

MINUTES
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- DATE:** Tuesday, February 11, 2014
- TIME:** 3:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Room WW55
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Goedde, Vice Chairman Mortimer, Senators Pearce, Fulcher, Nonini, Thayn, Patrick and Ward-Engelking
- ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator 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 3:03 p.m., and a silent roll was taken.
- MINUTES:** **Chairman Goedde** announced that the Minutes of January 22, 2014 covering the Joint Education Committee's Forum on Common Core and been prepared and approved by the House of Representative Education Committee and would be made a part of the Committee's permanent record.
- MOTION:** **Vice Chairman Mortimer** made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 28, 2014. **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Vice Chairman Mortimer** made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 29, 2014. **Senator Thayn** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Pearce** made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 30, 2014. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Patrick** made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 3, 2014. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- MOTION:** **Senator Ward-Engelking** made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 30, 2014. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.
- PRESENTATION:** **Tom Luna**, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education (Department) explained that Idaho's system of increased accountability is known as the Five-Star Rating System. The purpose of this system is to provide parents and taxpayers with an understanding of how well each school performs in terms of student achievement. For ten years, beginning in 2001, states measured student progress in terms of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which was established as part of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). States received funding based on AYP, however, AYP only measured proficiency in testing and proved inadequate over the next several years. In 2011, Superintendent Luna announced to the United States Secretary of Education that Idaho was moving forward toward its own accountability system. Focus groups of educators, parents and school boards met to establish standards and accountability, and the Five-Star Rating System was born.

The Five-Star Rating System measures proficiency on Idaho's statewide standardized tests, as well as academic growth. In grade 12, the Five-Star Rating System also measures preparedness for postsecondary education based on the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) or the American College Testing (ACT), dual credit courses taken, Advanced Placement (AP) courses taken, Technical Preparation courses, and graduation rates. Based on these criteria, each school is rated. Four-Star and Five-Star schools receive public recognition as top-performing schools. Three-Star schools, while recognized as "good", must develop an improvement plan for increased academic achievement. One-Star and Two-Star schools receive additional time and resources from the Department to support efforts to raise academic achievement.

Once Idaho developed its own accountability system, the federal government granted it a waiver from reporting under NCLB's AYP system. The waiver includes Idaho's plan to transition to the Five-Star Rating System, the formula for calculating Five-Star Rating System results, and how the Five-Star Rating System holds schools accountable and rewards high performing schools. The waiver does not impose federally mandated standards or assessments.

The Five-Star Rating System has been in place for two years, and great progress has been shown among Idaho Schools. The number of Five-Star schools has increased, while the number of One-Star schools has decreased. 158 schools moved upwards in their star ratings in the past year. Superintendent Luna has developed a new task force to identify any additional measures which need to be added to the system, such as the impact of Idaho's new core standards and assessments. The Five-Star Rating System provides an excellent example of how data can be used to improve Idaho's public education system. Superintendent Luna's complete remarks are attached.

Chairman Goedde commented that in order for data to be useful in the classroom, it must also be timely.

PRESENTATION: Joyce Popp, Chief Information Officer of the State Department of Education, stated that the use of current, accurate data at the classroom, school and state levels is important to make the best decisions for students. She said we must have data, and we must make sure all data collected remains secure.

In October 2013, the State Department of Education contracted with Applied Engineering Management (AEM) Corporation to audit the State's data collection system, known as the Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE). The results showed that the State is collecting the amount of data required by the State, federal law or policy. The main report required by the U.S. Department of Education is called EDFacts. EDFacts is a collection of numerous reports which is used to calculate distributions of federal funding, such as Title 1 funding, school improvement grants, and special education funding. Data is provided in the aggregate, and no individual data is shared with the exception of information on migrant students, which is shared among school districts.

Data is collected in 12 main areas: (1) student demographics, (2) student attendance, (3) district calendar, (4) special education students, (5) gifted students, (6) staff demographics, (7) staff assignments, (8) student course enrollment, (9) teacher attendance, (10) student test results, (11) disciplinary action, and (12) incidents of crime or violence. Data is collected at the student-level for four specific reasons: (1) Idaho accepted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) funds with the stipulation that the State create a longitudinal data system that provides insight to a student over time - the digital backpack, (2) data that is aggregated for reporting must be repeatable, (3) data that is aggregated must be auditable, and (4) data must be defensible. Data points do not include religion, voting records, sexual preference/gender bias, gun ownership, medical records or any biometric data.

