose to accept the federal stimulus funds in 2009 and the state was already working to accomplish them.

Ms. Popp, explained that in 2008, **Superintendent Luna** laid out a three year plan for the state of Idaho to build and fully deploy Idaho's statewide longitudinal data system – known as the Idaho System for Educational Excellence or ISEE. The acceptance of stimulus funds by the state and local school districts accelerated the implementation by one year and ISEE was fully deployed in 2010.

Ms. Popp emphasized that Idaho districts have faced many challenges since implementing ISEE in 2010. First and foremost, ISEE consolidated data collection and reporting from over 180 collections during a school year to just 12 collections. It also consolidated reporting that may have occurred among several different people down to just one or two people in a single district. The ultimate goal is for every district to get to the point where they can automate these uploads.

ISEE is the system Idaho uses to collect all data from districts once a month, every month throughout the year. Data is no longer collected outside of ISEE. All of the data collected is required by either state or federal law or policy. Changes are only incorporated once a year.

Ms. Popp explained how data is uploaded using student information as an example. Typically the school registrar or secretary will enter data on a student at the beginning of the school year. Student information systems vary from district to district and there are approximately 70 different systems being used across the state today.

After the student information is entered, on the third Friday of each month, the data must be uploaded into ISEE along with the teacher that student is assigned to. The Department has been told that people at the state and district levels understand the system better and are more able to accomplish error-free uploads.

There have been many concerns and frustrations from those working in local school districts about the transition to ISEE. Many of these concerns are not new or unique to Idaho. She went on to list the following changes that have been made over the last three years to address concerns:

1. Regional Outreach. School districts have made it clear they need more technical assistance at the regional level.
 - a. With the help of funding from the Legislature, they have provided four full-time regional coordinators to work with districts in each region of the state.
 - b. These regional coordinators are the first point of contact for schools and districts.
2. Consolidating Changes. At the state level, changes are only made once a year.
3. Additional Resources. Consolidating data collection down to once a month, while it creates efficiency at that state level, also created a larger workload for some individuals

at the local level. Many districts had to dedicate a full-time person to this new data collection process at the same time districts were also reducing their budgets.

4. Sharing Best Practices Among Districts. They have encouraged districts that have best practices in uploading data into ISEE to share these practices with other districts.
5. Improved Sharing. In the spring, the State Department of Education conducted ISEE Boot Camps in each region of the state. The overall feedback on the training was very positive.

Ms. Popp reiterated that the goal is to get every district and public charter school to the point where they can automate their data uploads into ISEE. Currently the process involves taking it from their Student Information System, reviewing it and then uploading it into ISEE. This takes time and is cumbersome.

The Department is working to address concerns heard from districts by improving communication. Each district has a different process for uploading information into ISEE and relies on different people. This makes it difficult for the Department to know who to communicate with when changes are made to ISEE or best practices are found to share with districts. The Department is working with IASA and IASBO to constantly improve communication channels.

Another challenge many districts face is uploading data correctly the first time so it can be seamlessly loaded into ISEE. Since there are so many different Student Information Systems, the Department started working with the major vendors in 2010 and now those major vendors design reports in the exact format that they are published in ISEE.

Ms. Popp stated that to ensure continual improvement and to streamline the overall system of data collection, the Department recently contracted with a third party to review the system. These review steps include:

1. To review each of the data elements collected and the necessity for state and federal reporting;
2. To review the systems that our districts are using to ensure they are capable of collecting and reporting accurate data to the state; and
3. To audit the use of the data for calculating financial information and other metrics utilized by the Department for promoting student achievement.

Ms. Popp said that in a short period of time, the Department realized many benefits from the new data and are excited about the possibilities going forward.

The Five-Star Rating System would not have been possible without ISEE. Without ISEE, the implementation of the growth model would not have been possible. In addition the data collected for the growth model can also be used to provide an individual growth report for every child back to the school and the school can provide this information to parent.

Also because of ISEE, the Department is able to cross reference data or double check the data districts submit. In previous years they just passed the data along to the federal government. This helps the Department see if a student is attending high school in Meridian for a half day and then attending a professional-technical program the other half day.

A third example is the ability to take the data collected at the state level and ensure that it gets back into the classroom where teachers, parents and school administrators can use it most. This is done through Schoolnet, phase II of ISEE.

