

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Monday, March 04, 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 (Committee) to order at 3:04 p.m., and a silent roll was taken.

**DISCUSSION OF INTENT LANGUAGE AT REQUEST OF JFAC:** **Chairman Goedde** explained that at Monday's Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC) final budget meeting, the Committee was granted the opportunity to review the intent language in two specific sections relating to education funding. **Chairman Goedde** clarified that the budget amounts were set, as was the language, except for sections 25 and 26. JFAC gave the Committee the opportunity to review the intent language in those two sections, and make comments or recommendations at the JFAC meeting scheduled on Friday, March 8, 2013. **Chairman Goedde** recognized Senator Cameron to begin the discussion.

**Senator Cameron** explained that after the defeat of the Students Come First legislation by the November 2012 propositions. A task force was assembled to make recommendations on education policy. The budget had set aside \$33.9 million to use for the task force recommendations. The task force did not have time to draft recommendations, so JFAC appropriated the \$33.9 million. Sections 25 and 26 deal with the allocation of that \$33.9 million in the FY 2014 budget. The proposed language in Section 25 of the JFAC budget allocates \$21 million to the districts for differential pay. School districts could request grant funds for local Excellence in Achievement Awards according to a formula based upon the number of support units used to calculate salary-based apportionment.

The excellence in achievement plans must meet certain criteria: (1) all plans shall be approved by the local board of trustees; (2) such plans would not be subject to collective bargaining; (3) up to 40 percent of the plan may include professional development and resources necessary to implement the Idaho Common Core State Standards (ICCSS) for math and English language arts; (4) the plan shall delineate how the moneys will be used for Excellence in Achievement awards; (5) awards may be directed at the school-wide level, the individual level, or other grouping criteria; (6) plan and grant fund requests must be submitted to the State Department of Education (SDE) before October 1, 2013; (7) Each school district receiving grant funds must report to the SDE at the end of the fiscal year detailing the plan's student achievement results; (8) each plan shall be posted to the school district and SDE websites; (9) a portion of the moneys received may be used to pay any variable, rate-based employer benefit costs; (10) the school districts have no obligation to maintain or repeat such payments in the future. **Senator Cameron** further stated that the term "school districts" would also include "public charter schools", and "board of trustees" would include "board of directors."

Section 26 allocates \$13 million to technology to include: (1) \$8 million for classroom technology; (2) \$2.25 million for wireless technology infrastructure; (3) \$3 million for technology pilot projects; and (4) \$150,000 for development and maintenance of an internet-based portal for online course. The complete language of Sections 25 and 26 is attached and incorporated by reference.

**Senator Cameron** explained that Sections 25 and 26 were intended to fund "laboratories of innovation" for rewarding and retaining the best teachers through awards of excellence and sharing those ideas with other districts. Some districts will do better than others, and the reporting system will identify those districts with the best track record. **Senator Thayne** asked if the Idaho Education Association (IEA) had weighed in on the language. **Senator Cameron** said that the bulk of the language had been written by Jason Hancock, (SDE); and Paul Headlee, Legislative Budget and Policy, and had been reviewed by Chairman Goedde and House Chairman DeMordaunt. None of the educational associations were involved. **Chairman Goedde** offered that he would schedule a stakeholder meeting to allow them time for input. **Senator Nonini** asked for clarification of the "rate-based employer benefits" mentioned in section 25(9). **Senator Cameron** described such benefits as costs which are variable in nature and associated with salary, such as Public Employees Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI) and Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA), but not health insurance benefits. **Senator Goedde** suggested that this subsection should be clarified.

**Senator Patrick** asked if the "Use it or Lose It" provisions of SCF were included. **Senator Cameron** replied that in the FY 2013-2014 budget, Use it or Lose It was all allocated to FY 2013, and was already in the base. After defeat by the 2012 propositions, \$33.9 million remained undistributed from SCF. Sections 25 and 26 address the one-time distribution of the \$33.9 million, with \$24 million allocated to differential pay, and \$13 million allocated to technology.

**Senator Pearce** queried if Section 25 and 26 were a "watered down" version of Proposition 2; he questioned the wisdom of moving forward without reviewing what had been learned from the last experience. **Senator Cameron** disagreed: what the public said with Proposition was that they did not like a top-down management approach; they wanted local districts to have more control; some did not want to pay for performance when teacher salaries were being cut.

