

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Wednesday, January 30, 2013
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayn, Patrick, Durst and Buckner-Webb
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:**
- NOTE:** The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.
- CONVENED:** **Chairman Goedde** convened the Education Committee at 3:02 p.m., and a silent role was taken.
- MOTION:** **Senator Thayn** made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 15, 2013; **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Patrick** made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 16, 2013; **Senator Fulcher** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Pearce** made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 16, 2013; **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.
- DOCKET NO. 08-0202-1203** **Luci Willits**, State Board of Education (SBE), reminded the committee that questions had remained concerning **Docket No. 08-0202-1203**, teacher preparation standards and documents incorporated by reference. Specifically, Senator Nonini had questioned language in the new rule regarding how "world languages" were being taught together with culture in a language setting, and how that might relate to perceptions about our country. **Ms. Willits** then introduced Dr. Cori Mantle-Bromley, Dean the College of Education, University of Idaho (UI).
- Ms. Mantle-Bromely** reviewed her professional background as a foreign language teacher, primarily teaching Spanish. In her work with students, she also helped them understand the culture of the country, the nuances of body language, for example, to aid in successful communications. **Ms. Mantle-Bromley** cited several examples from her own personal travels. **Senator Nonini** asked if she had experience travelling in the Middle East. She did not, nor did others present. **Senator Nonini** pressed on, asking if culture and government are appropriate in a language class, for example, that the United States is a democracy and another country might be a dictatorship. **Ms. Mantle-Bromley** replied that as a language teacher, she would leave those subjects to political science and government classes.
- Senator Fulcher** said that he could see the usefulness of teaching cultural habits along with language, but still questioned how you "wrap standards around culture" because culture is dynamic. **Senator Nonini** agreed. Since no one was present to speak about Middle Eastern culture, his questions remained unanswered. **Chairman Goedde** suggested that **Ms. Mantle-Bromley** locate someone who could answer Senator Nonini's question. **Chairman Goedde** thanked Ms. Mantle-Bromley and Ms. Willits for their time, and introduced the next speaker.

S 1027

Marilyn Whitney, State Board of Education (SBE), explained that **S 1027** amends Idaho Code governing state scholarship programs to ensure that those programs are relevant and effective in assisting Idaho students in completing postsecondary education and to improve efficiency of program administration. **Ms. Whitney** then introduced Curtis Eaton, Co-Chair of the Scholarship Committee ("Committee") to provide background.

Mr. Eaton acknowledged Vice Chairman Mortimer and Senator Thayne for their active participation on the Committee. He noted that although the Committee did not come to consensus on all points, they had good, honest discussion. He believes that S 1027 is representative of the work done by the Committee.

Mr. Eaton stated the Committee had several meetings between June and September, and wrestled with a number of issues. They were guided by the State Board of Education's goal to have 60 percent of Idahoans between ages 24 and 35 achieving a degree or certificate of value by year 2020. The Committee also reviewed several studies by Jamie McMillan and the Albertson's Foundation, the Western Interstate Commission on Higher education, and the Office of Performance Evaluations (OPE)

The Committee considered three questions: 1) should the scholarships be need based; 2) should the scholarships be merit based, and 3) should the scholarships promote completion of college. The Committee said "yes" to all of them. Scholarship awards are based upon a shared responsibility with various sources of funding, including federal, state, family and institutional assistance. **S 1027** addresses the state component of scholarship funding. The Committee also concluded that consolidation of many programs and simplification of the process would be a proper course for the state. **Mr. Eaton** stated that in consolidating the programs, the historical significance of the people involved in developing the state scholarships could be lost. Former Senator Robert Lee, whose name is attached to both the Promise A and Promise B scholarships, was a great proponent of higher education assistance.

Senator Durst asked Mr. Eaton to elaborate on the definition of merit. **Mr. Eaton** replied that merit means reward for performance. The Committee spent many hours discussing this topic. They found that the success of other states lies in the balance of opportunity and reward for doing well. There is a place for merit, also a place for those who have a lower Grade Point Average (GPA). The Opportunity Scholarship embodies 70 percent need based and 30 per merit based. As the Committee looked toward a hybrid solution and consolidating programs, it recommended that the Opportunity Scholarship serve as a model going forward. **Senator Durst** replied that Idaho does not have any need-only based scholarships which he sees as an extra barrier to college entry. **Senator Durst** asked that if a college accepts a student, shouldn't that be merit enough. **Mr. Eaton** agreed that balance is very important. This legislation tries set a framework for state funding as well as funding that may come directly from the colleges and universities. **Chairman Goedde** thanked Mr. Eaton for his work, and again recognized Ms. Whitney.

Ms. Whitney again stated that the changes proposed in **S 1027** consolidate all of the scholarship programs into one chapter of Code, now Chapter 43. This will assist students and families in identifying and understanding the state's scholarship programs. She directed the committee to a one page handout which outlined how the programs would be consolidated. Next, referring directly to **S 1027**, Section 1. on Page 1 Ms. Whitney explained that this legislation repeals the Student Loan Forgiveness Program. The SBE recommends that funding be redirected to the Opportunity Scholarship program. On Page 2, 33-4301 renames the chapter "the Scholarship and State Aid Act." Section 3 consolidates the POW/MIA and Public Safety Officers scholarships into one section of Chapter 43. Eligibility requirements and benefits remain the same. The underlined portions are the cut and paste from Section 4, which is the current Public Safety Officers section. Section 4 is then repealed. Section 5 repeals the Promise A and Promise B scholarships. Again, the SBE proposes that funding of those programs be redirected into the Opportunity Scholarships.

The new Section 6. brings the Opportunity Scholarship into Chapter 43. Previously, it was in Chapter 56. Section 7 is new and adds a reporting requirement which states that eligible institutions will provide data to the SBE to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Section 8, repeals the Minority and "At Risk" scholarship. Section 9, repeals the current Opportunity Scholarship. The current legislation makes some technical changes in implementation of Opportunity Scholarship program, including the distribution formula. These changes will be detailed in a proposed administrative rule that will be reviewed by The Education committee next year. The SBE will continue to recognize Senator Robert R. Lee for his vision to reward Idaho students and for his efforts to secure additional dollars for state support for scholarships.

Senator Durst asked questions concerning the State Loan Forgiveness program.

Ms. Whitney replied that the program is not really a scholarship but a loan forgiveness for nurses and teachers who are employed in the profession for at least two years. This program has been difficult to administer. Those currently in the program will be honored. **Senator Durst** again asked about the merit portion of the Opportunity Scholarship. **Ms. Whitney** replied that a recommended GPA of 2.5, or a General Education Degree, or home school equivalent would be addressed in the administrative rule making process in 2014. **Senator Fulcher** questioned the rule-making framework. **Ms. Whitney** answered that the framework differs for consolidating these programs. For students seeking a bachelor's degree, the scholarship would be available in a two-year college, and would follow if the student transfers to a four-year college. The current amount of the Opportunity Scholarship is \$3,000, but because of consolidation, it will decrease to \$2,000. However, more students can obtain scholarship benefits.

Having no further questions, **Chairman Goedde** called for a motion on **S 1027**.

MOTION:

Senator Thayne made a motion to send **S 1027** to the Senate floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Fulcher** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**, with **Senator Durst** voting **nay**.

Senator Goedde
Chairman

Elaine Leedy
Secretary