

MINUTES
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Thursday, February 21, 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:** None.
- GUESTS:** Mark Browning, Marc Stewart, and Kathy Martin, North Idaho Consortium of Higher Education; Cindy Omlin, Executive Director, Northwest Professional Educators; Katie Pemberton, Teacher of the Year; Phil Homer, Idaho Association of School Administrators, Harold Ott, Idaho Rural Schools Association; Bert Marley, Idaho Education Association
- Chairman DeMordaunt** called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Kloc** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 13, 2013. **Motion carried by voice vote.**
- RS 22057:** **Jason Hancock**, Deputy Chief of Staff, Department of Education, explained the legislation dealt with the frozen movement on the state's funding grid for educator salaries for those educators who earned additional college credits applicable to FY11. He told the committee **S 1184** in 2011 previously repealed this freeze, however, with the repeal of **S 1184** through Proposition 3, reinstated the freeze. The proposed legislation reinstates the repeal of the freeze, which will allow school districts to receive full state funding for actual college credits earned by their professional educator employees.
- MOTION:** **Rep. Kloc** made a motion to introduce **RS 22057**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**
- RS 22079:** **Jason Hancock**, Deputy Chief of Staff, Department of Education, explained the legislation includes the financial components of the recommendations made by a group of stakeholders that met and examined Idaho Charter School Laws. The two recommendations with fiscal impact include a new requirement that charter schools pay an authorizer fee to the entity that authorized their charter and oversees their performance. He said the purpose of the authorizers fee is to help defray the cost of providing oversight, thus encouraging more school districts to act as authorizers for charter schools. He stated the second recommendation with a fiscal impact involves the creation of a state facilities funding stream for charter schools, since currently charter schools have no discrete, identified source of revenue to pay for their facility costs. He noted that charter schools must divert state funds intended for employee salaries and operating costs to pay for facilities.

Mr. Hancock, explained the state facilities funding created for charter schools by this legislation is pegged to a percentage of the average amount of facility levy funds being raised by school districts, on a per student basis. For FY14, the distribution would be equal to 20 percent of this amount. For FY15, this percentage would increase to 30 percent. After this, the percentage would increase or decrease in 10 percent increments, based on triggers built around the level of increase or decrease in the public schools appropriation. He clarified the percentage is limited to a low of 20 percent and a high of 50 percent. Mr. Hancock told the committee, the net fiscal impact will be approximately \$1.4 million in FY14 and \$2.1 million in FY15, and subject to adjustments up or down thereafter, depending on overall public school budget increases and decreases. He explained the legislation to be a reform of charter school education laws, thus it could be paid from the money identified for education reform. The dedicated authorizer funds received by the state could also allow for up to \$135,000 in additional oversight capacity for the Idaho Charter School Commission and the State Department of Education.

In response to questions from the committee regarding stakeholders involved in the process, **Mr. Hancock** said the Idaho School Administrators, the Idaho School Boards Association, the Idaho Commission of Charter Schools, the Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families, the State Department of Education and the Idaho Charter Schools Network. He explained that the calculation formula for the authorization fee was explained on the bottom of page 7 and the top of page 8 of **RS 22079**.

Responding to additional questions, **Mr. Hancock** indicated the path of facilities funding for the traditional public school district is to go to the voters and get a bond approved. They need to get a 2/3 majority vote. He said the legislation before the committee provides a dedicated funding stream for the charter school facilities, instead of having to carve 15-30 percent out of their state issued operational funds. He said charter schools are funded on the same formula, the same salary grid as other public schools, the only difference is the bond level equalization program. Charter schools cannot run bonds. He added the funds for charter schools come from the general fund and not from property tax.

To questions from the committee, **Mr. Hancock** said when a school passes a bond, the state receives some of those monies. However, the public schools in districts which are property poor can be given additional state assistance. He noted that virtual charter schools have a 50 percent equivalency reimbursement. He added that charter schools, who run buses, do get transportation funds. Charter schools can and do get donations, but they cannot get the same percentage rates from facilities lenders because they do not have a secure funding stream.