Ms. Popp explained that Schoolnet is a portal through which any classroom teacher can log in and see how each individual student is achieving. Teachers can also see how their entire classroom is achieving. They can also upload their own assessment data into Schoolnet. **Mr. Alex MacDonald** will explain Schoolnet in more detail later.

She went on to say that with ISEE data the Department can create public reports that give parents and patrons a better idea of how taxpayer dollars are being spent. This is known as the fiscal report card. This report card allows one to compare funding based on state averages in specific districts. One report looks at the average spent per student in a district and what type of academic results that district is getting.

Ms. Popp noted that in January a beta version of this expanded fiscal report card was released to a limited number of superintendents and the Department has received great feedback. With that feedback the Department made some revisions and are working to update it with the most recent academic information and financial data available.

In response to a question from **Senator Thayn** about sharing this information, **Ms. Popp** said that at the present time Idaho does not share information from an electronic perspective with other states. She explained that the individual school districts still send student files or permanent records to other states as has been done in the past.

Senator Durst commented that this seems to be a discussion about the cost of decentralization. He asked why did the state not consider adopting a statewide system and would there be cost savings in doing so. **Ms. Popp** said they did look at that but heard that the cost to transition from one system to another is a large burden for some districts. **Senator Durst** asked who is the custodian of the data. **Ms. Popp** answered that the districts are custodians of their district data and the State Department of Education is responsible for the data collection and the security of that data.

Representative DeMordaunt asked, of the data collected, what is the percentage split that is state or federally required. He also asked about other opportunities for additional savings similar to the \$2 million that was saved due to double counting related to the Average Daily Attendance. **Ms. Popp** said they are just getting the data to where they can compare it to find other additional savings. In response to his first question, she said that much of the information

gathered for the federal government is also used on the state level but it is about a 60%-40% split to the federal government.

Senator Goedde said there was criticism due to the fact the data used in ISEE is 2009-10. He added that as of yesterday, that data is still 2009-10 and asked why it was not current data. **Ms. Popp** explained that this delay for financial information is due to the time it takes for school districts to go through their audit process. She said they do foresee many reports being updated more quickly but she is not sure about the financial information.

Senator Goedde commented that he was under the impression that higher education institutions were required to provide reports to school districts on students that were enrolled and who had to take remedial classes but he has learned that is not true. He asked whether ISEE would be able to provide such information. **Ms. Popp** answered that the ISEE data collection at this time is only for the K-12 system so they do not have the ability to collect that information.

Senator Goedde asked about the early warning system that was discussed earlier that can be used to notify school districts about certain information on students. **Ms. Popp** said that they do collect for attendance, test scores and so on. She said they have the data but that they have not created an early warning system.

Tim Hill, Deputy Director from the Department of Education, with regard to the fact that the financial data used is 2009-10, noted that they are just finishing the financial summaries for 2011-12. He stated that they cannot do statewide summaries until they receive information from all the districts. There was one district that was very behind. This delinquent district did not receive any payments from the state until May due to being behind in turning in data.

Alex MacDonald, Director of Instructional Technology, State Department of Education, was introduced to discuss ISEE Phase II (Schoolnet) and the benefit of all of this data collection. His complete presentation is available at:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Mr. MacDonald explained that now that Idaho has longitudinal data between school districts and the state, it is critical for this data to be made available back to the school and the classroom, where teachers, administrators and parents can use this data to improve student achievement. This is done via ISEE Phase II or Schoolnet.

The vision of Schoolnet is to develop a “digital backpack” for every student and foster data-driven instructional practices for Idaho teachers. Before Schoolnet teachers oftentimes had to wait weeks, if not months, to receive student files and achievement data. Now with Schoolnet they have ISAT Scores for every student with key performance indicators.

Mr. MacDonald indicated that Schoolnet is voluntary at this time. The Department is piloting this instructional improvement system, that should greatly benefit every teacher,

administrator, and other stakeholders because it provides meaningful data back in the classroom.

Schoolnet is actually a visual representation of ISEE data. ISEE Phase II is:

- An instructional improvement system (IIS) that helps educators maximize planning and instructional time;
- Provides access to information that identifies instructional needs;
- Can be used to create lesson plans and assessments;
- Aligns to Idaho Code, instructional resources, digital content and assessment questions;
- Has the reporting capability to allow for data driven decision making; and
- Allows for the opportunity for evaluation and educator development.

