

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, April 03, 2013

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

PLACE: Lincoln Auditorium, WW02

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Fulcher, Nonini, Thayne, Patrick, Durst and Buckner-Webb

Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman Nielsen, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Bateman, Boyle, Agidius, Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Horman, Mendive, VanOrden, Pence, Kloc and Ward-Engelking

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Senator Pearce

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 Senate Education Committee (Committee) to order at 8:00 a.m., and a silent roll was taken.

Chairman Goedde expressed his appreciation for everyone's hard work throughout the session and the spirit of cooperation with which so much was accomplished. He explained that the Committee would meet jointly to hear testimony on **S 1199**, after which the House Education Committee would be excused while the Senate Committee finished its work. **Chairman DeMordaunt** agreed and so advised his committee.

S 1199 **Tom Luna**, State Superintendent, Idaho State Department of Education, explained that **S 1199** provides policy for the one-time use of funds for two programs. The first program concerns differential pay, calculated through Average Daily Attendance, and provides for the distribution of moneys to school districts who request grant funds for local excellence in achievement awards. These excellence in achievement awards are subject to a variety of criteria, including among others: (1) that the awards shall be based upon excellence in achievement plans approved by the district with evidence that various local stakeholders provided input to the plan; (2) that the plans are not subject to collective bargaining; (3) that the plans allow for expenditure on professional development; (4) that the plans shall establish goals and objective measures of growth relating to student achievement; and (5) that each district receiving grant funds must submit a detailed report to the State Department of Education reflecting student achievement results.

Mr. Luna next detailed the second program of **S 1199**: technology pilot projects. This program provides that funding will be made available to public schools and public charter schools for grants for technology pilot projects designed to improve student academic growth. The program provides for a competitive grant process prescribed by the superintendent of public instruction. The program also provides requirements for grant applications under the program. The programs outlined in **S 1199** carry a one-year sunset clause.

Vice Chairman Mortimer asked Mr. Luna to clarify section 8 of **S 1199** concerning discretionary funds. **Mr. Luna** replied that **S 1199** provides the flexibility that school districts already have. However, the legislature recognizes that some districts are using discretionary funds to pay salaries and benefits. Under **S 1199**, the differential pay provisions will allow school districts to free up those discretionary funds for other uses.

Senator Durst asked Mr. Luna how **S 1199** would impact collective bargaining in light of S 1040aa. **Mr. Luna** replied that it would not. He explained further that the \$21 million in the Education budget, which is the subject of **S 1199**, is not "in addition to" money which the state is distributing to education, but rather, it is "part of." **S 1199** simply clarifies the distribution of those funds. Regarding the technology pilot project grant portion of the bill, **Senator Durst** asked Mr. Luna how he would develop criteria for awarding the grants. **Mr. Luna** replied, that he intended to follow what had worked in the past – to set up a task force comprised of educators, school boards, businesses, etc. to review and make recommendations for awardees. One likely criteria would be to choose projects which are "scalable and sustainable" statewide.

TESTIMONY:

Rob Winslow, Executive Director, Idaho Association of School Administrators (IASA), stated that the IASA supports **S 1199**. The differential pay sections gives flexibility to districts for professional development needed with implementation of the Common Core State Standards, and also provides for technology grants. The IASA appreciates the collaborative process that has characterized this session. **Senator Durst** asked what feedback he had heard from administrators around the state. **Mr. Winslow** replied that most administrators felt that they could work within this flexibility to take care of their needs.

Colleen Johnson, Principal at Paul Elementary, described how her district had been one of several in Idaho to become an iSchool. This entailed a full-school deployment of iPads for every student and staff member, high definition TV, Apple TV, classroom audio systems, a reliable high speed network and training on the use of iPads. In addition to widespread acceptance by both parents and teachers, the most apparent impact has been the high student engagement and excitement for learning through new and creative methods. **Representative Agidius** asked about the technology infrastructure. **Ms. Johnson** replied that it was very reliable and works every day.