In reference to Section 26, technology, **Chairman Goedde** noted that \$10 million had been included in the technology budget for several years. **Senator Cameron** said that JFAC awaited the governor's task force (task force) recommendations. Other options were considered; however JFAC preferred the language in Section 26 because subsection (3) included \$3 million to districts for pilot projects. These projects could include software, laptops, iPads – the language is fairly open – and requires them to predict how their plan would aid in student achievement, and to report to the SDE at the end of the year with their results. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** voiced concern that the language in subsection (1), technology for teachers, was too limiting; he would prefer it to read, "teachers and students." **Senator Durst** asked why not grant the \$33.9 million to all the districts to use as they wished. **Senator Cameron** replied that every school district was struggling to meet financial demands. The purpose was to choose a model which did not include a top-down management approach. **Senator Cameron** described a plan in Utah which allowed pilot projects and results-reporting. Utah ultimately did invest largely on technology. Section 26 mimics Utah's plan by allowing each district to devise their own plan and ask the state for grant assistance. **Senator Nonini** and **Chairman Goedde** asked if the pilot project provision would exclude districts which had already implemented pilot projects. **Senator Cameron** replied "no," that every district can submit their plan. The Superintendent of Public Instruction maintains flexibility; if he wishes to

approve only new projects, he has the authority to do so. **Chairman Goedde** announced that the Committee would resume discussion at the next meeting.

**PRINT  
HEARING ON  
RS 22109, RS  
22129C1, RS  
22130C1, RS  
22131C1 AND  
RS 22160:**

**Chairman Goedde** advised that he had obtained permission from the President Pro Tempore to send **RS 22109, RS 22129C1, RS 22130C1, RS 22131C1** and **RS 22160** to State Affairs for printing. These RS print hearings will be heard by State Affairs on Wednesday, March 6. Once printed, they will be returned to the Education Committee for presentation and debate.

**PRESENTATION:** **Chairman Goedde** next introduced Andy Smarick, who is a partner at Bellwether Education Partners, a non-profit organization working to improve educational outcomes for low-income students. He has extensive experience nationwide. His resume is attached and incorporated by reference. **Mr. Smarick** explained that at Bellwether Education Partners, he currently focuses on understanding the five biggest education areas which impact all states. They are: (1) Common Core State Standards (CCSS) implementation and professional development. In 2014, students will begin taking new assessment tests based on CCSS, and teachers will have questions on how to best prepare and teach the new standards. (2) Teacher evaluations have consumed the efforts of most states over the past five years. Research shows wide differences in teacher effectiveness – one teacher displays astonishing student effectiveness, while another struggles with students. Student surveys offer better assessment reports than most other assessment methods, such as supervisor observations. **Mr. Smarick** advised Idaho to consider teacher evaluation as top priority: start now. (3) In **Mr. Smarick's** opinion, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) should have been reinstated; instead, a waiver has been granted, allowing new accountability, new assessment testing, even new report cards. These changes can impact parents, teachers and students. (4) Technology, and the personalization of education, appears everywhere. **Mr. Smarick** remarked that most people want technology in education, but he advised Idaho to move forward prudently and conservatively. The financial investment can be enormous, especially if technology and its implementation is not thoroughly explored. (5) **Mr. Smarick** described the entrepreneurial explosion in the past few decades. For over 100 years, education looked much the same; now the most exciting advancements lie outside mainstream education, such as charter schools.

**Senators Durst** and **Patrick** asked about early childhood education and low income parental involvement. **Mr. Smarick** replied that preschool programs are only as good as the quality delivered. In addition, studies show that student gains from successful preschool experience can literally disappear within two years if the child moves to a low quality elementary school. **Mr. Smarick** said that many parents are not engaged in their child's education, which underscores the needs for good teachers. His advice is to educate the parents on how they can aid in their child's education, and then offer parents high quality options.

**Chairman Goedde** asked about the expectation the SDE could have in providing funds for technology to the districts. **Mr. Smarick** replied that technology required two elements: equipment and bandwidth. In his opinion, a state's only responsibility is to make sure that adequate bandwidth is available. He advised that the SDE might offer a competitive grant process for equipment wherein each district must make a proposal for what equipment they want and how it will be used. The SDE might also provide a list of approved devices, like they do with textbook choices, and solicit bids from competitive vendors. **Mr. Smarick** advised Idaho to take its time in evaluating the bandwidth and equipment required for the new ICCSS online testing that begins in 2014.