MOTION:

Rep. Nielsen made a motion to introduce **RS 22079**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Katie Pemberton, Teacher of the Year, Canfield Middle School, Coeur d'Alene, told the committee of her experience bringing her classroom from educational technology of the past and to the present. She wrote thousands of dollars worth of grants in order to bring her classroom to a 21st Century classroom. She said that each day her students are greeted at her classroom door with a hand shake, and smile because in Idaho we still believe in the value of a firm handshake and personal connection. She related her vision for Idaho schools which included a state wide weekly collaboration with teachers, teachers being asked to select the instructional technology they need to support 21st Century learning, while meeting all students needs. She said a quality evaluation system should be used to hold all teachers accountable while treating them like professionals. Ms. Pemberton told the committee of an experience related to her by the 2012 National Teacher of the Year, **Rebecca Nieliwocki**. On her trip to China, Ms. Nieliwocki indicated the teachers, whose students rank number one in test taking, wanted to know the

secret of American education. They wanted to know about teaching creativity, problem solving and confidence.

Responding to questions from the committee, **Ms. Pemberton** said she does not depend on the district, she writes grants to update the technology in her classroom. She stated that classroom management changes when students are working on laptops. She emphasized the need to use the programs which show constant monitoring of all students' screens and of being proactive in checking them. She related the interactive nature of her classroom, and the success with one-on-one instruction time. She said the Governor's Task Force, of which she is a part, is making excellent progress with broadening perspectives, and giving all stakeholders a voice.

Mark Browning, explained the North Idaho Consortium for Higher Education (NICHE) to the committee. He said it began in 1999 with North Idaho College, Lewis-Clark State College, and the University of Idaho. He said when the consortium received funding from the Idaho Legislature in 2002, Boise State University and Idaho State University were added to the consortium. He noted the group of higher education institutions work cooperatively to recruit, retain and facilitate student completion and success. They offer a full array of programs, degrees and certificates. Mr. Browning also noted the transfer of credits and articulation agreements between institutions.

Mr. Browning emphasized the success of North Idaho College's IDAHOGOES! Program as a focus program for keeping students engaged in Associates and 4-year degrees. In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Browning said the goal of the consortium is to keep students on the path to graduation, protecting the students from loss of credits as a result of changed majors. He said the consortium guides students to graduate from the college that can support and validate their credits and their career change. He stated the synergy in education is definitely in the professional technical field. He related the success of the professional technical high school that recently opened in North Idaho. It was planned for 250 students. One thousand applications were received the first year. It is now running two shifts of 500 students daily.

Cindy Omlin, Northwest Professional Educators (NPE), related her experience working with the teacher's union as a speech-language pathologist in Spokane, Washington. She said she challenged the amount of dues and the compulsory fees paid by the teachers. She represented 300 teachers in a class action lawsuit against the Washington Education Association. After she gained legal and financial assistance of the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, she was able to win the lawsuit on the basis of free speech. She helped in creating the Northwest Professional Educators in 2001, partnering with the Association of American Educators (AAE), a national nonprofit, nonunion organization with members in all 50 states. She explained the beliefs and mission of the organization as well as the problems facing the non-union teachers. She asked lawmakers to consider a bill that will require districts to provide teachers with a state-produced register of education associations providing legal/liability services, and equal access for both union and non-union associations.

In response to questions from the committee, **Ms. Omlin** said 700 teachers belong to NPE in Idaho and the organization is affiliated with the AAE, their national association. She also stated NPE, although not aligned politically, does speak out on legislation affecting teachers and students. On a membership survey, 75 percent of member respondents must agree with a position before NPE advocates or opposes an education issue.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Representative DeMordaunt
Chair

Jean Vance
Secretary