

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 11, 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** called the Education Committee to order at 3:04 p.m., and a silent roll was taken.

Chairman Goedde asked unanimous consent be given to print **RS 21933**, pertaining to early retirement and retired teachers; **RS 21960**, pertaining to one year and two year agreements; **RS 21961**, pertaining to negotiations and majority representation; **RS 21965**, pertaining to employee leave of absence; **RS 21953**, pertaining to math and science teachers; **RS 21981**, pertaining to fees for out-of-state students; **RS 21911**, pertaining to driver's education requirements; **RS 21959**, pertaining to the reduction of school transportation costs; **RS 21901**, pertaining to school counselor ratios; **RS 21905**, pertaining to class size; **RS 21921**, pertaining to school districts and consolidation; and **RS 21941**, pertaining to dual credit for those completing required courses early. Hearing no objections, the Committee agreed to print the RSs in question. **Chairman Goedde** then introduced Dr. Bob Kustra, President of Boise State University (BSU).

PRESENTATION: **Dr. Kustra** introduced BSU associates in the audience. Then, using Powerpoint slides, **Dr. Kustra** reviewed the current fiscal and physical state of BSU. A copy of the presentation is attached and incorporated by reference.

Dr. Kustra noted that recently additional campus space has been provided to address a growing student population, which is expected to slow as the economy continues to improve. Due to lack of resources, attention will be turned to the most pressing university needs that include an Arts and Humanities Institute and a Physical and Material Science building.

Dr. Kustra described programs soon to begin at BSU. These will include additional doctoral level programs and additional online programs. BSU also seeks to improve the number of graduates in high demand disciplines such as computer science with the goal of improving innovation and employment in Idaho. **Dr. Kustra** pointed out the changing student profile and reviewed programs to improve the university's ability to adapt to differences created by demographic changes in student populations. He outlined the university's use of external funding, including the Governor's Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission initiative (IGEM), in the Computer Science Department. This funding has enabled the university to garner more funds for school programs and increase student graduation rates in areas needed by the local economy.

Dr. Kustra described a funding inconsistency among institutions and said additional, permanent funding is needed to address a budget disparity created by more students taking upper level courses. Upper level classes are more expensive than lower level classes, but less funding has been received from the government.

Dr. Kustra focused on the strain that upper division credits have had on BSU; they have increased by nearly 50 percent from 2004 to 2011. This strain is further exacerbated by low growth in new faculty positions as well as more students attending the College of Western Idaho for lower level courses. In 2012, a limited upper division faculty, plus an increase in upper division enrollments, resulted in a waiting list for courses. He said Idaho's college and university budgets are the only major general fund item to receive less state funding today than ten years ago. This financial situation is not sustainable for the university.

Dr. Kustra emphasized that Idaho college graduates earn 67 percent more on average than students with a high school diploma and are 50 percent less likely to be unemployed. He said a highly educated society produces exponential economic growth through tax revenues and less drain on government entitlement programs.

Dr. Kustra encouraged more administrative flexibility by eliminating unneeded layers of review and approval at various state entities. He said increased flexibility would provide BSU, like the University of Idaho, the ability to make business decisions that are critical in a time of decreasing budgets and an increasing need for innovation and creativity in order to succeed.

Senator Durst asked if the legislature could assist colleges in more effectively reaching students. With the exception of finances, **Dr. Kustra** explained that no impediments have been identified by the school that the legislature could ameliorate. **Senator Fulcher** asked about student debt and the impact of increasing debt loads of students on BSU. **Dr. Kustra** replied that students have become more aware of the financial repercussions stemming from their schooling. He said most students find a way to cover the expenses.

Chairman Goedde requested for detail about the impact on the college football team incurred by changing leagues. **Dr. Kustra** replied that the impact was not great. He was not able to give more detail at the time but said he would submit more information when received.

ADJOURNED: Having no further business before the committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Senator Goedde
Chairman

Elaine Leedy
Secretary