**Chairman Goedde** said that the Committee had recently enjoyed a presentation from the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Study and asked Mr. Smarick for his perspective on teacher evaluations. **Mr. Smarick** replied that MET study showed that high, middle and low performance teachers can be identified in the areas of math and English language skills; test scores provide some measure of effectiveness; teacher observations were less valid than previously thought, and that student surveys provided the most reliable information. He encouraged Idaho to use all three evaluation measures. Having no further questions from the Committee, **Chairman Goedde** thanked Mr. Smarick and introduced the next speaker.

**PRESENTATION: Roger Quarles**, Professor of Education Leadership, Boise State University (BSU), explained that his teaching focus at BSU was to teach K-12 district superintendents and school principals how to become better leaders. He also provides education leadership to Idaho Leads Project (Idaho Leads). BSU created Idaho Leads, a professional development team focused on strengthening leadership capacity in Idaho's K-12 schools. Idaho Leads provides trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents and community members across the state with support to become more effective leaders, and to create high-performing schools where all students succeed. The project was given an 18-month, \$3.85 million grant from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation for funding. The goal of Idaho Leads is twofold: first, to support and enhance the advancement of educational improvement and reform in Idaho, and second, to share, in an easily accessible manner, best practices to all interested districts, schools and charters. Every district and charter school was invited to apply to join Idaho Leads. Of the approximately 150 Idaho school districts and charter schools, 49 were accepted. Those participating convened for four regional network meetings over the next 18 months where they defined priorities, identify and celebrate successes, and determine areas where improvements can be made. Idaho Leads team will be available between network meetings for assistance, including on-site support. The Idaho Leads website includes resources for teachers, administrators and students. Each participating district is asked to bring ten team members so network meetings include more than 150 participants. The network meetings include nationally recognized keynote speakers, team-building exercises and job-alike network meetings.

Idaho Leads promotes building relationships between teachers and students, teachers and principals, principals and superintendents, and with the community. In the network meetings, participants share effective practices to encourage continuous improvement and replication. Success of the program is measured by how many participants came to the meetings, what was learned, whether the new information was implemented, and whether or not that information created a difference within individual districts. Mr. Quarles' powerpoint presentation is attached and incorporated by reference.

In answer to questions by **Vice Chairman Mortimer** and **Senators Buckner-Webb**, and **Durst**, **Mr. Quarles** said that his group personally went to every school in every district to identify "bright spots." In Castleford, fifth graders were using Kahn Academy, and all were solving advanced math problems. In Blaine County, the teachers were taking advantage of all available professional development opportunities, and sharing it with others. Community partnerships include Idaho Business for Education who aids in creating highly effective district organizations. Noting that only 49 of approximately 150 school district participate, **Chairman Goedde** asked if Idaho Leads has the capacity to include all districts. **Mr. Quarles** answered affirmatively, stating that all districts had been invited, but some lacked the commitment to create a ten-member, dedicated team.

**Chairman Goedde** asked how Idaho Leads is working to implement CCSS. **Mr. Quarles** replied that their project was heavily involved in assessing capacity needs of various districts. Boise's district, for example, has more capacity than Castleford. The goal is to provide what they need to implement CCSS, but also to train and support them. Idaho Leads envisions that the current 49 districts will provide regional leadership hubs to assist in implementing CCSS in their districts. He cautioned that Idaho needs to look closely at vendors and the vetting process. **Senator Patrick** asked about the Albertson's funding. **Mr. Quarles** indicated that current funding will end in June 2014, at which time other partnerships will be sought. **Chairman Goedde** thanked Mr. Quarles for his presentation and said, "you have tremendous heart."

- MOTION:** **Senator Nonini** made a motion to approve the minutes of January 31, 2013. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Pearce** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 7, 2013. **Senator Nonini** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Buckner-Webb** made a motion to approve the minutes of the Joint Education Committee's February 11, 2013 "Listening Session". **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Pearce** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 12, 2013. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote.
- MOTION:** **Senator Durst** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 13, 2013. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Senator Patrick** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 14, 2013. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Nonini** made a motion to approve the minutes of January 31, 2013. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- ADJOURNED:** Having no further business before the committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

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Senator Goedde  
Chairman

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Elaine Leedy  
Secretary