Mr. MacDonald stated that they chose Schoolnet because it was the best fit across the state for stakeholders by role and district size per the advisory group recommendation. It was determined that Schoolnet was the most complete and easy to use solution when the advisory group provided their recommendations.

Schoolnet was purchased in perpetuity through a grant provided by the J.A. and Kathryn Albertsons foundation in 2011. This means the state owns the code and the license for that code. Part of that grant also offered \$2 million per year directly to school districts that volunteered to be part of the pilot. He noted that this is the second year of the pilot phase. During 2012-13, 15 ISEE Phase II A grant districts were awarded an implementation grant and during 2013-14, 42 ISEE Phase II B grant districts were awarded implementation grants. The \$4 million has been distributed impacting 9,192 teachers and 142,907 students.

Mr. MacDonald explained that any stakeholder can use Schoolnet due to the fact that there are several “dashboards” or “portals” available. There is an administrator dashboard, a teacher portal where the district can upload the curriculum it chooses, a parent portal and a student portal. Each dashboard or portal contains a different level of security and set of data in it.

For example, the principal of a school would have access to all the data on the students and teachers in his or her school on the administrator dashboard. A classroom teacher would only have access to the students in his or her classroom or grade level. A parent could only have access to the data on his or her own child, and so forth

Schoolnet has four modules: district data, classrooms, assessment administration and educator development. The district module allows district to create pre-formatted or custom reporting on demographic data, standardized or benchmark tests. The Classroom module allows teachers to create student groups, access student performance, and also access and create lesson plans. The Assessment Administration module allows teachers to create, schedule, assign and share assessments while also collecting instant feedback. The Educator Development module allows teachers to search for professional development opportunities at the district or state level.

Mr. MacDonald explained that there are dozens of resources provided within Schoolnet to assist on all modules.

A key lesson learned the first year was the need for availability of timely data uploads into Schoolnet. The requirement that ISEE data be uploaded only once a month sometimes caused Schoolnet data to be out of date.

He concluded stating that Schoolnet is improving Idaho's education system by helping to enable individualized instruction, providing access to digital content aligned to standards, streamlining access to student achievement data and by saving teachers and administrators time.

Carson Howell, Director of Research and **Andy Mehl**, Technology Program Manager, Office of the State Board of Education spoke after lunch on the P-20 Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Their PowerPoint presentation is available at:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Mr. Howell explained that longitudinal data is looking at data over time. One of the major needs for longitudinal data is in looking at the transitions of students who move between institutions or among schools in K-12. As those students graduate high school and move into postsecondary education it is important to be able to follow their progress. He noted that not many students start and graduate from the same postsecondary institution so it is important to track those students between institutions. Ultimately they want to be able to look at how successful those students are once they leave college.

Mr. Howell stated that if Idaho wants to improve the decisions being made and the policies being created we need better information. That is what they intend to glean from the SLDS. This includes strengthening the education system, developing better policies, ensuring student success, improving processes. protecting student privacy and mitigating data burden.

Andrew Mehl explained the system structure of SLDS in detail. This is available at:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

He explained that ISEE is taking the unique identifier that is generated from K-12 data and having post secondary institutions use that same number for those kids as they enter college. This would also be used for teachers taking classes if they are part of the ISEE program. They also plan to build a labor SLDS system that would create a different unique identifier but would be able to cross reference students as they enter the workforce.

They worked with postsecondary institutions to determine what data will be collected. It will include student information, demographics, courses enrolled in and degrees.

Mr. Mehl noted that ISEE started collecting data in October 2010 and he started working on the postsecondary SLDS in July-August 2010. He said they are just now loading the data for the postsecondary SLDS. He has two years of data from most institutions and is working on the third year.

In July 2012, they received a federal SLDS grant that allowed expansions from a P20 system to a P20 workforce system. This means the grant is basically paying for the labor piece of the system. This is scheduled to be completed in 2015. The grant also funded some enhancements on the unique ID system as well as a research request portal estimated for completion in 2014.

His PowerPoint contains sample reports following the class of 2005's postsecondary enrollment and progress. He noted that these reports can be run at the state level, district level, school level or county level.

Future reports will try to track the behavior of students in high school that go directly to college. What courses did they take, activities they were involved in and so on.

Another future report will be on student transition. Reviewing student information to elementary school and their transitions in the education system will allow the state to make better decisions regarding policies that will help plug the leaks in the student transition pipeline.

