

MINUTES  
**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

- DATE:** Thursday, January 30, 2014
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayn, Patrick, Buckner-Webb and Ward-Engelking
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Chairman Goedde
- 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:** **Vice Chairman Mortimer** convened the meeting at 3:05 p.m., and roll was taken. **Senator Mortimer** recognized the guests attending, especially thanking his wife, Judy, for attending.
- PRESENTATION:** **Vice Chairman Mortimer** welcomed Dr. Mary Barinaga, MD of the Idaho WWAMI Medical Education Program, University of Washington School of Medicine. **Dr. Barinaga** said that she is a family physician in Boise. She grew up in Cambridge, and practiced for several years in Plummer, Idaho. **Dr. Barinaga** said that 7 to 11 years after college are required to become a physician. The physician pipeline in Idaho includes two parts: the first is the Idaho WWAMI program, which is the "medical school" part. The second is the Kootenai Family Medicine Residency, which is the "residency" part.
- Dr. Barinaga** indicated that Idaho has significant physician workforce challenges. Idaho ranks 49th in the nation for overall physicians and Idaho physicians are aging. Of the 65 Idaho citizens who started medical school in 2012, only 20 were in enrolled in WWAMI.
- Dr. Barinaga** shared some positive results of WWAMI. It has a retention rate of 51 percent, significantly higher than the 38 percent national number. The cost to educate a student through WWAMI is about two-thirds the cost of other medical schools. Forty-five percent of Idaho WWAMI graduates select primary care specialties. The Targeted Rural Underserved Track (TRUST) program was expanded by 5 additional students in 2013 to 25 students. These students hopefully will return to practice in another underserved Idaho community. TRUST communities in Idaho include Sandpoint, McCall, Hailey, Nampa (Terry Reilly Health System) and Jerome. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** asked how the TRUST areas were chosen. **Dr. Barinaga** replied that the areas must have experience in training students, and they must be rural and underserved areas.
- Dr. Barinaga** had two budget requests for WWAMI. The first was ongoing support for TRUST students that were added in FY14, and the second was to expand the first-year class by 5 students to a 30 student class size.
- Dr. Barinaga** also discussed the Idaho GME (Residency) Data. This information is detailed in Dr. Barinaga's PowerPoint Presentation which is attached and incorporated by reference as Attachment 1.

**Senator Pearce** asked about the difference between a "DO" and an "MD". **Dr. Barinaga** responded that there were many similarities, but Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) typically have more hands on musculoskeletal training than Medical Doctors (MD). DO schools are usually private schools with much higher tuition. WWAMI is not a DO school and trains students at a significantly lower cost. The students are still able to practice in any specialty upon graduation from WWAMI.

**Senator Patrick** asked what the city of Plummer did for a physician when she moved away. **Dr. Barinaga** responded that the city still has not found a replacement for her. The cost to recruit one doctor is about \$100,000. It is important to train doctors where you want them to remain. **Senator Fulcher** asked about the impact of the new health care laws on Idaho's physician pipeline. **Dr. Barinaga** responded that Idaho received a primary care expansion grant, funds for teaching health centers and funding for five new residencies.

**PRESENTATION: Elaine Clegg** was the President of ITAG/SAGE in 2001 and a legislative liaison from 1990-2000. She is also a parent and grandparent of gifted children.

In the 1980s, gifted and talented (GT) students were beginning to be identified in schools. By the early 1990s, success of the students depended on well trained people who knew how to work with these children. Local districts were asked to write their own programs to meet local needs. Ms. Clegg stated that funding for these programs has been cut, and the children have suffered as a result. Students continue to need these services. The accelerated pace of Common Core is not enough. A request has been made for \$500,000 out of the \$8.25 million to be set aside into a separate fund for training gifted and talented teachers. More details of Ms. Clegg's presentation are attached and incorporated by reference as Attachment 2.

**TESTIMONY: Tina Polishchuk** past president of ITAG/SAGE, and currently a math teacher at Syringa Middle School. She became involved in gifted education in her first year of teaching. She found the gifted teaching style very motivating for her students in the gifted program. She now teaches math at a basic level and to students "struggling" in math. Using the same teaching concepts as she did in her gifted classes, has enabled her "basic" and "struggling" students to almost double the growth of their grade-level counterparts. **Ms. Polishchuk** indicated that teachers are not being trained to identify and work with gifted students from any walk of life. These students are dropping out of high school at rates higher than Idaho can afford. The loss of gifted programs and trained personnel is detrimental to gifted students. ITAG/SAGE is not asking for new funding, they are asking for a restoration of the funds prior to the budget cuts. More details of Ms. Polishchuk's presentation are attached.

**Senator Ward-Engelking** asked for clarification on whether different districts use different criteria to place children in the GT program. **Ms. Polishchuk** responded that they do, and it varies from district to district. **Ms. Clegg** added that, when districts do not have enough money, they raise the standards to keep the number of students lower.

**Senator Pearce** asked if Ms. Clegg thought the gifted students were going to be taken care of through Common Core. **Ms. Clegg** answered that Common Core parallels many of the principle themes used to teach GT students. It will serve them by the accelerated pace, but it will not give them the depth they need. **Senator Pearce** asked if the testing in Common Core was a concern. **Ms. Clegg** responded that she had significant concerns. There is not a plan in place to take the students further. Teachers are not trained to help the GT students.

**PRESENTATION: Michelle Watts** and **Kimberly Popa** are both parents of gifted children. They testified concerning the unique challenges their gifted and talented children face. Their testimonies are attached.

**Ms. Clegg** thanked the Committee for hearing the testimonies of this very emotional issue for the children and families involved. She indicated that the fix being proposed is fairly simple. She encouraged the Committee to carve out the small \$500,000 line item to return funding to this program. **Senator Thayn** asked how the money would be used. **Ms. Clegg** said that the minimum for each district would be \$1,000 which would be used to train one teacher, counselor or specialist to implement the GT program in their district. They would be able to use it at their discretion, and it would be enough to get the program started again. Vice Chairman Mortimer asked how much money had been given to this program over the last few years. Ms. Clegg said that the amount was \$1 million beginning in 2006 through 2009.

- MOTION:** Motion was made by **Senator Pearce** to approve the Minutes dated January 14, 2014. **Senator Nonni** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** Motion was made by **Senator Thayne** to approve the Minutes dated January 15, 2014. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** Motion was made by **Senator Thayne** to approve the Minutes dated January 16, 2014. **Senator Ward-Engelking** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** Motion was made by **Senator Patrick** to approve the Minutes dated January 20, 2014. **Senator Nonni** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** Motion was made by **Senator Ward-Engelking** to approve the Minutes dated January 21, 2014. **Senator Buckner-Webb** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** Motion was made by **Senator Noinni** to approve the Minutes dated January 23, 2014. **Senator Thayne** seconded the motion. The motion was carried by **voice vote**.
- ADJOURNED:** There being no further business to come before the Committee, **Vice Chairman Mortimer** adjourned the meeting at 4:06 p.m.

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Senator Goedde  
Chair

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Elaine Leedy  
Secretary

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Sharon Pennington  
Asst. Secretary