

MINUTES  
**HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 06, 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:** Rep. Wills  
**GUESTS:** Luci Willits, and Elizabeth Frasnick, State Department of Education (SDE); Selena Grace, Chief Academic Officer SDE; Brian Prescott and David Longanecker, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

**Chairman DeMordaunt** called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Clow** made a motion to approve the minutes of January 30, 2013. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Anita VanGrunsven** explained an issue regarding the current instruction on American Government in the State of Idaho. She gave examples from the Magruder's American Government by William A. McClenaghan, 2009 edition, which she said were attempts to indoctrinate the students instead of presenting to students the factual truths. She explained that the text was the most popular for use in high school classrooms across the nation, however, she said Idaho should have textbooks that were more in line with Idaho's conservative values.

**Ms. VanGrunsven** compared language from the same Magruder textbook used in Texas where explanations on such subjects as Second Amendment rights differed. She said Idaho has the same opportunity to adopt textbooks with more accurate, historic references.

**Ms. VanGrunsven** referenced a State Republican Central Committee Resolution to the committee which recommends: to rewrite the goals used to evaluate the American Government textbooks; to review the current texts, disallowing those that do not meet new goals; and to develop a comprehensive test on the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Idaho Constitution.

Responding to questions from the committee, **Ms. VanGrunsven** explained there were other books that appeared on the highly approved list. She said that the content standards for Government in Idaho needed to be changed and an exam needed to be developed for the US and Idaho governing documents.

**David Longanecker**, President of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), explained his regional organization was created by the Western Regional Education Compact. He said it was created to facilitate resource sharing among the higher education systems of the West and is located in Boulder, Colorado. He listed the commissioners for Idaho as: Mike Rush, State Board of Education; Mack Shirley, former Legislator; and President Dwayne Nellis, University of Idaho.

**Mr. Longanecker** reported on comparative data showing that the United States ranked 15th in the world when compared to populations attaining an associates and higher degree. Idaho ranked 45th when compared to states within the nation. In relationship between education attainment, personal income and economic strength, Idaho ranks in the 23rd percentile.

**Brian Prescott**, Director of Policy Research, WICHE, explained that in the newest projections released three weeks ago on Idaho public high school graduates by race or ethnicity, it shows Idaho's Hispanic population to be increasing by 29 percent by the year 2020 with the White non-Hispanic population remaining mostly constant. He added the attainment of an Associates Degree or higher within the 25-44 age group remains at only 12 percent of the Hispanic population and only 39 percent of the White, non-Hispanic population, while Idaho Asian populations are at 60 percent.

**Mr. Longanecker** explained WICHE's goal was to get states to think of appropriations, tuition, and financial aid together when considering higher education finance and when achieving educational goals. In consideration of Idaho's record of appropriations per student, Idaho ranks 30th in the nation and has the 4th largest cuts in per student funding for 2006 through 2011. Mr. Longanecker stated Idaho's colleges and universities were ranked 8th lowest in net tuition and fees. However, the students are bearing more of the cost of their education.

Referring to the financial aid for students awarded in Fiscal Year 2009-10, **Mr. Longanecker** stated that Idaho ranked 47th in nation for total state grant aid, 50th for total state need-based aid, and 20th for institutional grant dollars. He said, in regard to Idaho's policy for higher education, improving college completion is the most compelling issue facing the state.

Speaking of data collection for accountability and informed decision-making, another policy goal for Idaho higher education, **Mr. Prescott** said Idaho has made huge gains in tracking individual students from high school to college and into the workforce, despite modest commitment of resources.

**Mr. Longanecker** said Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Hawaii are part of the collaborative focused on improving the "common core" of English Language Arts and Mathematics in preparing students for college. He noted that Idaho is working with Complete College America which emphasizes improving remedial education. He said assisting students in choosing a college program and monitoring progress is one of the changes being incorporated.

**Mr. Prescott** explained that improving affordability for those most in need may be Idaho's best opportunity to achieve students' college completion. He said research indicates the low-income student is the one who does not complete college and so there is a "need" versus "merit" dilemma. Those receiving scholarships may also be the ones most able to pay for their own education. He said that may have to change.

In response to questions from the committee, **Mr. Longanecker**, said the financial aid institutions have been benevolent to a fault. Student loans have made it possible for students to buy cars, move into apartments and take on other debt which then becomes a burden. He noted that in the next federal reallocation of funds, this issue will be part of the equation. He explained that Oregon has a shared responsibility plan. He said borrowing is a reasonable component; but scholarships, parent assistance, student savings and work are considered first, then federal and state aid fills in the gap.

**Mr Prescott** said the Oregon plan was a frugal one with class attendance being calculated into the financial assistance package.

Responding to questions from the committee, **Mr. Longanecker** said there are not statistics on whether those who received a certificate or a two year degree were equally successful in comparison with those earning a four year degree. He said high value certificates in welding and applied health fields are of great value and can be a step on the career ladder to move up. He also said that all of the figures presented had come from the 2010 Census data.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

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Representative DeMordaunt  
Chair

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Jean Vance  
Secretary