

MINUTES  
**HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, February 11, 2013  
**TIME:** 4:00 P.M.  
**PLACE:** WW02  
**MEMBERS:** Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman Nielsen, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Bateman, Boyle, Agidius, Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Horman, Mendive, VanOrden, Pence, Kloc, Ward-Engelking  
**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** None.  
**GUESTS:** The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office until the end of the session. Following the end of the session, the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

**Chairman DeMordaunt** called the Joint Education Meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. He welcomed the guests and explained the rules and protocol of the hearing.

**Co-Chairman Goedde** explained the Idaho School Board Association brought seven proposed legislations before the two committees for their consideration. Stakeholders involved were: Parent Teacher Association, Rural School Administrations, Idaho School Administrators and the Idaho Education Association (IEA). He said the new proposed legislation contains better language and as the bills come through the two committees, they will again have public testimony. He noted the Governor's Task Force has completed it's third meeting. During those sessions, it was determined that labor relationships were out of their scope. There are presently five subcommittees looking at school improvements with some good recommendations coming out of those regional meetings.

**Robin Nettinga**, Executive Director, IEA, said she respected and valued the legislative process. She said the Task Force needed time and space; authentic discussion had not been done. She noted that the defeat of Propositions 1, 2, and 3 during the November election proved that there was no public support for similar proposed legislation coming before the 2013 Legislature. **John Olovich** told the committees that passing legislation prior to Task Force findings, would threaten success of representative reform. He said he was concerned that continued passage of legislation without stakeholder input would discourage the Task Force and lower teacher morale.

**Anne Ritter**, President, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA) and Trustee of Joint School District #2, Meridian, explained that the Governor has asked the ISBA to take the leadership role on labor issues. She said the reallocation of funds left on the table when the Students Come First laws were repealed threaten the fiscal health of the school districts.

**Rob Winslow**, Executive Director, Idaho Association of School Administrators, explained he represented the superintendents and principals of Idaho's school districts.

**Rep. JoAn Wood** explained the challenges facing Idaho's rural schools. **Erika Kemery**, Superintendent and Principal, South Lemhi School District 292, also spoke of the problems facing the rural schools. She said South Lemhi is a 4-star remote district with 2 school buildings 25 miles apart: one is 100 years old and one is about 55 years old. There are a total of 82 students from an area of 22 square miles. She noted the failure of the Propositions has left many districts in jeopardy. She also said **H 69** did not provide enough funding to meet the cumbersome, financial emergency conditions. She stated it is the Legislature's constitutional duty to maintain the system of public, free common schools and urged lawmakers to provide the much needed fiscal stability and the critical flexibility in teacher contracts and operational funds. **Christy Castro**, Troy School District, said his district had 317 students. He focused on the problems of low income students and the need to cut services and positions in the rural schools.

**Amy Pancheri, Sandra Merrick, Chris Stokes, Deb Foster, and Gail Chumbley** addressed the problem of keeping the best and brightest teachers in Idaho. They were concerned with class size, the demands on teachers, the low morale and the failure to champion the great things teachers do for children and the community. Ms. Chumbley and Mr. Stokes feared the adversarial position of teachers and management during bargaining. Ms. Merrick asked lawmakers to restore respect for teachers and prioritize children over politics. **John McCostie** said teachers, alongside students, should be given funding priority and that equality of opportunity is a basic public responsibility. He asked the committees to abide by the November election mandate.

**Spencer Larson**, Butte County, spoke of the dwindling tax base. **Karen Pyron**, Superintendent Mackay School District 182, **Scott Rogers**, Minidoka County Joint School District 331, **Ron Perrenoud**, Superintendent and 2-8 Principal Ririe School District 252, and **Tammy Stevens**, Trustee Minidoka School District asked Legislators to review the tax structure and provide adequate school funding. She said technology was vital for poorer populations and districts. Supt. Pyron supports 21st Century technology and said pay for performance has been a success in her district. She testified her support for all ISBA bills, especially **H 69**, Reduction in Force, and "use it or lose it." She said equity in funding is partially achieved by providing local flexibility; but, there needed to be some form of equity in the tax base. She cited the local taxing abilities and agreed with **Dallas Clinger** and **Christy Castro** stating the loss of business personal property tax would put a burden on school districts.

**Dave Wagers, Scott Thomson, Dan Nicklay, Kelly Trudeau, Amber Scott Wilson, Allen Millar, Luda Miller, Heather Dennis and Troy Schultz** represented Idaho Charter Schools. They testified that Idaho Charter Schools have been award winning, but at a disadvantage without equal unit funding, without facilities funding, and with no ability to levy taxes. Mr. Wagers said he sees the charter school as an unsustainable business model. Ms. Trudeau said the charter school gives choice to parents whose children have different learning styles. She added charter schools cannot receive property taxes, only entitlement funds. The Albertson's Foundation and other benefactors were given credit for their contributions to keep some charter schools open.

**Jerry Helgeson** described his discussion with a Bosnian student. He told the committees that other countries have different ways of accomplishing student achievement. He asked for collaboration to continue and quoting President John F. Kennedy, he told the committee: "We choose to become a leader in education change, not because it is easy but because it is hard." **Cherri Sabala**, Northwest Professional Educators (NPE), said from a survey of NPE, most of the educators support increased access to technology but do not support mandated online classes. She added that 61 percent of her organization does not support the policy retaining teachers solely on the basis of seniority and 91 percent support requiring a local association representative during contract negotiations. She did not support on-line schooling.

**Gloria Tortoriquena**, iSchool Campus, explained the importance of technology and suggested the use of pilot programs as a way of reducing wasteful spending in redundancy.

**Brian Duncan**, Minidoka County Joint School District 331, said he favored Propositions 1, 2, and 3. Mr. Duncan noted good management practices have to be separated from personal relationships. **Todd Wells**, Castleford School District Trustee, said teacher negotiations within the terms of the repealed propositions had been civil and more fiscally healthy for the district. **Supt. Scott Rogers**, Minidoka County Joint School District 331, told the committees the funding of schools at an adequate level does not mean that you are funding the status quo. He said schools are eager to implement technology, maintain higher learning standards, and reward good teachers. He told the committee when finances become scarce, energy is placed on survival, not change. He asked that "use it or lose it" be removed from school funding policy. He said reforms will benefit all stakeholders.

**Ryan Kerby**, Superintendent of New Plymouth School District 372, and **Galen Smyer**, Superintendent, Cassia County Joint School District 151, told of their success implementing the Common Core. They agreed that districts must have control of the funds and the adjusting of salaries. **Joseph Kren**, Superintendent, St. Maries Joint School District 41, explained the challenge of running a supplemental levy with declining enrollment. He said operational expenses do not go down. He asked for adequate funding.

**Laurie Kiester** told the committee she had spent several years researching school structure and achievement studying education in countries like Finland. She said she had formulated an educational plan and said she would like to present it before the education committees.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business to come before the joint committees, the meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

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Representative DeMordaunt  
Chair

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Jean Vance  
Secretary