

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Wednesday, February 27, 2013
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayne, 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 3:06 p.m., and a silent roll was taken.
- Jerome Filip**, student from Boise State University, and serving as an Senate Intern, introduced the Senate Concurrent Resolution commending the Boise Independent School District (District). He explained that the District had done such an outstanding job of implementing the Read Right Program that they have been honored with the 2013 Read Right Award of Excellence. The Read Right program was originally funded by the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation to provide an avenue for students from diverse backgrounds to become successful readers. The Boise District is one of only seven recipients to receive this prestigious award, and one of just two school districts. Mr. Filip's complete remarks are attached and incorporated by reference.
- UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST TO PRINT RS 22072** **Chairman Goedde** asked for unanimous consent to send **RS 22072** to the Judiciary and Rules Committee to be printed and returned to the Education Committee. There were no objections.
- PRESENTATION:** **Glen Zollman**, Vice President of Implementation Services, Think Through Math (TTM), summarized his background as a math teacher during which time he taught many remedial math students. He has been with TTM for five years. Think Through Math is America's premier math differentiation system—a Web-based curriculum proven to raise math achievement for students in grades 3 through Algebra I. The program is designed to meet the rigors of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and accelerate students to grade level. With an instructional focus on the essential foundational concepts and practices, Think Through Math deepens understanding and skill proficiency. The program provides a personalized CCSS pathway for every student. The goal: readiness for college and career for all.
- Mr. Zollman** explained that as students transition from elementary mathematics to middle school, many start to lose interest in academic success. Think Through Math is designed to transform how students feel about math and dramatically improve their achievement. The program deepens students' understanding of critical mathematical concepts, improves higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, and readies students for Algebra and beyond.

TTM's philosophy is that motivation plus student effort, plus computer-adaptive instruction plus live state-certified teachers equals a measurable contribution to students' mathematical growth. Its number one goal is to motivate students to do more math and transform the way they feel about math. Because Think Through Math meets students in their zone of proximal development, students quickly achieve success which is a meaningful reward to struggling students. Many students are significantly stressed or fatigued by mathematics. Too many have never experienced success with math and have given up. However, results show that the more students engage with Think Through Math, the more they learn, and the more they improve. Think Through Math motivates students to do more math both during and after school with its uniquely 21st century motivation system—a powerful blend of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. The system is based on a single idea: reward effort. Students are awarded points for each problem undertaken.

Mr. Zollman described TTM's three tiers of motivation: long-term team and classed based, short-term individual and team based, and random individually based. TTM sets up fun contests with prizes such as the iPod Shuffle and iPod Nano. Students win by completing math problems online. These contests often run over holiday periods or spring break to motivate students to work math problems when they are not in school. Others track how many problems students undertake during evenings and weekends. One short-term contest, customized for Idaho, pits Idaho versus West Virginia math students. Another, Idaho Math Cup, allows a class as a whole to compete against other peer classes. Long-term class and team goals motivate students to donate their math points to charities such as Special Olympics, United Way, Wounded Warrior Project, Boys and Girls Clubs of American and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Over \$56,000 has been donated over the last two years. This program originated in Idaho and 50 percent of students now donate to charities. In the past they had not known how to give, but 50 percent of students also know of someone who has been impacted by these charitable groups which makes them want to complete math problems in order to give to others.

The adaptive learning component of TTM tailors new questions built upon previous answers. It continues to adapt to each individual student, resulting in an efficiency of time. Real time interaction from state certified teachers offers specific instruction to convey deep conceptual understanding. Students can also text or chat with instructions, which provides a very safe and anonymous interaction. Active teachers on evenings and weekends allow parents to become positive reinforcers rather than frustrated helpers. **Mr. Zollman** reported that on a year-to-year basis, the program is gaining momentum; their target is 10 million math problems completed this year. Results show gains in the Idaho Scholastic Assessment Test (ISAT) for students who began at below-basic levels. **Senator Nonini** asked Mr. Zollman to explain teacher training. **Mr. Zollman** replied that in Idaho, three instructors coach full-time and provide all training to classroom teachers. Standard training consists of three hours of implementation: how to have success in classrooms and how to make TTM an integrated part of the classroom. The coaches visit two additional times per year to observe and coach, discuss best practices and to look at student data to help reinforce teacher progress. **Chairman Goedde** asked how TTM complements or correlates to Kahn Academy. **Mr. Zollman** replied that Kahn Academy's instructional videos and problems are a solid program for those students working at grade level, but is not as successful with students who are behind. TTM is more robust in terms of feedback and adaptability. **Chairman Goedde** thanked Mr. Zollman for his presentation. Mr. Zollman's powerpoint presentation is attached as Exhibit 1 and incorporated by reference.