The data is collected through the longitudinal data system, known as Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE), on a monthly basis. First, data is entered on students at the beginning of the school year. On the third Friday of each month, the data is uploaded into ISEE. Transition to ISEE has caused many frustrations. With the financial help of the Legislature, one full-time regional coordinator has been hired in each region of the State to provide needed technical assistance. The Department conducted ISEE boot camps with their internal staff to provide training. While challenges still remain, progress is being made. The Department's goal is for every district and public charter school to trust the data in their system and to automate their data uploads into ISEE.

Data is also used to calculate state funding, and audits showed that the data was not changed to affect funding outcomes. Once collected, the data goes back to the classroom where it can be used most effectively. Idaho is piloting Schoolnet to make the data available to teachers, parents and school administrators. Data provided to the classroom includes student profiles, enrollment and academic records, standardized tests, program participation and student growth charts. Disciplinary data and socio-economic information are not provided. The data also creates the Fiscal Report Card which compares funding and expenditures based on state averages.

Requests for data must be submitted to the Department's Communication Director and must meet the Idaho Public Records Law and Family Educational Rights and Protection Act (FERPA). All requests are reviewed by the Department's Deputy Attorney General. Requests may not include student level data, or any personally identifiable student information.

The Department takes data security very seriously and utilizes multi-level firewalls, virus and malware detection software, proactive notifications to specific IT security personnel, bulk encryption, 128 bit encryption, and multiple layers of intrusion detection technology. Data is beneficial, but it must always be protected. Ms. Popp's complete report is attached.

Vice Chairman Mortimer questioned the use of student names versus student identification numbers used in ISEE. **Ms. Popp** replied that in the initial report, a name must be matched to an identifier to ensure accuracy. Subsequently, only the identifier is used. **Senator Nonini** noted that Idaho was the last state to develop a longitudinal data system and asked if Idaho had learned from mistakes of other states. **Ms. Popp** replied that Idaho listened carefully and continues to do so. She has been asked to speak at every national convention as an expert. **Senator Thayne** asked if consideration had been made for uploading only portions of data monthly. **Ms. Popp** said that other states collected daily or weekly, but the Department felt that monthly uploads provided the most mobility. Some data subsets upload nightly. **Chairman Goedde** asked about the number hits to ISEE's firewall. **Ms. Popp** stated that the firewall receives anywhere from zero to thousands of hits per day. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** asked if districts collect more data than the State.

Ms. Popp said that districts do collect medical and immunization information. A random audit also showed problems, such as lack of documented procedures, multiple input staff, excessive time requirements and mistakes. The Department is working with the districts to ensure data is entered correctly the first time. **Vice Chairman Mortimer** asked if the Department had a policy to restrict access to student data. **Ms. Popp** answered affirmatively. **Chairman Goedde** asked if the Department was making progress toward automation of data in order to eliminate upload problems. **Ms. Popp** replied that districts use 70 different vendors statewide. The Department is working to provide specific pull-down menus so that data will be entered consistently regardless of vendor. **Chairman Goedde** asked if districts are able to mine ISEE data without using SchoolNet. **Ms. Popp** replied that SchoolNet provides instructional feedback, however other vendors may also exist. **Chairman Goedde** asked questions concerning ISEE's pilot program. **Ms. Popp** replied that 57 districts participate in the pilot project and 70 use a five file upload. She will provide a link to that report.

PRESENTATION: **Alex MacDonald**, Director of Instructional Technology, State Department of Education, explained that ISEE Phase II, or SchoolNet, is an Instructional Improvement System (IIS) and is the means by which teachers, administrators and parents can use ISEE's data to improve student achievement. He reviewed a flow chart of a typical teacher's year in the classroom and the ways in which she might use SchoolNet feedback to guide instruction based on student achievement data, lesson planning tools and assessment resources. Currently 57 districts participate in the SchoolNet pilot project, which has been funded by federal grants and the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation (JKAF). Districts apply to participate in the pilot and receive professional development and on-site technical assistance. In turn participating districts help the State to identify benefits and challenges which has resulted in a Year 3 Work Plan.