Another report evaluates how effective scholarships are at keeping kids in Idaho schools and in keeping them in school in general.

Senator Thayne asked how long the will data be kept. **Mr. Howell** said that needs to be discussed and the longer the data is kept, the more information it provides but there are tradeoffs.

Senator Durst asked about the process of creating unique identifiers. **Mr. Mehl** stated that K-12 does not track social security numbers in its system and neither does postsecondary unless someone applies for a student loan. He added that Labor does have a name matching system attached to their social security number data. **Senator Durst** asked about kids that go on missions or leave the system for a period of time. **Mr. Mehl** explained that as a student starts K-12, they are assigned a unique identifier. If they leave to go on mission and then return and enroll in a postsecondary institution, they will be given the same unique identifier they had in K-12.

Representative DeMordaunt asked how they get labor data. **Mr. Mehl** said mostly through unemployment insurance data because employers have to report people's wages when employed. **Representative DeMordaunt** asked whether that tracks throughout the country. **Mr. Mehl** said that there are systems in 25 states that can cross reference and track these people.

In response to a question from **Senator Goedde**, **Mr. Mehl** stated that the system just tracks students in Idaho's eight higher education institutions. It does not include community colleges or private institutions.

Senator Goedde commented that **Ms. Popp** had indicated her system could not track students that need remediation. He asked if this system has that ability. **Mr. Mehl** noted that this system is supposed to do that but currently it only tracks for math and reading remediation. The plan is to supply this information to districts.

Tom Taggart, Executive Director of the Idaho Association of School Business Officials (IASBO) was the next speaker. He explained that IASBO became involved with the ISEE issue in February of 2011. Since then, they have provided feedback, input and suggestions for improvement. Over the last year and a half, he said that the State Department of Education has become more responsive to their concerns.

Mr. Taggart commented that the Department has taken a number of positive steps to help to start climbing out of the hole we found ourselves in after the initial implementation. These steps include increased regional support, regional user training, i.e., ISEE Boot camp, as well as improved overall communication. There is, however, still a long way to go to erase the frustration and negativity of many local districts and charter staff's regarding ISEE.

In preparation for this meeting the IASA and the IASBO conducted a joint survey of districts and charter schools. Copies have been distributed to this committee, the Department of Education and the State Board of Education. A copy of the survey is also available at: <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Mr. Taggart moved on to discuss some of the responses relevant to the committee as legislators.

He noted that increased regional support by the Department was a positive step. Forty-two percent of respondents have a positive view of the Department's regional ISEE staff, with 25% having a negative view. As time passes, he thinks the number of positive responses will grow.

In the past, one of the most negative issues was Department communication with districts and charters. According to the survey, this issue appears to be improving with 33% having a negative view and 31% positive. This might not sound good, but it is a big improvement from past responses, and hopefully one that will keep getting better. The Department is clearly trying in this area.

Local districts and charters believe their staffs are becoming more knowledgeable concerning ISEE. Forty-five percent responded positively and only 17% negatively to this question. **Mr. Taggart** believes better Department training and communication were factors in this improvement, but it was also a result of local staff who have had to learn more on their own just to survive the ISEE process.

Seventy-seven percent of districts have a high degree of confidence in the data they upload to ISEE. However, only 40% have a high degree of confidence in the reports they generate from that data.

Seventy-five percent of the respondents asked said they did not believe policy makers could use the data reported directly from ISEE with confidence. Sixty-eight percent responded negatively when asked to rate the Department's understanding of local ISEE issues.

This shows the lack of confidence and high level of mistrust in the ISEE system. If 77% believe they are entering good data, but then do not trust the information reported out, there is clearly still a problem.

Mr. Taggart encouraged the committee to read the comments included in the survey. He said that frustrations run deep. While the State Department has taken a number of positive steps, there is still a long way to go before we have a data system that is not a huge burden on local school districts and charter schools, and one that produces data that can be used with a high degree of confidence. At this time most districts still do not trust ISEE to deliver the accurate and timely data we all need.

Mr. Taggart stated losing trust is never difficult. Regaining it is. We all need to focus on solving our existing problems before we think about moving forward.

He added that one of the questions in the survey asked about the financial impact of ISEE on districts. District after district had to add staff or add duties to staff members and so on. This came about during the budget crisis and just added to the frustration.