PRESENTATION: **Ann Joslin**, Idaho State Librarian and Director of the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICL), gave a brief overview of the history of the Idaho Free Library Commission which was created as a state agency in 1901. One hundred twelve years later, Idahoans still want traditional library services, and they also want 24 hour access, seven days a week to electronic information services, and a place, both physical and virtual, to participate in their community. A new survey from the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project shows that Idaho's circulation and reference increased significantly over the past five years, and that use of the Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) databases increased 65 percent in just the past two years. Today the ICL has built and maintains a library of online resources to Idahoans through any internet connection.

Ms. Joslin explained that their largest area for growth lies in supporting digital literacy training in libraries. Their broad program entitled "From Readers to Leaders" encompasses several components. Read to Me (RTM) focuses on early childhood literacy, and provides access to books for young children who are unlikely to have books at home. With a \$100,000 appropriation in 2012, the RTM project was able to offer mini-grants to elementary schools and public libraries for their book budgets. The Routes to Reading grant for Grade Level Reading, one of only 19 awarded nationwide, adds a new dimension to RTM, by providing access to quality children's books in rural communities. It has also created "Books to Go" for preschools and child care centers so that busy parents can take home bags of library books to read with their children, and provides information for parents on how they can develop their children's early literacy skills. Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) content has also been added into the RTM programs. Over the past twelve years, the summer reading program has increased by almost 300 percent.

Together with broadband speed support and new devices, the new LearningExpress Library supports students from community colleges and the workforce in computer literacy, technical certifications, job interview skills and resume improvement, career information and preparation for General Education Degrees (GED) or college entrance exams. The most-used resources in 2012 were related to the GED test, which soon will be offered only online. Survey results show that Idahoans use library online resources to interview online for a new job, to find scholarships, to find customers, and many other specific purposes. Seventy percent of rural areas report that libraries are their only source of free internet access in their communities, and provide primary access to the economy, business resources, and education.

Community outreach efforts include working with Health and Welfare staff to notify health care providers that their patients can access their online health records at the library; working with education groups to provide information about cyberbullying, and working with Idaho Public Television and the Idaho Department of Labor to create an online JobSeekers Handbook. Ms. Joslin's complete speaker's notes and handouts are attached as Exhibit 2 and incorporated by reference.

H 163

Karen Echeverria, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA) explained that **H 163** sets out criteria for the return of teacher contracts each year so the school district will know in ample time who is returning for employment. It aligns the return of the contracts with the one year master agreements. It will also allow the school district to send those contracts via email, return receipt requested, rather than through the U.S. Mail, return receipt requested. After meeting with the Idaho Education Association (IEA), we made one amendment to this bill. That amendment will now require the local district to send the contract through U.S. Mail, if the contract that was previously sent via email has not been returned during the allotted time. **Ms. Echeverria** indicated that all stakeholders had reached consensus.

Bert Marley, representing the IEA, agreed the stakeholders had reached consensus on **H 163**. He stated that proof of delivery had always been required in delivery of contracts, and that the IEA had not been aware of any instance where a district had used the U.S. Mail, return receipt requested to deliver contracts to professional personnel. However, if in the unlikely event that a district would need to send contracts to employees, this bill would now provide an additional, less expensive method for doing so. **Mr. Marley** assured the committee that the IEA supports this legislation.

MOTION: **Senator Nonini** made a motion to send **H 163** to the Senate floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senator Nonini** will carry the bill on the floor.

ADJOURNED: Having no further business before the committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 4:14 p.m.

Senator Goedde
Chairman

Elaine Leedy
Secretary