Some of the challenges uncovered in the pilot included communication issues, misperceptions of platform functionality, disaggregated approaches to professional development opportunities and difficulty tracking platform issues. The Department has implemented several resolutions to re-engage local school districts. Many districts struggled with accuracy and age of data due to the ISEE monthly uploads. In response, the Department created the Five File Upload. This allows districts to weekly or nightly upload staff demographics and assignments, student demographics and courses, and a test file. While this data upload does not undergo a full ISEE validation process, it does allow much faster access in SchoolNet. The Department is creating new professional development modules, as well as modules that integrate Idaho Core Standards, Smarter Balanced Assessment and digital content. Data shows that SchoolNet login and activity have increased up to 74 percent. Within the next year, the Department hopes to see teachers collaborating with other teachers, parents viewing and tracking the student information, teachers viewing student data before school starts in August, teachers and administrators managing student interventions and greatly increased usage. The Department's budget request includes \$1.54 million for SchoolNet maintenance, support and hosting; \$900,000 for Discovery Education streaming; \$1 million in assessment creation and sharing, and \$1.05 million for professional development. Mr. MacDonald's presentation is attached.

Chairman Goedde noted that some educators have tried SchoolNet and do not like it. He asked how the Department plans to overcome their negativity. **Mr. MacDonald** replied that the Department has focused its re-engagement efforts by working with individual districts and small groups who were willing to try it again. They demonstrate and allow teachers to pilot the beneficial aspects, and keep the lines of communication open. **Chairman Goedde** and **Senators Thayne** and **Patrick** asked questions concerning the creation of assessments in SchoolNet. **Mr. MacDonald** said that the \$1 million requested would be used to contract with teachers to develop assessments that are aligned to Idaho Core Standards. He did not know how much assessments would cost individually or how many might be created for that sum. Formative assessments would be aligned to Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessment for math and English language arts, and include all subjects, such as health and history. The lessons posted in SchoolNet would be optional for teachers to use; they are examples of lessons that could match Idaho Core Standards which are posted in order to share what other teachers have found successful. Rather than coming from top down, it rises from bottom up: from teacher to principal, principal to administrator, administrator to district, district to other districts and to the State.

Vice Chairman Mortimer and **Senator Nonini** asked about the future in light of SchoolNet's bumpy start and the end of its contract in June 2014. **Mr. MacDonald** replied that SchoolNet had initially been chosen because it scored the highest among other IISs. The Year 3 Work plan is part of SchoolNet's commitment to sustainability. The Department is drafting a contract renewal agreement.

PRESENTATION: Scott Woolstenhulme, Bonneville Joint School District 93 (District), in his capacity as Director of Technology Services, stated that he had first hand knowledge of ISEE and the Five Star system, and reviewed the recent improvement in star ratings for the District. Using the principals of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to create a culture of collaboration, focus on learning and focus on results, the District reviewed both SchoolNet and Mileposts as their IIP. Initially they chose Mileposts, but cancelled the contract before implementation when SchoolNet first was announced. SchoolNet was implemented in Fall 2011, but the District soon became frustrated with the errors in data and the 3-12 week delays in usable results. In Fall 2012, they turned to Mileposts with a focus on assessments and nightly uploads of data. In Fall 2013 the District expanded its Mileposts functionality to include learning plans and interventions. **Mr. Woolstenhulme** reported that the District now has a comprehensive view of each student and can create Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) for struggling students.

Mr. Woolstenhulme illustrated the differences between the data flow of a statewide system (SchoolNet) versus a district system (Mileposts). SchoolNet data takes three weeks to three months to reach teachers; data availability and accuracy depend on accurate submission from other districts, and test scores are the only data input from the State. Mileposts data reaches teachers within one day; data availability and accuracy is independent from required reports; the local system allows district-specific assessments and results to be uploaded; the data warehouse is separate from ISEE reporting processes.

Chairman Goedde asked why it takes districts so long to "clean" data. **Mr. Woolstenhulme** replied that IEPs often are created for students with disabilities who do not fall within standard categorizations. Error messages result. The department has supplied an electronic system, but now the District must keep data in two different systems. **Mr. Woolstenhulme** is in daily conversation with the Department to resolve these errors.

ADJOURNED: Having no further business before the Committee, **Chairman Goedde** adjourned the meeting at 5:14 p.m.

Senator Goedde
Chair

Elaine Leedy
Secretary