Mr. Taggart went on to say that his association has a draft list of recommendations that will be forwarded at a later time. In his opinion, one of the key steps the legislature can take would be to provide additional funding specifically for ISEE at the local level. He said this is clearly an unfunded mandate that was put on districts at a time when they could not afford it.

Mr. Taggart believes that when big initiatives are started, they should be questioned in depth. Questions of how things will be done, timelines involved and how to get there. The more people involved, the more successful things are.

Representative Boyle asked whether it would be helpful if the legislature were to fund one person per school specifically for ISEE data input. **Mr. Taggart** said not necessarily. He thinks it would be better to let schools or districts decide what works best for them.

Representative Horman asked whether the questions in the survey regarding ISEE only refer to phase I. **Mr. Taggart** said yes. **Representative Horman** asked how confident the association is that the 57 responses to the survey are a good representation of the state. **Mr. Taggart** said those are district or charter responses. He added that there would probably be some difference if they had 100 to 150 responses but it would still be close.

Representative DeMordaunt spoke about the confidence in the data and asked what do the districts think is happening to the data after they enter it that causes them to lose confidence in it. **Mr. Taggart** answered that he has seen reports change daily even though the data was not changed. He admitted that some of this was early on when data was having to be corrected. Sometimes they cannot even generate a report. He stated that things have improved but people lost their confidence early.

In response to a question from **Senator Durst**, **Mr. Taggart** stated that even if there was one system in place for everyone, they would still have a hard time getting information entered into it. He admitted it would be easier and faster if there were not 70 different systems involved.

Georgeanne Griffith, Director of Information Systems at Lakeland School District in Coeur d'Alene agreed with Mr. Taggart and said moving forward increased communication regarding ISEE is a very important issue. She recommended that the Department conduct regional seminars or webinars each year to show ISEE changes and perhaps follow that up with a vendor session so districts will know what has been placed in their software programs. She commented that she works closely with **Joyce Popp** and her team and that they have been very helpful but there are still communication issues.

Ms. Griffith agreed again with Mr. Taggart that the Legislature consider providing the districts with funding to support staff to enter the information properly.

Ms. Griffith went on to discuss Schoolnet. She said it is a valuable tool but there are a lot of kinks in it. In her opinion, one way to get Schoolnet to be an effective tool is to make entering student information into the system less of a challenge. She said that getting students into the system at the beginning of the school year is a challenge. Another challenge is getting test data in a timely manner. The district ISATs are done in mid-May and they get preliminary scores right away but the scores did not show up in Schoolnet until this fall.

She noted that in order to keep data secure, there are detailed logins for students at the elementary grade level that make it a difficult challenge. She admitted students keyboard skills are lacking but it is still very complicated.

Cindy Sisson, Director of Curriculum and Staff Development and **Bernadette Sexton** an academic coach who has been reassigned to help with the Schoolnet project, Joint School District #2 in Meridian spoke to the committee regarding Schoolnet. Their complete PowerPoint is available at:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2013/interim/education.htm>

Ms. Sisson stated that the process began for them in November 2011 and they submitted the grant application in January 2012 and were selected to be a ISEE Phase II Pilot District. She noted that it has been two years and they are still trying to get an ISEE upload into Schoolnet. She said there are whole schools missing, teachers missing as well as courses missing. She

added that they have been told that there will not be a full ISEE upload until October and that is very late for teachers.

Ms. Sisson went on to discuss what works well in Schoolnet.

- Discovery education
 - They did a lot of training in this area and had over 100,000 logins;
 - Streamed 39,000 videos;
 - 66,000 images were used;
 - 18,000 reading packages; and
 - 1400 writing prompts.

She stated that improvement is needed in the student login portion of Discovery education. The nine digit Idaho ID number is very difficult for young children even with the new shortcut. There is also concern regarding the fact that test scores and other assessment data is visible to others in a computer lab. Also on the homepage the digital content access bar seems to change and move around making it difficult to find the Discovery education tab.

- Courses in Schoolnet that teachers take also work well.
 - 348 teachers have taken 1,454 Tech Integration Classes through ISU and the Schoolnet ETI program (July 2012 through June 2013).
 - Costs are only \$50.00 per credit hour.

She added that the library databases also work well in Schoolnet but they do have more databases available within their school district. So there is the question of why go to Schoolnet when there is more available on the school's own homepage.

