

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, January 14, 2014

**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW55

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini(Nonini), Patrick, and Ward-Engelking

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senators Thayn and Buckner-Webb

**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 3:04, and a silent roll was taken.

**PASSED THE GAVEL:** Chairman Goedde turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Mortimer for rules review.

**DOCKET NO. 08-0202-1307** **Ms. Luci B. Willits**, Chief of Staff, State Department of Education (Department), explained that the State approved "Mathematical Thinking for Instruction" course is required for all Idaho math teachers and administrators. The rule change offers more flexibility in the offering of this course by allowing a Department approved alternative course. A further change allows a three-year, non-renewable certificate to those out-of-state applicants who are required to take the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Course. Providing interim certificates to out-of-state teachers who come to Idaho is common practice and allows those teachers time to take Idaho mandated courses. **Senator (Nonini)Nonini** asked the time frame for completing the literacy course. **Mr. Taylor Raney**, State Department of Education, Director of Certification, stated that the course is a standard three-credit course taken during a semester. **Senator (Nonini)Nonini** asked if those teachers would suffer from lack of skills by having three years to take the course. **Mr. Raney** replied that those teachers would be under the tutelage of a qualified principal who has already met this requirement.

**MOTION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** made a motion to adopt **Docket No. 08-0202-1307**. **Senator (Nonini)Nonini** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**DOCKET NO. 08-0203-1303** **Ms. Willits** explained that this rule revises the definition of "gun-free" schools. While each school district must have a comprehensive policy and procedure encompassing safety and discipline, the term "gun-free" schools was not accurate because districts can choose to arm their teachers or not. Thus the language has been changed to require that districts have a policy concerning "possessing weapons on campus" which provides each district the flexibility to choose for itself. **Senator Patrick** asked if the district had discretion to define "weapons." **Ms. Willits** replied affirmatively.

**MOTION:** **Senator Patrick** made a motion to adopt **Docket No. 08-0203-1303**. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**DOCKET NO.  
08-0203-1301**

**Ms. Tracie L. Bent**, Policy Planning Officer, State Board of Education (Board), explained that this rule redefines how schools are recognized as distinguished schools. Previously that definition was aligned to the state accountability system of "Idaho Adequate Yearly Progress " (AYP). When that system changed to the Five-Star Rating System, the language of this section was revised to align with it. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** asked how the Five-Star Rating System was developed. **Ms. Bent** replied that it is an Idaho standard, based on proficiency and achievement. **Chairman Goedde** suggested that this rule is not defining five-star schools, but that the five-star system is one criteria for determining distinguished school designation. **Ms. Bent** agreed.

**MOTION:**

**Chairman Goedde** made a motion to adopt **Docket No. 08-0203-1301**. **Senator Pearce** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**DOCKET NO.  
08-0203-1306**

**Ms. Willits** described the proposed changes in graduation requirements with respect to physical education instruction, and math and science requirements for middle and high school graduation. **Ms. Willits** began with the section affecting middle school students. The State of Idaho has been encouraging students to move faster through the system by using such programs as dual credit. The revised language in this rule allows middle school students to meet high school content and credit requirements if they meet certain criteria, and to have that credit transferred to their high school transcript. **Chairman Goedde** raised an issue from his district wherein middle school students are limited by a four-point grading system, whereas the corresponding high school operates on a five-point grading system. If a student took a course in middle school, his maximum score would be 4.0 whereas if he took the course in high school, he could earn higher than 4.0. This creates a problem for students who really need the Grade Point Average (GPA) to qualify for scholarship programs. **Matt McCarter**, State Department of Education, said that the Department had recently encountered this problem and reached out to the Director of Advanced Education, head of the accrediting body of Idaho schools. The director stated that it was within the boundaries of an accredited high school to expunge a lower grade if the course is taken again and a higher grade is earned.

**Ms. Willits** illustrated the high school mathematics requirement with a powerpoint slide of the game, "Shoots and Ladders." Students must take six units of math in high school regardless of whether they have earned middle school credit. However, if either dual credit calculus or Advanced Placement (AP) calculus are included in those six units, then the math requirement has been met, regardless of when those credits were earned. In response to a question by Senator Ward-Engelking, **Ms. Willits** stated that the Department felt that if students had taken dual credit or AP calculus early in their high school years, they probably would elect additional math courses.

Every student must take the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) in math, reading and language usage in the tenth grade in order to graduate. Under this rule, students who receive a proficient or advanced score on the tenth grade ISAT while in grade nine may bank the score to meet the high school graduation requirement. An alternative path is required for students who will graduate in 2016 and have not received a proficient score on the ISAT in grade nine. In answer to a question by Senator Patrick, **Ms. Willits** explained that when the ISAT was instituted as a graduation requirement, it was intended as a tenth grade assessment, not to show maximum competency, but rather minimum competency, allowing for two years of remediation. The fact that ninth graders can pass the ISAT demonstrates that it has a low standard. **Senator Goedde** clarified that this rule does not apply to the class of 2017 or beyond who will be taking assessments under new standards.

In order to determine readiness for graduation, and in conjunction with raising math and science requirements, the State Board instituted a requirement that students take a college entrance exam. Since implementation, some needed adjustments are reflected in this rule, which redefines which tests meet this requirement, and makes provision for students who miss the test during their eleventh year under valid criteria. Additional language in this rule has been eliminated because it no longer applies after high school redesign. In answer to a question by Senator Pearce, **Ms. Willits** stated that many states redesigned their graduation requirements six or seven years ago, but she did not believe it was a result of Common Core State Standards. **Senator Pearce** inquired about the graduation requirements of neighboring states, and **Ms. Willits** agreed to provide that information.