Ashley Johnson, a 5th grade teacher at Paul Elementary, described how technology has accelerated learning and creative thinking. Students now research projects on their iPads and present iMovies of their projects. The students have freedom to expand their imagination; since they each have their own iPad, they can learn at their own pace. Higher level students can pursue topics in more depth, while slower learners have the time and assistance they need to stay on path. **Representative Nielsen** asked about abuse or damage to the devices. **Ms. Johnson** replied that the students "treasure those iPads", and each knows how important it is as their learning device.

Karen Echeverria, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA), explained the her organization represents 113 school districts and over 550 school board members. In addition, over 40 charter schools are also affiliate members of ISBA. **Ms. Echeverria** stated that the ISBA stands in support of **S 1199**. **Ms. Echeverria** said that the goal of the ISBA will be to work with any school district who wishes to submit a grant application for either the differential pay plan or technology plan, and to assist them to ensure that school districts make the best use of these funds. They look forward to the report next year from the superintendent of public instruction. The ISBA anticipates that it will contain information on the results of the plans and their impact on student achievement, and that it will contain information on the grant process itself – how it worked and how it could be improved upon. The ISBA looks forward to the recommendations of both the task force and the interim committee.

Mr. Ryan Kerby, Superintendent at New Plymouth School District, stated that he and Dr. Heather Williams work with superintendents all over Idaho, and have appreciated being included in this process. He said that S 1199 seems stronger now, the expectations are clearer, and he especially appreciates that the stakeholder groups are closer together than they have been in many year. He invited the Committee to visit with superintendents, administrators, teachers and parents in their districts to describe how this was crafted, and discuss expectations for the coming year.

Lisa Boyd, Principal for the Desert Springs school , discussed how their school had used discretionary funds to purchase iPads and upgrade their technology infrastructure. In her school of 660 students, 78 percent participate in the lunch program; 50 percent are Hispanic, 40 percent speak no English. The students "love these devices" – they are excited and "glued" to their iPads. **Representative Nielsen** asked if this obsession with iPads interferes with exercise during the recess period. **Ms. Boyd** replied that the children still go out for recess.

Robin Nettinga, Executive Director, Idaho Education Association (IEA), testified that the IEA supports **S 1199** for several reasons. The IEA's white paper, "Ensuring a World Class Education for Every Idaho Child," notes its commitment to encouraging, recognizing and rewarding excellence in teaching because it leads to increased student achievement. Changing the way school employees are paid is complex. If done well, it can drive positive change. If done poorly, it can create dissension and dysfunction throughout the state. The IEA believes that the best alternative structures can be created at the local level and be created in cooperation with those who will be affected by the changes. **S 1199** allows for local decision-making. Because there is a one-year sunset attached to the bill, the IEA further hopes that over the next year, the state will be able to collect important data that will prove useful to the Governor's Task Force and the Legislative Interim Committee. The IEA looks forward to seeing the positive results that will result from freeing up districts to try new and innovative approaches.

In summation, **Mr. Luna** noted the broad support for **S 1199**, and asked the Committee for its support as well.

ADJOURNED: Having no further testimony before the House Education Committee, **Chairman DeMordaunt** adjourned his committee at 8:42 a.m.

RE-CONVENED: **Chairman Goedde** re-convened the Senate Education Committee and called for discussion on **S 1199**.

Senator Fulcher stated that he had appreciated the testimony, the process, and in particular, the work of Chairman Goedde and Vice Chairman Mortimer. While **Senator Fulcher** suggested that the language of **S 1199** was not exactly what he would have scripted, it does reflect ongoing objectives, and he therefore could support the bill.

MOTION:

Senator Fulcher made a motion to send **S 1199** to the Senate loor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. **Senator Durst** objected to the process of order – that two task forces are now looking into education issues – and that policy should not be made ahead of the task forces' findings. He further objected to the "hasty manner" that was used to draft the bill, and fears it may not have been well thought out. **Senator Patrick** said he felt better with the public hearing and the support of the stakeholders. **Senator Buckner-Webb** asked about the differential pay, and **Senator Goedde** explained that the plans would be developed at the local level. Forty percent could be used for professional development and leadership; the other 60 percent could be used at the discretion of the local districts. The motion carried by **voice vote**. **Senator Durst** voted **nay**.

ADJOURNED:

Having no further business before the committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 8:54 a.m.

Senator Goedde
Chairman

Elaine Leedy
Secretary