Her presentation includes slides discussing what needs to be improved in detail. These items include:

- Research choices for children
- Data upload issues
- Special populations
- KPI data is not accurate
- SAT data is not accurate
- Lesson plans
- Curriculum management desktop
- ISEE navigators

In summary, **Ms. Sisson** stated that her district likes the idea of one-stop shopping for teachers. She noted that it may be more beneficial for smaller districts. It is a challenge to use this instructional management tool statewide.

Ms. Sisson emphasized that her district cannot move forward and train on the product until the data is complete and accurate. She added that the data must be accurate to get buy-in from stakeholders.

Representative Horman asked whether Schoolnet is working accurately and reliably anywhere in their district. She noted that the Bonneville tried it for one year and then ended up changing to another system. **Ms. Sisson** said that the Discovery education portion is working but the portal is difficult and they cannot do training because system data is not accurate. **Ms. Griffith** said that her district has not had the same problems but they are a much smaller district. She admitted that they have had difficulty importing some of their own data into the system.

Senator Durst asked whether a statewide system would be beneficial because everyone would be using the same system. **Ms. Sisson** said it is important to realize the frustration and the fact people need help using the system. She stated that part of the problem could be, in part, because her district is so large.

Senator Goedde commented that this is probably not the first time Meridian has voiced these concerns and asked what type of response do they usually get. **Ms. Sisson** said it has been a struggle to get people to listen and understand their difficulties. Everyone is trying to use this and they feel bad that they are unable to use to full extent. **Ms. Griffith** said she has found the Department to be very responsive. In her opinion a lot of problems might be with the provider of software.

The final agenda item was a panel discussion that included Paige Kowalski, Data Quality Campaign, as the moderator; Joyce Popp and Alex MacDonald, Department of Education; Andy Mehl and Carson Howell, Office of the State Board of Education; Tom Taggart, Association of School Business Administrators, Rob Winslow, Association of School Administrators and Georgeanne Griffith, Lakeland School District. They were asked by **Ms. Kowalski** to discuss what they see as key challenges regarding the longitudinal data system and the next step the interim committee can take to help the situation.

Mr. Howell said that the biggest challenge he sees is data quality – if the state is going to use the system to make policy recommendations and decisions, it needs good quality data. His solution would be to coordinate linkage across the systems and use the digital backpack.

Mr. Taggart said we need to be realistic about lack of confidence and trust regarding what comes out of the system. He said there needs to be adequate resources available to fix problems quickly.

Rob Winslow commented on the need for good implementation and commitment to having ISEE work especially on the first phase. His solution would be to legislatively build in some accountability and to make sure we are truly measuring implementation and making sure things are getting done correctly and being used to the fullest.

Ms. Griffith agreed with the above comments. She said there needs to be a focus on making what we have work and work cleanly.

Mr. MacDonald emphasized the need for training and the understanding of how data flows and the importance of that data at an individual personnel level.

Mr. Mehl agreed with **Mr. Howell** and added that data collection and reliability are important but getting data back out to the people who need it is equally important.

Ms. Popp agreed with all of the above but said that communication and training are absolute keys to help all of the districts to get source data in properly the first time. Her solution involves listening to the districts and understanding what they go through on a daily basis and collaboratively working to find solutions.

Ms. Kowalski said that in her opinion trust is probably the most important thing mainly due to how difficult it is to restore.

Ms. Kowalski commented that despite frustration, it is her belief that people want this to work. She asked the panel to imagine five years from now and all of the bugs have been worked out of the system. She asked them what they feel the biggest benefit will be.

Mr. Howell said it goes back to the statement that good data is key to making good policy decisions.

Mr. Taggart said he sees the greatest benefit being that once the system is in place and the local districts are able to collect the data, the districts will be able to use it as needed.

Mr. Winslow commented that most school districts are data driven and will remain that way so he would like to see this system as a reliable source of information that is just a part of everyday business.

Ms. Griffith said she would like to have the data to make good decisions about the education system but also for teachers to be able to make good decisions about their instructional effectiveness.

Mr. MacDonald agreed with Mr. Winslow that the system and data collection should be a normal part of what teachers do on a daily basis.

Mr. Mehl sees the wealth of available information to parents and teachers in the future to get what they need as a great benefit.

Ms. Popp said the development of early warning systems to help make policy decisions through the use of this data.