In order to encourage students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), this rule also embraces AP computer science, dual credit computer science and dual credit engineering courses within the six credit mathematics requirement if the student has completed Algebra II standards. However, these courses only can be credited as either math or science, but not both. Positive public feedback was received regarding this section.

**Ms. Willits** continued, stating that the Department was asked to review what schools were requiring for physical education at all levels, elementary, middle school and high school. Several meetings were held and information was brought to the State Board, resulting in section 104 of this rule. Elementary school now requires sixty minutes of physical education per week. Effective Fall 2015, the middle school requirement shall be an average of two hundred minutes of physical education on a by-weekly basis, to be increased to two hundred twenty minutes in Fall 2018. Most districts require sixty minutes already in elementary schools. Research supports the middle school requirement of two hundred minutes.

High school school students will now be required to complete one class period on psychomotor cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training with hands-on training in accordance with the American Heart Association Guidelines, as well as proper utilization of an automatic external defibrillator.

Further revision authorizes districts, if they so choose, to allow students to substitute up to one credit of physical education for any sport recognized by the Idaho High School Activities association or club sport recognized by the local school district. Many districts already provide this credit on an "as requested" basis, however this rule provides flexibility to provide for such credit if the district wishes.

**Senator Ward-Engelking** noted that the extended middle school requirement significantly increased participation time, and asked how students were going to fit this requirement into their day given the push for more reading and math. **Ms. Willits** responded that students were not required to take physical education, but if they did enroll in physical education, than the 200-225 minute requirement would apply.

**TESTIMONY:**

**Ms. Lori Gash**, Joint School District No. 2 (Meridian), testified both for and against the physical education rule changes. Since many coaches are not "certificated" teachers of record, this presents a problem in Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE), the State reporting system, and would ultimately affect funding and accreditation. The Board has suggested they might simply assign the students to another teacher of record, but she felt that was not ethical to impose requirements and grades when no contact had been made. Finally, with over twelve thousand students in the Meridian district, the burden imposed by assigning students to a surrogate teacher of record is unreasonable. In answer to questions posed by Chairman Goedde, **Ms. Gash** confirmed that over fifty percent of Meridian's coaches were not certified teachers. Of those who are certified, many are not endorsed in physical education.

**Matt Kobe**, Area Director for Timberline Quadrant of the Boise School District (Boise district) and Athletic Director, stated that the Boise district supports the proposed legislation for increased physical education. The Boise district already meets or exceeds the time recommendations, and its curriculum centers on life-long learning skills and a "fit for life" plan individualized for each student. The Boise district supports the legislation's goal in providing well rounded wellness approaches. However, Mr. Kobe also believes that the substitution of club or team sports fails to meet the standard set by their current curriculum, and subverts the intended purpose of the legislation by allowing students to take less, not more, physical education. While opposing the team sport provision of this rule, the Boise School District supports the overall goal of promoting fitness participation and life time wellness for Idaho students. **Mr. Kobe** asks that districts be given local control to determine how best to meet the needs of their students. **Senator Ward-Engelking** confirmed with Mr. Kobe that the Boise district supports the physical education minutes proposals, but opposes the team sports for credit language. **Chairman Goedde** confirmed with Mr. Kobe that he would feel more comfortable with the option of local districts choosing the Idaho High School Activities Association recognized sports. Mr. Kobe simply wants districts to be able to choose what is most appropriate for their situation.

**Tim Rosandick**, Superintendent of the Caldwell School District and representing the superintendents of the Southern Idaho Conference (SIC). The SIC superintendents are very supportive of the underlying goals and objectives of the proposed physical education, however, they feel that the timing is detrimental. Due to economic and funding factors over the past few years, many SIC school districts have been forced to make significant cuts to their staffing and are in no position to easily accommodate new demands placed on their limited resources. These new provisions simply come at the wrong time.

**Adrean Cavener**, Director of Government Relations for the American Heart Association (AHA) and American Stroke Association (ASA) said that both organizations support the elementary physical education minutes requirements. Over thirty percent of Idaho elementary students right now are overweight or obese. Multiple studies have shown that physically fit students perform better on standardized tests, have better classroom behavior and less absenteeism. Even our military readiness has been affected because recruiters cannot find enough physically fit men and women to get through boot camp. **Ms. Cavener** pointed out that the elementary and middle school requirements of this proposed rule do not take effect until 2015 so adequate time is available for planning. **Ms. Cavener** echoed the concerns of others concerning the sports substitution for physical education credit. Many times football players only learn that one activity – they eat like an athlete and never learn how to exercise outside of football. **Ms. Cavener** asks that the substitution provision be eliminated from this rule and allow the AHA and ASA to return next year with a high school graduation requirement. **Ms. Cavener** fully supports the CPR class requirement and detailed statistics and stories in support.

**Ms. Willits** addressed the concerns expressed by the speakers. The substitution provision comes at the request of students and parents to extend the school day and allow credits to occur. Certified teachers oversee these activities now with on-line physical education, which is monitored by a parent/guardian and submitted to a certified teacher. She urged the Committee to at least give the substitution provision an opportunity, and to allow for adjustments in the future, if needed. In answer to questions by Senator Pearce, **Ms. Willits** confirmed that school districts can allow substitution credits now, but the majority have not created those local policies.

**Senator Pearce** suggested that the Committee hold this rule for further discussion, and **Chairman Goedde** agreed.

**ADJOURNED:** Having no further business before the Committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

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Senator Goedde  
Chair

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Elaine Leedy  
Secretary