LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF IDAHO

Sixty-second Legislature First Regular Session - 2013

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3

BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND REQUESTING THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENCE RULEMAKING TO PROVIDE THAT CURSIVE HANDWRITING SHALL BE TAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF THIS STATE.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that handwriting, based upon empirical evidence from neuroscience, plays a major role in the visual recognition and learning of letters; and this is something the State of Idaho should be aware of in an educational context. The State of Idaho recognizes that those who learn to write by hand learn better; and

WHEREAS, there have been studies where cursive handwriting has helped students with their fine motor skills and made them more graceful; these students show more of an interest in art because they are able to form things they hadn't before and they have new muscle movements that they didn't know before; and

WHEREAS, there was an experiment involving two groups of adults in which participants were taught a new, foreign alphabet. One group learned the characters by hand, the other learned only to recognize them on a screen and with a keyboard. Weeks after the experiment, the group that learned the letters by hand consistently scored better on recognition tests than those who learned with a keyboard. Brain scans of the hands-on group also showed greater activity in the part of the brain that controls language comprehension, motor-related processes and speech-associated gestures; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature also recognizes that there are reliable scientific studies that show, for some important aspects of reading and composition, digital technology may not be as important as handwriting; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature also recognizes that if the cursive script is not taught, the time will come when people will not be able to read old diaries, journals, letters, documents and the like written in cursive. This will have a negative effect on the study of genealogy and family history and will weaken society's relationship to its past.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Session of the Sixty-second Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and the Senate concurring therein, that the State Board of Education is requested to commence rulemaking to provide that cursive handwriting shall be taught in the public elementary schools of this state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Board of Education shall report its progress in its rulemaking pursuant to this Resolution to the Second Regular Session of the Sixty-second Idaho Legislature.