

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 17, 2013
TIME: 9:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room EW41
MEMBERS: Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman Nielsen, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Bateman, Boyle, Agidius, Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Horman, Mendive, VanOrden, Pence, Kloc, Ward-Engelking
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Vice Chairman Nielsen, Representative Gestrin
GUESTS: Tracie Bent, State Board Of Education; Scott Cook, State Department of Education; John Fosh; Jess Hamson, Idaho School Board Association; Phil Homer, Idaho Association of School Administrators; Robin Nettinga, Idaho Education Association; Harold Ott, Idaho Rural Schools Association; Russell Westerberg, Rocky Mountain Power; Tony Smith, Benton Ellis; Marilyn Whitney, School Board Of Education; Luci Willits, State Department of Education; Rob Winston, Idaho Association of School Administrators; Matt Keenan Idaho Reporter.com

Chairman DeMordaunt called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Luci Willits, State Department of Education, gave basic understanding and background to the Common Core program. She defined 'standard' as what a student should be able to know and use at certain grade levels. Standards were started about 20 years ago and were driven by curriculum. She explained there were different standards for different counties and states. This drove the need for a baseline for student knowledge. She said because there was no alignment they could not compare Idaho students to students from other states.

Ms. Willits explained that in 2009, educators got together for math and English language standards. They did extensive outreach, then took those standards to the colleges to see if those standards were applicable to college students. Their goal was to have fewer, clearer and higher standards. The main Common Core standards in Idaho are English, language arts and math. She explained they compared new standards to standards across the country and found math standards were not being reached and they needed to engage in professional development for teachers. She continued by saying one of their main goals were to have college and career ready students when they graduate.

In response to questions, **Ms. Willits** said they provide a suggested list for curriculum but let the schools finalize the curriculum. She explained standards are the basics and curriculum is how you get there.

Presently, **Ms. Willits** explained next school year (Fall 2013) Common Core will be taught in math and English. Then Spring 2015 school year a new ISAT will be given that will give teachers more information. She explained the standards will be more rigorous than ever before and aligned to college and work expectations.

In response to questions, **Ms. Willits** explained that Idaho's initial test scores will be lower because the standard has been raised. She also said there will be outreach to parents and families so they will understand the meaning of test scores and program scope.

Dr. Carissa Miller, Deputy Superintendent, Idaho State Department of Education, gave background on the Smarter-Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). She stated they received a four year grant of \$175 million to help in building test engines for online testing, which will include writing, performance tasks and multiple choice questions. It will have adaptive testing, meaning if a student gets an answer correct the questions will get harder and vice versa. She explained that on this consortium, Idaho is a governing state and has a vote on everything at the same weight as other states. She said 20,000 Idaho students have been taped to do a pilot test without consequences. They will then open up to any schools that want to participate. She mentioned one of the benefits of using online testing is it creates a technology assessment of IT readiness in schools to determine how many computers and bandwidth they have.

In response to questions regarding whether other subjects will be ignored in order to teach to the test, **Dr. Miller** said there is always the opportunity for people to ignore other subjects but there are opportunities to embed Common Core standards in other subjects.

Stephanie Zimmerman, spoke in opposition to the Common Core program. She explained Common Core takes control out of the hands of Idaho and puts it in federal hands. She said states are not allowed to take any standards away and only add 15% of additional standards/material. In regards to the Smarter-Balanced Assessment Consortium she said if Idaho did not like the tests given they would have to go to every member state and ask for changes. She said the college and career readiness standards is equivalent to a 2 year community college. She said algebra would start freshman year and would not allow calculus until senior year under Common Core and there could be a loss of student family privacy under Common Core, creating student identifiable information.

In response to follow up questions, **Dr. Miller** stated students have the opportunity to advance to higher levels in subjects if they test out of them. She said no effort has been made to collect identifiable student data, however, there is data about students on free or reduced lunch and those eligible for special education but not used in the context of Common Core or SBAC. She addressed cost by saying it is around \$33 per student in Idaho. She said there is nothing that prohibits them from adding more than 15% to the curriculum, only they would have to create testing for any additional curriculum.

Rep. Bateman, commented in favor of Common Core but sees a need to watch it closely to avoid a national curriculum.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Representative DeMordaunt
Chair

Jackie Wright
Secretary