

MINUTES  
JOINT MEETING  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, January 15, 2014

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

**PLACE:** Lincoln Auditorium WW02

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

Chairman DeMordaunt, Vice Chairman Nielsen, Representatives Shepherd, Wills, Bateman, Boyle, Clow, Gestrin, Harris, Horman, Mendive, VanOrden, McDonald, Pence, Kloc, and Rubel

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Buckner-Webb, and Representative Wills

**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 Joint Senate and House Education Committee (Committee) to order at 3:01 p.m., and a silent roll was taken.

**Tom Luna**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education (Department), assured the audience that he is very optimistic about the state of Idaho education. Schools are performing well: Idaho has more Five-Star schools this year, and students are being measured by proficiency. He emphasized the importance of dual credit and advanced placement options for students and the benefits gained through those programs. He also detailed several of the technology grant pilot programs which are underway and looked to the day when technology grants would be offered statewide. Every student in Idaho's K-12 public schools is being taught to the new Idaho Core Standards, and this spring they will have the opportunity to trial the new Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) test. **Superintendent Luna** recognized the need to protect student privacy and the data collected in the public education system. He stressed the need to implement the Governor's Task Force recommendations for transforming education, and suggested online sales tax as a means to fund those recommendations. Superintendent Luna's complete remarks are attached.

In answer to questions from the Committee, **Superintendent Luna** said that individual districts educate parents and make policies about electronic books. Most are allowed to go home with the student. He said that the career ladder and tiered licensure is a two part process and that the two are compatible. The salary grid is in place and money is available to give leadership bonuses. He hoped for complete implementation next year. **Senator Pearce** stated that he was a proponent of End of Course (EOC) assessments and asked how they compare with the SBAC. **Superintendent Luna** replied that SBAC only measures math and English language arts. EOC's are useful in history and science. One is not better than the other – they serve different purposes. **Senator Pearce** stated that Arne Duncan, United States Secretary of Education, called the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) a "great experiment" and asked for comment. **Superintendent Luna** replied that Mr. Duncan played no role in the development of CCSS. Under No Child Left Behind, the federal government imposed the standards. What Mr.

Duncan had referred to as the "great experiment" was that fact that for the first time, states were working together to develop standards and raise student learning.

**Representative Gestrin** asked if Mr. Luna felt that "buy-in" from Idaho school districts had been achieved on the new standards and assessments. **Superintendent Luna** replied that their participation is critical. Over one hundred Idaho teachers participated in writing test questions in collaboration with teachers from other states. The CCSS has been a unifying event in education. All education stakeholders, as well as business leaders, support it. The biggest concerns expressed are administration and logistics of the new assessments. The test has been piloted, and students will have a further opportunity to take the test this spring. The Department will know more after that. Meanwhile, **Superintendent Luna** intends to petition the State Board of Education to allow districts administrative flexibility in administering the tests.

**Mr. Richard Westerberg**, Chairman of the Governor's Task Force on Education (Task Force), State Board of Education, explained the work of the Task Force and the process used to narrow its focus. Two committees were formed to focus on fiscal stability, structural change, teacher/administrator effectiveness, professional development and technology. The guiding principles of the two committees were (1) structural changes are required to achieve the sixty percent goal for post-secondary education, and (2) high performance schools require a high performance work environment for teachers and administrators. He then reviewed a summary of twenty Task Force recommendations. Those recommendations are attached.

In response to questions from the Committee, **Mr Westerberg** said that while much work had been done by the Task Force and many recommendations were well-developed, others needed additional and continuing work. He did not know the first steps toward a mastery-based education system. The Governor had recommended \$50,000 to get started and has recommended that the Task Force committees work with the State Board to lead the effort. He said the preschool issue had not garnered enough votes in committee for further study, and that local districts must deal with the issue of wireless connections in student homes.

**Mr. Westerberg** told Committee members that what was done by the Task Force was not new, however, taking it as a whole and implementing as a whole is new and is transformational. He said that funding is a legislative task.

Responding to further questions, **Mr. Westerberg** indicated that the Task Force committees discussed the training of school board members. They discussed this with the Idaho School Boards Association who indicated some school board members desired training, and Mr. Westerberg agreed with the idea. However, **Chairman Goedde** explained that training for elected school board members cannot be required.

**ADJOURNED:** Having no further business before the Committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

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Senator Goedde  
Chair

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Elaine Leedy  
Secretary