

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 20, 2013
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: Room WW55
MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Nonini, Thayn, Patrick, Durst, and Buckner-Webb
ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Chairman Goedde and Senator Fulcher
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: **Vice Chairman Mortimer** called the Education Committee to order at 3:06 p.m., and a silent role was taken.

PRESENTATION: **Mark Browning**, Vice President for Community Relations and Marketing, North Idaho College (NIC) introduced the North Idaho Consortium for Higher Education (NICHE) and its representatives from NIC, Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC), University of Idaho (UI), Boise State University (BSU) and Idaho State University (ISU). NICHE began as an alliance between NIC, LCSC and UI in 1999, and expanded with state funding to include BSU and ISU. The purpose of NICHE is to work cooperatively to recruit, retain and facilitate student completion and their success. Between the five schools, NICHE offers a wide variety of offerings including completion certificates, Associate degrees, Bachelor's degrees and advanced masters and doctoral programs, all on one integrated campus in Coeur d'Alene. **Mr. Browning** introduced Marc Stewart of LCSC to address some of NICHE's marketing efforts.

Mr. Stewart described NICHE's efforts under IdahoGoes to reach students and help them find their career direction. Through presentations in junior and high schools, college career nights, and community outreach, NICHE helps students to define their goals, illustrate future employment opportunities, and outline the requisite educational requirements to meet those goals. The NICHE members also work cooperatively to recommend the best institution for each student's goals. **Mr. Stewart** stated that, according to research surveys, people often change careers five to six times in their working life. Therefore, a broad base of knowledge in the first two years of college is very important so that people can come back into the educational system and focus on new interests rather than on fundamental courses. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** noted that inequities usually exist within partnerships, and asked how those inequities manifest within NICHE. **Mr. Stewart** replied that NIC benefits greatly, and BSU often refers students. Online courses enhance degree opportunities beyond the second year, especially in social sciences. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** thanked Mr. Browning and Mr. Stewart for their presentation.

H 82

Marilyn Whitney introduced **H 82** by explaining that the proposed changes outlined in this bill would align the workers compensation laws contained in Section 72-102, Idaho code, so that postsecondary students receive the same workers compensation coverage that K-12 students receive while completing work experience credit hours. This bill amends the definition of "work experience student" to include any person enrolled in the public school districts or public institutions of higher education. The proposed changes also modify Section 72-205, Idaho Code to allow a university or college to purchase coverage for students through the State Insurance Fund. Under Idaho Code, higher education institutions currently are not allowed to purchase separate coverage for students in these situations. This change provides the same protection for postsecondary students as the current statute provides to secondary students.

Senator Nonini asked for an example of a K-12 work situation. **Ms. Whitney** responded that high school students may work an internship with a local business or computer company for credit hours. They are covered on the state's workers compensation program, but college students are not offered that coverage. **H 82** would provide equal coverage. A discussion ensued concerning the compensating value of a college credit, the value of loss of life or limb when no monetary compensation exists, and the minimal cost to colleges and universities for workers compensation coverage versus a potential liability. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** suggested that the real value of this bill lies in protecting colleges and universities from liability. In looking at risk, the Industrial Commission would categorize the type of worker and charge the institution that amount.

MOTION:

Senator Thayne made a motion to send **H 82** to the Senate floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Buckner-Webb** seconded the motion. Additional questions in discussion revealed that the State Board of Education (SBE) had reviewed the bill with the Departments of Labor and Commerce with no objections. **Senator Nonini** suggested that postsecondary students likely were omitted by oversight. He hoped that universities would be prudent in the kinds of jobs students are asked to perform. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

S 1057

Senator Thayne explained the **S 1057** allows a portion of teaching hours to be used for visits between kindergarten teachers and parents. The goal is to strengthen the relationship by discussing the kindergarten experience and expectations of both teacher and parent. A program in Portland, ME finds that home visits help prepare for the school year in many ways: students get to know their teachers in their home where they are most comfortable. Parents can discuss their concerns. The result has been more confidence in kindergartners and less tears from parents on the first day of school. Everyone had a positive experience. **Senator Thayne** noted that **S 1057** would help to accomplish these achievements. Participation is voluntary, not required, and the location of the visits can be in home or at school. **Senator Buckner-Webb** asked clarifying questions concerning the time used for these visits and how it would effect classroom hours. **Jason Hancock**, State Department of Education (SDE), confirmed that schools must meet the minimum of 450 hours for kindergarten. He also suggested that schools could set up their year to meet requirements and provide visit time.

MOTION:

Senator Durst made a motion to send **S 1057** to the Senate floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Pearce** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senator Thayne** will carry **S 1057** on the floor.

S 1091

Senator Durst explained that **S 1091** creates a stable, long-term funding formula for the Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA), sets up a portal for online learning so that districts know what online courses are being offered, and reestablishes the dual credit for early completers. **Senator Durst** detailed the new funding formula, based on a two tier distribution, that would (1) cover digital learning fixed expenses that districts would incur regardless of their number of students or administrators, and (2) provide variable funding that is more comprehensive and inclusive. **Senator Thayne** said that the legislation also reinstates the dual credit for early completers program, defines online classes, and establishes guidelines to ensure that students enroll in online classes which would meet graduation requirements. **Rob Winslow** said that the Idaho Association of School Administrators (IDLA) does not oppose the legislation. Ongoing funding has always been a concern, and the IDLA can work with the proposed formula provided it is fully funded. **Senator Pearce** asked if the JFAC budget included IDLA funding. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** confirmed the funds, and **Jason Hancock** provided specific numbers. **Mr. Hancock** further stated that the SDE stands in support of this legislation: the funding fits within the superintendent's budget, and the SDE believes **S 1091** offers opportunities to challenge high-achieving students.

MOTION:

Senator Nonini made a motion to send **S 1091** to the Senate floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Pearce** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senators Durst** and **Thayne** will carry the bill on the floor.

ADJOURNED:

Having no further business before the committee, **Vice Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

Senator Goedde
Chairman

Elaine Leedy
Secretary