

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 23, 2014

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayn, Patrick, Buckner-Webb and Ward-Engelking

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

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 3:02 p.m., and a silent role was taken.

PRESENTATION: **Dr. J. Anthony (Tony) Fernandez**, President of Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC) introduced his staff and colleagues, Chet Herbert, Annie Hansen, Kathy Martin, Heather VanMullen, Kathy Stensen, Ed Miller and Mary Flores.

Dr. Fernandez introduced LCSC with its mission of "Connecting Learning to Life" through academic programs, professional-technical education (PTE) programs and community programs. LCSC's primary areas of emphasis are arts and sciences, business, justice studies, nursing, PTE, social work and teacher education. LCSC has increased its enrollment over the past 10 years by 29 percent, with a current enrollment of 4,304 students, producing approximately 80,000 credit hours and awarding nearly 700 degrees annually. Their average incoming freshman student has a high school grade point average of 3.1, American College Testing (ACT) scores of 20, and Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores of 920. LCSC offers academic and career planning, free tutoring, computer and web skills training, and special curriculum on college survival skills to its incoming freshmen. As a result, LCSC's student retention rate is nearly 60 percent. Students in nursing, radiological technology, teacher preparation, social work licensure average a 92 percent first-time pass rate in certificated programs, while academic graduates boast an 88 percent job placement rate, and PTE graduates achieve 85 percent job placement. All students, regardless of field, provide service in their community.

LCSC collaborates with regional health facilities and several regional community colleges. In addition, their facility in Coeur d'Alene now serves 484 students in the prime areas of business administration, education, nursing and social work. They offer non-credit classes for community enrichment, workforce training for over 3,000 students and provide small business development consulting. **Dr. Fernandez** stated that LCSC's most critical budget challenge is the significant salary gap for its faculty and staff compared to other similar western colleges. In addition, they need to sustain their current operations, maintain safe infrastructure, and minimize student fee increases. In summary, LCSC runs a lean and practical operation focused on professions that promote economic development. Realistic planning and aggressive management help them to get the most from every appropriated dollar.

Chairman Goedde commented that the joint facility in Coeur d'Alene was very important in that community. **Senator Buckner-Webb** asked about LCSC's deferred maintenance issues. **Dr. Fernandez** replied that LCSC has some of the oldest public supported buildings in the state, and carries \$20-25 million in deferred maintenance costs. **Senator Thayn** asked what Dr. Fernandez would like to see as incoming SAT scores. **Dr. Fernandez** said he would like over 1,000 as an average. He supports higher standards for high school graduation. **Chairman Goedde** and **Senator Patrick** asked about remediation rates. **Ed Miller**, Professor of Mathematics, said that the minimum ACT math score is 19; below that requires math remediation. Approximately half of incoming students need remediation in math, and about 20 percent need remediation in English Language Arts (ELA).

PRESENTATION: **Dr. Arthur C. Vailas**, President, Idaho State University (ISU) introduced ISU's mission of "Transforming Education through Partnerships." ISU educates more than 17,000 students each year in the areas of energy, health professions, engineering, performing and visual arts, technology, biological sciences, pharmacy and business, and offers 285 programs from certificates to doctoral degrees. With locations in Pocatello, Meridian, Idaho Falls and Twin Falls, earnings from ISU alumni living and working in Idaho contribute \$873 million annually to the state economy. ISU builds skills, flexibility, careers and leaders by focusing on oral and written communication, critical thinking and problem-solving and teamwork. Their early college program for high schoolers and summer programs for low income and first generation students build "bridges" to access and opportunity by instilling the confidence necessary for college success. Career path internships benefit both students and the community, and 80 percent of all graduates and 86 percent of PTE graduates reported post-graduation employment.

ISU's technical education programs continue to receive recognition for nuclear education and training, environmental research, and nanofabrication. A leader in health sciences, ISU is home to eight of the top 11 programs named in Forbes 2013's List of Most-Needed Health Professionals. ISU clinics now serve over 54,000 Idahoans in family medicine, counseling, dental hygiene and physical and occupational therapies. The anatomy and physiology laboratory in Meridian, slated to open in 2015, will provide specialized training for schools and first responders, and foster research and business opportunities in the health care industry. In partnership with the Idaho Education Network, ISU will be able to provide anatomy and physiology presentations to every high school in the state. ISU continues to increase its statewide impact, and appreciates all that the legislature does to support its efforts.

Vice Chairman Mortimer asked how long it would take for the colleges and universities to align their course numbers and course content to improve student transferability between them, and whether it would take legislative action to complete the task. **Laura Woodworth-Nye**, Provost, ISU, said that a lot of work has been done over the past two years with sister institutions and community colleges, and progress has been made. The problem lies in pre-requisites for different program areas. As Idaho moves to a more competency based approach to general education, more alignment in pre-requisite content can be achieved. **Ms. Woodworth-Nye** said that two years would be a reasonable projection to accomplish the task. She did not think that legislation would help. **President Vailas** agreed, stating that legislation creates political complexity. Responding to questions from Vice Chairman Mortimer and Senator Thayn, **President Vailas** reported that ISU provides some compensation to high schools for dual credit courses, however, ISU does not offer many PTE dual credit programs. **Ms. Woodworth-Nye** explained that PTE courses are not transcribed while a student is in high school, but rather when they enter ISU. She believed PTE dual credit

courses represented approximately 20 percent of total dual credits. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** expressed his hope that more will be offered because he believes it provides encouragement to student to continue their education. ISU currently confers nearly 1,700 Bachelor's degrees annually.

Responding to questions from Chairman Goedde, **President Vailas** reported that online enrollment has increased by approximately 33 percent. He was pleased to report that students needing remediation has dropped from 48 percent to approximately 30 percent. He attributes this reduction to a pilot grant project aimed at total curricular alignment between high school and universities. He applauds Idaho's core competency standards as the pathway to increased success.

Chairman Goedde asked President Vailas to describe the half-life isotope that ISU has developed to treat cancer. **President Vailas** expressed his excitement, and said "The trials are on! If it works, it will change the landscape of our economy."

PRESENTATION: **Don Burnett**, Interim President, University of Idaho, proudly introduced Idaho's land-grant university with its missions in research, teaching and outreach. Building on the theme, "*Science brings money to Idaho*", **Interim President Burnett** described a variety of programs in biomedical research, medical education, water resources management, engineering, and energy. His spirited and detailed remarks are attached and incorporated by reference.

ADJOURNED: Having no further business before the Committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 4:38 p.m.

Senator Goedde
Chair

Elaine Leedy
Secretary