Representative DeMordaunt commented that he realized that Schoolnet is in the pilot phase but asked whether one works better than the other. **Ms. Griffith** stated that the ISEE Phase I system is working better. She said there are still some bugs but the state is getting the information it needs and districts are getting funded. **Mr. Taggart** agreed and said that ISEE been working longer and is working better because we are meeting federal requirements and getting funded. **Ms. Popp** noted that this is the fourth year of ISEE and thinks they are seeing major improvements. People are becoming more familiar with what they need to do and they are developing better relationships with vendors who provide software. **Mr. MacDonald** commented because Schoolnet is the face of the ISEE system, there are challenges as to how the data is represented back to the end user. It needs to be able to reflect accurately back to the end user. He noted that it is still a work in progress.

Senator Goedde asked whether any states were effectively using Schoolnet. **Mr. MacDonald** said that Kentucky and North Carolina were but not to the extent that Idaho does. They only use one or two modules. He added that they have statewide student information systems but are not local control states.

Representative Horman commented about the fact that Schoolnet was purchase in perpetuity from J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation and asked whether there are licensing fees charged annually and what happens when the funding ends. **Mr. MacDonald** there is no cost through the three year grant period. After that school districts are on the line for maintenance and operations. **Representative Horman** asked about the appropriation for Schoolnet and **Mr. Headlee** stated that for FY2014 \$4.5 million was funded for Schoolnet.

Senator Goedde asked how long the state was obligated to fund Schoolnet when they signed for the three year grant. **Mr. MacDonald** explained that the state owns the code outright so this will eventually be an in-house system.

Representative DeMordaunt commented that it is clear that there are challenges but it is also clear that there are people working toward solutions. In his opinion, most people would say Idaho needs a statewide system that allows us to make better decisions. In looking at districts going through the process, the allocation of resources will change, people involved will change and the management process will change. He asked what support can be given to districts to help guide them through a change management process. **Ms. Popp** answered that the Department put together a booklet on the change management process and noted that it is good to get people involved in the change because then they are more likely to embrace that change. **Representative DeMordaunt** agreed and thinks that is an important part of the process but because of the tight timeline, that was not done at the beginning and now we are trying to catch up. **Senator Goedde** agreed but said we would have lost a significant amount of money if we did not move the time line up.

Senator Goedde commented that a significant amount of teacher evaluations are based on student achievement. He asked if teachers can challenge the data when they are evaluated. **Mr. Winslow** said he has not heard of this issue. Usually teachers have the data that they entered

into ISEE. **Senator Goedde** said this could be an issue with a new student that comes from out of state. **Ms. Griffith** said that there is more involved in teacher evaluations than this data.

Ms. Kowalski asked regarding the P20 Idaho numbers, whether there is a plan to track for kids that go straight to the work force. **Mr. Mehl** said yes, they can get social security numbers from the Department of Labor and should be able to track them that way.

Ms. Kowalski asked what is being done to build educator skills once they have the resource and trust to allow them to use the system to its full benefit. **Ms. Popp** said that there is a professional development element. This is based on helping teachers understand what they are looking at and how to use data to make individual decisions that will benefit students. **Ms. Griffith** said that there are a lot of districts where these discussions are going on but teachers do not have time built into their schedules to actually look at data on a regular basis. **Mr. MacDonald** added it is important to work with teachers to make them aware that they are part of the data collection and to also work with higher education institutions to integrate data collection into teacher education curriculums.

Ms. Kowalski agreed that it always comes down to having the time to use the system to its full potential and many never get to that discussion because the systems are usually not complete. She thinks it is very important to have those discussions.

Senator Goedde commented that the legislature might need to look at funding additional days for teachers to have time to learn and use these systems.

Senator Thayne asked how secure the data is on district and state levels. **Ms. Kowalski** said there has been a lot of conversation about privacy. She does not think there is an issue on the state level. In fact, there has been some problem because state agencies hold on to the data too tightly. She said, in her opinion, the district level is a different story. Protecting privacy and ensuring security requires legal and technical expertise as well as financial resources and she does not think a lot of districts have the funding to have access to the expertise to secure the information. There is the argument that states could probably do this better on behalf of districts and schools because they have legal experts and best practices in other sectors that local districts do not have the time to investigate. Districts also probably do not have the oversight ability to negotiate contracts with vendors that have the security provisions necessary.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.